**YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL**

**SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

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1. **Introduction**
   1. Everyone has a duty to safeguard children young people and vulnerable adults
   2. This policy outlines practices that will promote the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults using Yeovil Town Council facilities.
2. **Definitions**
   1. Children and young people: anyone under the age of 18 years.
   2. Vulnerable adult: anyone over 18 years who is unable to care for themselves; unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation; or may need community care services.
3. **To whom this policy applies**
   1. This policy applied to anyone working for or on behalf of Yeovil Town Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity.
4. **Promoting a safe environment**
   1. In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, Yeovil Town Council wishes to promote a safeguarding culture in its premises and activity areas. To achieve this, Yeovil Town Council will:

* Provide safe facilities and undertake regular safety assessments
* Ensure that employees and councillors are award of safeguarding expectations
* Make available on public noticeboards and to employees and councillors relevant contact details.
  1. Employees, councillors and volunteers all have a duty to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults but are not responsible for deciding whether abuse is taking place. If they have concerns, these should be passed on to the authorities as detailed below as soon as possible.

1. **Allegations against staff and volunteers**
   1. All staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child or vulnerable adult. It is always advisable for interview or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.
   2. No attempt should be made to investigate or act on any allegation before consultation with the following:

* Somerset Children’s Social Care
  + Initial Response Service – 0300 123 2224
  + Emergency Duty Team – 0300 123 2327
* Somerset Adult Social Care
  + Initial Response Service – 0300 123 2224
  + Out of Hours: Adult and Mental Health- 01823 368244
* Area -wide
  + Avon and Somerset Police – 101
  + NSPCC Helpline – 0808 800 5000

**You should always call 999 in an emergency** – for example when someone’s life is at risk or someone is seriously injured or critically ill.

1. **Whistleblowing**
   1. We recognise that children or vulnerable adults cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff or volunteers fail to do so.
   2. All staff and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and appropriate advice will be south from the Social Care teams at Somerset County Council.
2. **What should be a cause for concern**
   1. Staff and volunteers should be concerned by any behaviour, action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child or a vulnerable adult. A child or vulnerable adult may be abused by parents, other relatives or carers, professionals and their peers, and abuse can occur in any family OR in any other area of society, regardless of social class, wealth or geographical location.
   2. Abuse falls into four main categories:

* physical abuse
* emotional abuse
* sexual abuse
* financial abuse
* neglect
  1. All staff and volunteers need to have an awareness that there are many other forms of abuse ranging from Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) through to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
  2. Ideally, staff and volunteers who engage with children or vulnerable adults will have accessed appropriate training.
  3. Further information about types of abuse, signs to look for and what to do if you are concerned are also available on the Somerset County Council website: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk>

Yeovil Town Council

29th September 2020

To be reviewed: September 2024

(subject to changes in legislation, recommended practice, operations)