



## **City of Ely Council**

### **Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

#### **1. Introduction**

The City of Ely Council is fully committed to its role and responsibility in safeguarding the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults. This policy applies to all staff, councillors, volunteers and contractors. This policy is vital to the Council's role as an owner, provider and operator of children's play areas including any facility the council provides. However, any agency working with children and vulnerable adults has full responsibility to ensure the users are safeguarded.

#### **2. Definitions Children and young people**

Anyone under the age of 23 years and with regard to vulnerable adults: Anyone over 23 who is:

- Unable to care for themselves
- Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation
- Or may be in need of community care services

All information in this Policy was up to date at the time of its creation. Please bear in mind that legislation is always changing. Any updates will be sent out as soon as possible

#### **3. Equality Statement**

The City of Ely Council will ensure that all children and vulnerable adults have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

#### **4. Legal framework**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults, namely:

Children Act 1989

Children and Social Work Act 2017

United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991

Data Protection Act 1998

Sexual Offences Act 2003

Children Act 2004

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children

Mental Capacity Act 2005

Care Act 2014

## **5. Key Elements of Policy**

- 5.1 The City of Ely Council's primary aim is to ensure as far as possible that children and vulnerable adults are safe and secure in any facility or environment it provides.
- 5.2 The City of Ely Council shall ensure that anyone employed by the Council shall be appropriately checked for suitability when working with or around children and vulnerable adults by ensuring that staff are DBS checked to a standard disclosure unless informed otherwise in which case an enhanced disclosure shall be applied for.
- 5.3 The City of Ely Council shall ensure that all staff, Councillors, volunteers and contractors are aware of child protection and shall know the procedure to follow if there is a child or vulnerable adult protection issue.
- 5.4 The City of Ely Council shall take advice and guidance from its Child Protection Councillor, and/or Local Safeguarding Children's Board, Every Child Matters and any other relevant body or agency. (*See Appendix 3: Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy Useful Contacts.*)
- 5.5 The City of Ely Council's Clerk has responsibility in ensuring that all staff, Councillors, volunteers and contractors are in receipt of this policy.
- 5.6 The City of Ely Council understands and recognises the different types of abuse and shall ensure that all staff, Councillors, volunteers and contractors are aware of and alert to types and signs of abuse and the procedure in reporting any concerns. (*See Appendix 1: Signs and Symptoms of Abuse.*)

## **6. Responding to Suspected incidents of Child or Vulnerable Adult Abuse**

- 6.1 The City of Ely Council shall support in every way that it can children or vulnerable adults who have been abused by informing the appropriate authority. If it is suspected that abuse or poor practice is taking place there is a clear obligation to report such matters to the proper authority, the decision for such action shall be taken by the Clerk (under delegated powers) following consultation with the designated Councillor for Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection and the Chairman. The Council shall make, or cause to be made, such enquiries as they consider necessary to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard or promote the child or adult's welfare (Children Act 1989 section 47(1) & The Care Act 2014).
- 6.2 The City of Ely Council shall do its best to ensure that any relevant bodies are notified of any child or vulnerable adult protection incidents and that good communication and links are made in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.
- 6.3 The City of Ely Council shall record any concerns they have about a child or vulnerable adult immediately even if the concern needs no further action and the record must be kept in a secure and effective way.

**Reviewed and approved 22nd May 2023**

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**Cllr C Phillips - Chairman of the Council**

## **Appendix 1**

### **Signs and Symptoms of Abuse**

#### **1. Neglect -**

Occurs when a parent/carer fails to meet a child or vulnerable adults essential needs for food, clothing, shelter or medical care, or when children are left without proper supervision which leaves them unsafe or unprotected.

##### **Some indications are:**

- Consistently unkempt, dirty appearance
- Medical needs unmet
- Delay in the child's development without other clear cause
- Lack of responsiveness with peers or adults in everyday social situations
- Behaviour such as head banging or rocking
- Repeated failure by parents/carers to prevent injury
- Consistently inappropriately clothed for the weather
- Hazardous living conditions
- Failure to attend any sort of appointments
- Non-organic failure to thrive

#### **2. Physical Abuse -**

Occurs when parents or adults deliberately inflict injuries on a child or vulnerable adult, or do not protect the individual from injury.

##### **Some indications are:**

- Unexplained injuries - bruises, scars, bites or burns, particularly if they are recurrent injuries of varying ages and types
- Individual shows fear about returning home
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Bruising on very young babies

#### **3. Emotional Abuse -**

Occurs when parents fail to show their children sufficient love or attention or when they threaten, taunt or belittle them, causing them to become nervous, withdrawn, aggressive, or disturbed in their behaviour.

##### **Some indications are:**

- Very low self-esteem
- Lack of any sense of fun
- Excessively clingy or attention seeking behaviour
- Over reactions to mistakes or over anxious to please
- Substantial failure to reach potential in learning
- Self-harming; compulsive rituals
- Unusual patterns of response to others showing emotion

#### **4. Sexual Abuse -**

Occurs when an adult or older child involves a child or vulnerable adult in sexual activity to which the child does not or cannot consent, because of his or her age or understanding

**Some indicators are:**

- Withdrawn, fearful or aggressive behaviour to other children or adults
- Poor concentration at school or learning problems which do not match intellectual ability
- Behaviour with sexual overtones inappropriate to age
- Complaints of genital itching or pain
- Unexplained abdominal pain
- Distrust of a familiar adult or anxiety about being left with a particular person, relative, babysitter or lodger
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Apparent secrecy
- Wetting day or night when previously dry and clean
- Severe sleep disturbances or nightmares
- Chronic illness, especially throat infections
- Venereal disease or other sexually transmitted diseases
- Marked reluctance to take part in physical activity or to change clothes for PE, for example
- Phobias or panic attacks
- Self-mutilation or attempted suicide
- Running away from home

#### **5. Psychological abuse**

Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

#### **6. Financial or material abuse**

Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

#### **7. Modern slavery**

Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.

Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

#### **8. Discriminatory abuse**

Including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

#### **9. Organisational abuse**

Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example or in relation to care provided in one's

own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes or practices within an organisation.

#### **10. Neglect and acts of omission**

Including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

#### **11. Self-neglect**

This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

*Information obtained from Cambridgeshire County Councils Safeguarding and Child Protection Model Policy (September 2015) and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Model Policy (September 2015)*

## **Appendix 2**

### **Code of Conduct when working with children**

1. This code of conduct has been produced as a guide to any City of Ely Council Councillors and officers who come across children.
2. Avoid physical contact unless it is justified in the context of the activity, explained to the individual, and with their permission.
3. Physical restraint may be needed to manage certain situations, such as if a fight breaks out. Ensure the purpose of your actions is clear, and keep any physical intervention to the minimum required to prevent harm to any young people or others.
4. A distressed child or vulnerable adult may require physical contact, such as an arm around the shoulders, to comfort or reassure them. Try to ensure you are with, or in sight of, a colleague, and ensure the purpose of your actions is clear.
5. Conduct all dealings with children or vulnerable adults in a public environment in full view of others.
6. Do not place yourself in a situation where you may be open to suspicion or allegation, or where your actions may be misinterpreted.
7. Maintain a safe environment.
8. Avoid being alone with a child or vulnerable adult in any situation.
9. Avoid spending excessive time with a child or vulnerable adult.
10. Avoid using inappropriate language in front of, about, or to a child or vulnerable adult.
11. Try not to approach a child or vulnerable adult when a parent /carer is present. If you have a concern about a child or vulnerable adult's behaviour take it up with the parent/carers in a non-threatening way.
12. Try to use the disabled toilet when possible avoiding communal toilets thus avoiding being in a toilet alone with a child or vulnerable adult.
13. Remember to keep calm when challenging any persons' behaviour. Shouting or swearing is not a good idea and try to speak to the child or vulnerable adult in a way which you would be comfortable with someone speaking to you.
14. Remember that children and vulnerable adults are not purposefully trying to aggravate you and generally see no wrong in what they're doing so try to explain why you are asking them to do something.
15. Never ask a child or vulnerable adult to enter a building alone with you.
16. If you have any concern with a child or vulnerable adult refer to the City of Ely Council's Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection and Safeguarding Policy and seek advice from the Council's Designated Person for Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection and Safeguarding Policy Useful Contacts**

Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children's Board

Scott House

5 George Street

Huntingdon, PE29 3AD

**Email:** [LSCB@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

**Telephone:** 01480 373522

Children's Social Care Services

Telephone 0345 045 5203 between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday.

Email: [referralcentre.children@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:referralcentre.children@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) or

If it is outside office hours or at the weekend, call the First Response and Emergency Duty Team on 01733 234 724.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Headquarters

Hinchingbrooke Park

Huntingdon

Cambridgeshire

PE29 6NP

Telephone: 0345 456 4564 or 101

NSPCC

NSPCC Helpline, 42 Curtain Road, London, EC2A 3NH.

Helpline website: [nspcc.org.uk/reportconcern](http://nspcc.org.uk/reportconcern)

Telephone: 0808 800 5000

Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

ChildLine Free helpline for children and young people in the UK. children and young people can call to talk about any problem [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) or telephone 0800 1111

Vulnerable Adults

**Cambridgeshire Direct 0345 045 5202**

or

[referral.centre-adults@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:referral.centre-adults@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

- Age UK Cambridgeshire & Peterborough **0300 666 9860**
- Carers Advocacy at VoiceAbility **0300 222 5704**
- Adults and Young People Advocacy at Voice ability **0300 222 5704**
- Our Voice specializing in working with D/deaf people **07553 349127**
- Cambridge Older People's Enterprise (COPE) **01223 364303** (10am-4pm)
- Carers UK **020 7378 4999**
- National Domestic Violence Helpline **0808 2000 247**
- Care Quality Commission **03000 616161**