



# SEDLESCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL CHILD/YOUNG PERSON PROTECTION POLICY

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## **I**NTRODUCTION

Sedlescombe Parish Council is a statutory organisation committed to providing a safe environment.

The Council believes that:

- The welfare of the child or young person is paramount.
- All children and young people, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or religion, have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All staff, volunteers and elected Members are not to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.
- All staff, volunteers and elected Members of the Council have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

As part of the policy, the Council will be adopting Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks on those whose roles within the Council engage with children or young people. In line with best practice, these checks will be repeated every three years.. Whilst the information provided by the CRB is important in terms of employment, the Council recognises that this is only part of the overall policy to create and sustain a safe environment for children and young people that use services or facilities provided by Sedlescombe Parish Council or engage with staff, elected Members and volunteers.

## **P**OLICY STATEMENT

*Sedlescombe Parish Council is committed to taking all reasonable precautions to safeguard the welfare of children and young people that use its services. It aims to promote a safeguarding culture and environment.*

A child or young person is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children's Act 1989).

The Council will ensure that all staff, volunteers, elected Members and partnerships refer to this policy and that it and the accompanying guidelines and procedures are readily available.



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## **P**OLICY AIMS

The aim of the Sedlescombe Parish Council's Child/Young Person Protection Policy is to promote good practice by:

- Providing carefully planned and appropriate activities for the group of children or young people involved.
- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst using a Council services or engaging with staff, volunteers and elected Members. This means ensuring that all places where activities take place have had appropriate risk assessments and that any person supervising or helping in the activity has the appropriate training, vetting and/or qualification.
- Allowing all staff, volunteers and elected Members to make informed and confident responses to specific child/young person protection issues.
- Reviewing the Child/Young Person Protection Policy for Sedlescombe Parish Council annually.

This Policy is to be used in conjunction with the following Sedlescombe Parish Council policies:

- Health & Safety Policy
- Code of Practice on handling complaints
- Risk Management Assessment

## **P**PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE

Good practice protects not only children and young people but also staff, volunteers and elected Members. In addition, promoting good practice also protects the Council which is responsible for the provision of services children may use.

By following good practice and the guidelines laid out in this Policy, Sedlescombe Parish Council can reassure the community it serves that it is taking all reasonable precautions to safeguard the welfare of children and young people.

## **C**ODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Whilst undertaking duties in Sedlescombe, including at the children's playgrounds, all staff and volunteers must act appropriately, treat everyone with respect and provide an example of good conduct for others to follow.



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## **C**HILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

### **T**YPES OF ABUSE

It is generally accepted that there are four main types of abuse. These are Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Neglect.

### **R**ESPONDING TO ABUSE OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE.

Neither Members, the Clerk, nor volunteers are expected to come into contact with children or young people in the normal course of the work of the Parish Council. However, it is possible, during playground inspections, that children or young people may seek help from them, seeing these people as official representatives.

#### **DO**

- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell the Parish Clerk or Chairman of the Parish Council immediately. In the event of the absence of both of these people, refer the matter yourself to the Duty and Assessment Team for Hastings and Rother (contact details below).
- Do treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the child or young person as if you believe what they are saying.
- Do reassure the child or young person that they are not to blame.
- Do be honest about your own position and that you will have to tell someone else.
- Do write down everything said and what was done. Dates, times, facts, observations, verbatim speech, if possible. Ensure correct details are available ie the young person's name and address and name and address of parent/guardian.
- Do seek medical attention if necessary.

#### **DON'T**

- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Don't interrogate the child – it is not your job to carry out investigation – this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this.
- Don't cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.
- Don't say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse.
- Don't do anything further unless asked to do so by the Duty and Assessment Team.



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**ACTION BY THE PARISH CLERK OR PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN**  
Once the Parish Clerk or Chairman of the Parish Council has received information regarding possible abuse, he/she should immediately pass on all available information to:

The Duty and Assessment Team  
(Hastings & Rother)  
Old Court House  
North Trade Road  
Battle, East Sussex  
BN23 7HQ  
Tel: 01424 775599

### **C**ONFIDENTIAL FILE

As soon as a case begins, the Parish Clerk/Chairman of the Parish Council should prepare a confidential file. Action: To record all notes, all conversations, advice from the Duty and Assessment Team. Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information will be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws. No other action to be taken unless advised to do so by the Duty and Assessment Team.