

Box Parish Council – Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy – November 2024

Review date November 2025

Policy Purpose

The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to promote the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults at risk within our parish community and to protect them from harm, abuse, and neglect.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all members of the parish council, volunteers, and anyone working on behalf of the parish council.

Policy Statement

Box Parish Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all individuals in our care. We believe that everyone, regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, has the right to live safe and free from abuse, harm and neglect.

Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Definitions of Abuse

What is abuse?

Child abuse happens when a person harms a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can also involve neglect.

Children may be abused by:

- family members
- friends
- people working or volunteering in organisational or community settings
- people they know
- strangers

General signs of abuse

Children experiencing abuse often experience more than one type of abuse over a period of time.

Children who experience abuse may be afraid to tell anybody about the abuse. They may struggle with feelings of guilt, shame or confusion – particularly if the abuser is a parent, caregiver or other close family member or friend.

Many of the signs that a child is being abused are the same regardless of the type of abuse. Anyone working with children or young people needs to be able to recognise the signs. These include a child:

- being afraid of particular places or making excuses to avoid particular people
- knowing about or being involved in ‘adult issues’ which are inappropriate for their age or stage of development, for example alcohol, drugs and/or sexual behaviour
- having angry outbursts or behaving aggressively towards others
- becoming withdrawn or appearing anxious, clingy or depressed
- self-harming or having thoughts about suicide
- showing changes in eating habits or developing eating disorders
- regularly experiencing nightmares or sleep problems
- regularly wetting the bed or soiling their clothes
- running away or regularly going missing from home or care
- not receiving adequate medical attention after injuries.

These signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused. There may well be other reasons for changes in a child’s behaviour such as a bereavement or relationship problems between parents or carers. If you have any concerns about a child’s wellbeing, you should report them following your organisation’s safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing physical harm. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating. It’s also physical abuse if a parent or carer makes up or causes the symptoms of illness in children. For example, they may give them medicine they don’t need, making them unwell. This is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII)

- **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse involves:

- humiliating, putting down or regularly criticising a child
- shouting at or threatening a child or calling them names
- mocking a child or making them perform degrading acts
- constantly blaming or scapegoating a child for things which are not their fault
- trying to control a child’s life and not recognising their individuality

- not allowing a child to have friends or develop socially
- pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations
- manipulating a child
- exposing a child to distressing events or interactions
- persistently ignoring a child
- being cold and emotionally unavailable during interactions with a child
- not being positive or encouraging to a child or praising their achievements and successes.

There aren't usually any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse but you may spot changes in a child's actions or emotions.

Some children are naturally quiet and self-contained whilst others are more open and affectionate. Mood swings and challenging behaviour are also a normal part of growing up for teenagers and children going through puberty. Be alert to behaviours which appear to be out of character for the individual child or are particularly unusual for their stage of development.

- **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and non-contact abuse. Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact with the child. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child is wearing clothes or not
- rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus
- forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity
- making a child take their clothes off or touch someone else's genitals.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities. It can happen online or in person and includes:

- encouraging or forcing a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- making a child masturbate while others watch
- not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others
- showing pornography to a child
- making, viewing or distributing child abuse images
- allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images.

- meeting a child following online sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them.

Online sexual abuse includes:

- persuading or forcing a child to send or post sexually explicit images of themselves, this is sometimes referred to as sexting
- persuading or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone
- having sexual conversations with a child by text or online.

Abusers may threaten to send sexually explicit images, video or copies of sexual conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the abuse has stopped.

Abusers will often try to build an emotional connection with a child in order to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse. This is known as grooming.

- **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Young people may be coerced or groomed into exploitative situations and relationships. They may be given things such as gifts, money, drugs, alcohol, status or affection in exchange for taking part in sexual activities.

Young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol before being sexually exploited. They can also be groomed and exploited online.

Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs (Berelowitz et al, 2013).

Child sexual exploitation can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults and involve multiple perpetrators

- **Neglect**

Neglect is not meeting a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. This can result in serious damage to their health and development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer not:

- providing adequate food, clothing or shelter

- supervising a child or keeping them safe from harm or danger (including leaving
- them with unsuitable carers)
- making sure the child receives appropriate health and/or dental care
- making sure the child receives a suitable education
- meeting the child's basic emotional needs – this is known as emotional neglect.

Neglect is the most common type of child abuse. It often happens at the same time as other types of abuse

Roles and Responsibilities

-Role: Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO):Parish Clerk Margaret Carey [Name and contact information]

- Responsible for receiving and managing safeguarding concerns and allegations.

- All Council Members and Staff:

- Have a duty to report any safeguarding concerns, suspicions, or disclosures.

Safer Recruitment

All Parish Council Employees who may come into contact with children to have a DBS check; in this case all Open Spaces Workers.

Reporting Concerns

All safeguarding concerns should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer Margaret Carey, Parish Clerk. clerk@boxparishcouncil.gov.uk. 01225 742356.

If the DSO is unavailable, concerns should be taken to a deputy or another council member.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer shall report all safeguarding concerns to the Wiltshire Council Integrated Front Door Service.

The Integrated Front Door Service (MASH, Early Support Hub and Out of Hours Service)

County Hall

Bythesea Road

Trowbridge

Wiltshire

BA14 8JN

Email Integratedfrontdoor@wiltshire.gov.uk

Website [Child protection - Wiltshire Council](#)

MASH and Early Support Hub: 0300 4560108

Out of Hours Service: 0300 456 0100

The Integrated Front Door Service is available 8.45am - 5pm, Monday - Thursday and 8.45am - 4pm Friday.

During all other times, referrals should be raised with the Out of Hours service

If there is immediate danger, phone the police or emergency services on 999.

Confidentiality

All safeguarding reports will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. Information will only be shared with those who need to know, in order to protect individuals at risk.

Training and Awareness

Regular safeguarding training will be provided for all council members, staff, and volunteers to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities and the procedures to follow.

All Councillors to complete an online safeguarding training course.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure it remains compliant with legislation and best practice.

Contact Information

For any safeguarding concerns or queries, please contact:

- Designated Safeguarding Officer: Margaret Carey, Parish Clerk,
clerk@boxparishcouncil.gov.uk. 01225 742356

- The Integrated Front Door Service (MASH, Early Support Hub and Out of Hours Service)

County Hall

Bythesea Road

Trowbridge

Wiltshire

BA14 8JN

Email Integratedfrontdoor@wiltshire.gov.uk

Box Parish Council Safeguarding and Child protection Training

All Parish Councillors undertake the following training, provided by Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable Peoples partnership

Registration with [Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership \(SVPP\) - Home page \(wiltshiresvpp.org.uk\)](http://wiltshiresvpp.org.uk) is required.

Level 1 – Safeguarding Everyone

This course covers the core information for Safeguarding Everyone Level 1, covering both children and adults. It introduces safeguarding as a topic, covering jargon, multi-agency working and best practice, as well as how to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and what you should do if you suspect a vulnerable individual is being abused or discloses information. The core content also covers national and local context, whistleblowing and focuses on your role and what you can do to recognise and reduce the likelihood of abuse. The final part focuses on how to deal with suspected and disclosed abuse at Level 1.