

Bromham Parish Council

Safeguarding Policy



Policy Statement:

Bromham Parish Council (BPC) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and to ensuring a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for all.

BPC recognises that safeguarding also includes protecting individuals from bullying, harassment and discrimination in connection with Parish Council activities, meetings and events. The Council will not tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity, safety and wellbeing of any individual, as outlined in our Civility and Respect Policy.

Bromham Parish Council recognises that it does not have a statutory safeguarding role, but it is responsible in taking all reasonable steps to protect staff, Councillors, volunteers and visitors from abuse or neglect while they are involved in Parish Council activities, services or events.

This policy is informed by, and should be read in conjunction with, relevant legislation and guidance, including Children Act 1989 and 2004, Care Act 2014, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 and 2023, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and Equality Act 2010.

Scope

Children, young people and vulnerable adults who may come into contact with the Parish Council

Under 18 years of age

Anyone over 18 who is:

- Unable to care for themselves
- Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation
- May need community care services
- All councillors, employees, contractors and volunteers
- Members of the public engaging with the Parish Council

The Parish Council recognises that it does not normally deliver services directly to children or vulnerable adults but acknowledges its duty of care to act appropriately if safeguarding concerns arise.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Parish Council will:

- Appoint the Chair as the named Safeguarding Lead
- Ensure safeguarding is considered in all relevant decisions and activities
- Ensure councillors, staff and volunteers are aware of this policy
- Ensure concerns are reported appropriately
- Promote a culture of respect, equality and inclusion
- Keep secure and confidential records of safeguarding concerns

Bromham Parish Council

Safeguarding Lead responsibilities:

- Act as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns, including bullying, harassment and discrimination
- Ensure concerns are recorded and managed appropriately
- Refer matters to statutory agencies or other bodies where necessary

Reporting Procedure for Safeguarding Concerns

If concerns arise:

- Ensure the individual is safe and seek emergency assistance if required
- Report the concern immediately to the Safeguard Lead
- The Safeguarding Lead will decide whether the matter should be referred to:

Bedford Borough Council LADO, the police or the Monitoring Officer.

All concerns will be handled sensitively and confidentially.

Concerns relating specifically to bullying, harassment or discrimination will be managed in line with the Parish Council's **Code of Conduct**, as appropriate. Where such behaviour presents a safeguarding risk, it will be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis and in line with data protection legislation.

Safeguarding concerns will always take precedence over confidentiality where there is a risk of harm.

Safer Working Practices

Where relevant, the Parish Council will:

- Carry out DBS checks only where legally required and appropriate
- Ensure decisions regarding checks are proportionate and risk-based
- Promote professional and respectful conduct at all times
- Avoid situations where individuals are unnecessarily alone with children or vulnerable adults

Use of Parish Council Facilities

Organisations and individuals hiring or using parish council facilities are responsible for their own safeguarding arrangements and must comply with relevant safeguarding and equality legislation. The Parish Council will not accept responsibility for the safeguarding practices of third-party organisations.

Bromham Parish Council

Online and Digital Safeguarding

The Parish Council recognises that safeguarding responsibilities extend to **online and digital environments**, including email, websites, social media and virtual meetings.

The Parish Council will:

- Promote respectful and appropriate behaviour in all online communications
- Not tolerate online bullying, harassment, intimidation or discriminatory behaviour connected to Parish Council business
- Manage digital conduct in line with its **Code of Conduct and IT Policy**. Safeguarding concerns arising from online activity, including persistent or targeted online behaviour, will be taken seriously and managed in accordance with this policy.

Risk Assessment and Safeguarding at Events and Activities

The Parish Council will consider safeguarding as part of its risk assessment process when organising, funding or supporting events or activities.

Where relevant, this will include:

- Identifying potential safeguarding risks
- Ensuring appropriate supervision and conduct
- Clarifying safeguarding responsibilities with third parties or partner organisations

Safeguarding risk assessments will be proportionate to the nature of the activity and the level of contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

The Parish Council is committed to treating all individuals affected by safeguarding concerns with respect, sensitivity and fairness.

Where appropriate, the Parish Council will:

- Listen to concerns and take them seriously
- Ensure individuals are informed about how concerns will be managed
- Signpost individuals to appropriate support or advice services

The Parish Council recognises that safeguarding processes can be distressing and will seek to ensure that those affected are supported throughout, while maintaining appropriate confidentiality.

Review and Approval

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or guidance changes

Adopted by: Bromham Parish Council

Date:

Review Date:

Bromham Parish Council