



Torpoint Town Council Safeguarding Policy

“Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility”

DATE OF REVIEW – February 2023

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW – February 2025

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1. Meeting your communication needs

We want to ensure that your needs are met, if you would like this information in any other format please contact the Town Clerk.

2. Purpose of Policy

To set out the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and how this will be implemented by Torpoint Town Council in the discharge of its duties. This is a joint policy as there are similarities in many of the actions needed to safeguard children and young people and to safeguard vulnerable adults. However the Town Council recognises that there are also some distinct differences between these groups and these are reflected in this document.

3. Policy Statement

To develop procedures and good practice within Torpoint Town Council to ensure that each person can demonstrate that there is an understanding of the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

To provide evidence of how this is being implemented within its own organisation and within multi-agency working arrangements and of its plans to address any gaps in these arrangements.

4. Policy Application

This policy applies to all members of staff of Torpoint Town Council and all those organisations who have a working relationship with the Town Council including volunteers.

5. Introduction

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff who, during the course of their employment have direct or indirect contact with children and vulnerable adults, or who have access to information about them, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

There is a duty on organisations to make appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

Government guidance makes it clear that this is a shared responsibility, and depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

6. Safeguarding Children and Young People

6.1 Definitions for the purposes of this policy

A child is "anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989. (See Children's Act 2004).

An adult is anyone over 18 years of age.

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over who may need community care services because of a disability (mental or other), age, or illness.

A person is also considered vulnerable if they are unable to look after themselves, protect themselves from harm or exploitation or are unable to report abuse (Department of Health).

6.2 What do we want to achieve for our children?

Torpoint Town Council aims to ensure that children in Torpoint, Cornwall achieve the five outcomes for Children that are identified in the Children Act 2004, which are: -

- Be Healthy – physical and mental health and emotional well-being
- Stay Safe – prevention and protection from harm and neglect
- Enjoy and Achieve – education, training and recreation
- Make a positive contribution to society
- Achieve Economic and Social Well-being.

6.3 What does this mean?

“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children” means:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing the impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

7.0 Legislative background

Torpoint Town Council does not have a legislative role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as defined in Chapter 3 of the statutory guidance to the Children Act 2004, ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’,

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf). However, Torpoint Town Council recognises it is a local organisation that works alongside children and families and as such can and must therefore play an important role when it comes to safeguarding children.

8.0 Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

8.1 Definition

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over who may need community care services because of a disability (mental or other), age, or illness.

A person is also considered vulnerable if they are unable to look after themselves, protect themselves from harm or exploitation or are unable to report abuse (Department of Health).

8.2 What do we want to achieve?

Torpoint Town Council works to the following principles:

- Everyone has the right to live his or her life free from violence, fear and abuse.
- Everyone has the right to be protected from harm and exploitation.
- Everyone has the right to independence, which carries with it a degree of risk.

Torpoint Town Council will ensure that all members of staff know or can easily find out what they need to do if they have a concern about the abuse of vulnerable adults.

8.3 What does this mean?

Staff will be able to recognise abuse. The main forms of abuse are divided into the following categories:

- **Physical abuse** – including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, inappropriate sanctions
- **Sexual abuse** – including rape, sexual assault, sexual acts to which a person has not consented, could not consent or was pressurised into consenting
- **Psychological abuse** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, withdrawal from services or supportive networks
- **Financial or material abuse** – including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- **Neglect and acts of omission** – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating
- **Discriminatory abuse** – including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment
- **Institutional abuse, neglect and poor professional practice.** This may take the form of isolated incidents of poor or unsatisfactory professional practice at one end of the spectrum, through to pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct at the other.

(No Secrets – Department of Health 2000)

9.0 Reporting concerns

Councillors and staff will respond appropriately when they see or are concerned about abuse. This means that councillors and staff will report and record their concerns about abuse. If Councillors or staff have any concerns about a child's or vulnerable adults' welfare they should act immediately.

Contact the **Multi Agency referral Unit (MARU) on 0300 123 1116** (see <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/childrens-services/child-protection-and-safeguarding/>). If the concerns arise out of office hours contact **01208 251300**. Please ensure you have as much factual information, about the child/vulnerable adult, as possible when you telephone and include:

- Full name
- Date of Birth
- Address
- Family details
- Factual information about concerns identified.

Telephone calls will need to be followed up in writing by completing the multi-agency referral form. This is available from the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Children Partnership website <https://ciossafeguarding.org.uk/>.

10.0 Policy Objectives

Torpoint Town Council's main policy objective is to ensure that we will promote safeguarding as the moral norm so that it becomes everybody's business.

By everybody's business we mean that all staff and Councillors in all areas of the organisation connected with children, families and vulnerable adults, understand their

safeguarding responsibilities and their active role in working together to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from harm.

- For this policy to be effective it is essential that each person has an applied understanding of what safeguarding means,
- knows that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility,
- knows the signs and symptoms of potential harm,
- knows how to access safeguarding information, advice and guidance, and
- is committed to making an informed contribution to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

It is imperative that Councillors as individuals and the Town Council as a body, fully understand the community that they serve and the many and varied risks that exist within that community related to safeguarding not only children, but the vulnerable adults in the area.

Knowledge and understanding about safeguarding will also enable all Councillors to be vigilant about possible threats or dangers which may be occurring in the community such as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or Right-Wing Activism.

The Council's appointed DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead), will use information shared by the police to inform their actions around safeguarding.

All members of the Town Council should understand what they must do if they are concerned about a child or adult and should be able to articulate that responsibility.

11.0 Safeguarding Children and Young People

The following principles will underpin all the Town Council's connection with children and young people.

Our approach will be: -

- Child centred – seeing and listening to children and young people
- Rooted in understanding child development
- Support the achievement of best possible outcomes for children
- Holistic in approach – seeing the whole of the child and not just aspects of their lives
- Understand diversity, the impact of discrimination and how to ensure equality of opportunity
- Respect for the views of parents/carers
- Identify and build on strengths and protective factors, as well as identifying and addressing difficulties and risks
- Work collaboratively, sharing information as appropriate
- Provide support as a continuing process not for brief periods in relation to particular events
- Achieve good standards in safeguarding practice consistently and be informed by evidence.

12.0 Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

The following principles will underpin all the Town Council's connection with vulnerable adults: -

- Everyone has the right to live his or her life free from violence, fear and abuse
- Everyone has the right to be protected from harm and exploitation
- Everyone has the right to independence, which carries with it a degree of risk.

13. Specific Safeguarding Issues

There are specific issues that have become critical issues in Safeguarding that Torpoint Town Council will endeavour to ensure ALL their staff and Town Councillors are familiar with, this list is illustrative rather than exhaustive:

- Bullying including cyber bullying
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Domestic Abuse
- VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls)
- Drugs
- Child criminal exploitation – county lines
- Children with family members in prison
- Faith abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Gender based violence / Violence against women and girls
- Hate
- Mental Health
- Homelessness
- So called 'Honour based' violence
- Peer on peer abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Preventing Radicalisation
- Online abuse/Sexting
- Trafficking
- Missing children and vulnerable adults
- Child sexual abuse within the family
- Poor parenting (this can be in relation to babies and young children).

13.1 Domestic Abuse:

Operation Encompass children are has strived over the last 11 years to ensure that children are victims of domestic abuse in their own right and should be acknowledged as such.

In the DA ACT 2021 **Children were recognised as victims of Domestic Abuse in their own right.**

Domestic Abuse is likely to be the commonest form of abuse that children in our community experience

Domestic abuse may take many forms – Torpoint Town Council has endorsed Operation Encompass, a charitable organisation set up in 2011. This is a police and education early information sharing partnership enabling schools to offer immediate support for children and young people experiencing domestic abuse. Information is shared by the Police with a school's Key Adult prior to the start of the next school day after officers have attended a domestic abuse incident thus enabling appropriate support to be given, dependent on the needs and wishes of the child.

14. Equality and Diversity

This policy should be read with Torpoint Town Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Equality is based on the idea of fairness whilst recognising that everyone is different, and diversity is about the ways in which people differ

and about recognising that differences are a natural part of society. Torpoint Town Council expects that all Town Councillors, staff and volunteers who come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults treat them as individuals and make them feel respected and valued as an essential part of our commitment to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.

15. Responsibilities for Safeguarding

Torpoint Town Council will ensure that:

- All Town Councillors and staff are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- There is a named Safeguarding Lead who has undertaken appropriate training and will regularly attend training updates.

DSL (Name): Camilla Southworth

Trained date: September 2022

By: Torpoint Nursery and Infant School

- Undertake safe recruitment of staff, where appropriate, utilising the Disclosure and Barring Service, particularly staff who work or have contact with children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families or carers.
- Staff employed by the Town Council have training so that they know of the appropriate procedures in place, and of their role in responding to concerns about children, young people, vulnerable adults and other safeguarding matters.
- In collaboration with partners, for example Cornwall Council, safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Any concerns are recorded and passed over to other agencies.

16. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Confidentiality needs to be fully understood by all those persons who come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults, particularly in the context of safeguarding. No adult must ever guarantee confidentiality to any individual including parents, children and colleagues. Staff should always make children aware that if they disclose information that may be harmful to themselves or others, then certain actions will need to be taken. Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties.

17. Supporting Staff

Torpoint Town Council recognise that staff may find dealing with safeguarding concerns very difficult and upsetting. It is hoped that in such situations the individual staff member would be able to talk to the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk - the Chairman) who can then make enquiries into what support may be available for the individual member of staff.