



EAST COWES

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

2023

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1 East Cowes Town Council is committed to taking all reasonable precautions to safeguard the welfare of children and any adults at risk that use its services and promotes a safeguarding culture and environment. The Council have a duty of care to ensure that all users will be reasonably safe when using our premises for the purpose to which they are permitted to be there.

2 This policy is designed to keep our more general activities safe and will be shared with all staff, volunteers and Councillors who have a responsibility to help to direct any person with concerns to the correct Agency.

3 The Town Clerk is the responsible officer for the implementation and review of this document.

4 These guidelines are designed not only to protect children and adults at risk, but also to protect the staff, volunteers, and Councillors from situations where false allegations may occur. Our buildings must be places where all users feel secure, confident to enjoy the resources around them, and where they know that they will receive suitable help if needed.

For information:

Definition of a child - Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means children and young people'. *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*

Definition of an adult at risk – An adult at risk is any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and or support. *The Care Act 2012*

5 Staff, volunteers, and Councillors must:

- Always wear your name badge (if allocated).
- Treat all children and any adult at risk and their possessions with respect.
- Provide an example of good conduct they wish others to follow.
- Ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children and adults at risk, or at least that they are within the sight or hearing of others.
- Respect the child/adult at risks right to personal privacy and encourage them to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret their actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- Be aware that physical contact with a child or any adult at risk may be misinterpreted and be mindful of how and where they touch them.
- Avoid touching as far as possible and discussing sensitive issues.
- If any safeguarding issues are highlighted to you direct any child or adult at risk to the correct Agency for assistance/advice.

6 Staff, volunteers, and Councillors must not:

- Assume responsibility for looking after children in any of our spaces.
- Take children to the toilet.
- Give advice on any personal issues visitors may have.
- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or any adult at risk.
- Make inappropriate comments, even in fun.
- Make derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or any adult at risk.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts.
- Allow bullying.

7 Children using the Library/Town Hall:

- Children under the age of 8 must always be accompanied by a responsible adult.
- Children over 8 can visit the library by themselves but cannot be left in sole charge of a younger sibling under 8.
- Children under 16 can borrow books from the adult library. Parents/carers/responsible adults should be aware that the library staff are not able to take on the role of censor.
- Children can use the public computer to research homework online or produce course work.
- Children under 8 must be supervised by a responsible adult when using the computer.
- If the child requires the toilet and the parent/carer/responsible adult is not in the library, the staff member should direct the child to the toilet.
- Parents/carers should be made aware of the hot water dispenser and asked to ensure their child/children are kept away from this area.
- If you witness a child being bullied or a child complains of being bullied, this is not acceptable behaviour, and you have a duty to do whatever you can to stop it. In the first instance, tell the bully that their behaviour is not acceptable and if necessary, ask them to leave.
- Staff vulnerability. See Appendix 1.

8 Visits by school classes and other groups:

- When a group from an external organisation visits the library/town hall, children remain the responsibility of the group leader or teacher, who would be expected to provide the required number of adults to supervise that age group. However, our duty of care still applies with regard to the safety of the premises.

9 Useful Contacts

A) Designated Authority for Safeguarding

Adult Safeguarding Team, Isle of Wight Council

Email: safeguardingconcerns@iow.gov.uk

Telephone No: 01983 814980

B) Isle of Wight Council Specialist Assessment Team (Adult Social Care Referral Team)

Telephone No: 01983 814980

Domestic Abuse Service (iow.gov.uk) for further support

C) Police

Emergency 999

Non-emergency 101

Telephone: 0808 2000247

www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

D) Hants Direct (24 Hours)

Telephone: 0300 3000117

SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

Appendix 1 – Staff vulnerability

Although our concern must always be with the safety of children and adults at risk, staff members and volunteers should also take care not to put themselves into a situation which could be misconstrued:

- Never allow a child to sit on your knee during Rhyme Time, Story Time or any other time.
- In a difficult situation involving a child, try to ensure that another member of the team listens/observes.
- Do not lead a child by the hand out of the library in search of a parent.
- Do not make arrangements to contact children outside of the library.
- Do not do things of a personal nature for a child.
- Always wear your staff/volunteer ID badge.
- If a child is obviously distressed, try and comfort but take into account the Safeguarding Policy and good practice requirements.