



# **Lostwithiel Town Council**

## **Child Protection Policy**

**Approved: September 2014**

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## Policy Statement

Lostwithiel Town Council is firmly committed to practices that protect children from harm. Staff in this Council recognize and accept our responsibilities to develop the awareness of the issues that may cause children harm.

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identify, have the right to protection from abuse.
- Any suspicion or allegation of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All staff working for the Lostwithiel Town Council have a responsibility to report concerns to the Town Clerk or Mayor.
- Any local amenity or volunteer group that comes under the mantle of Lostwithiel Town Council are aware and comply with the Child Protection Policy.
- The Child Welfare Officer is immediately informed if any child reports or suggests they may be the victim of Child Abuse.

Good child protection practice protects not only children, but also the staff who may come into contact with them. This is called a safeguarding culture.

The reason for creating this policy is

- Lostwithiel Town Council is aware that Child Abuse can occur anywhere and wants to ensure this organisation is as safe as possible for children and its employees.
- Any reports of Child Abuse may be dealt with in a professional, effective manner.

For the purpose of this policy a Child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children' Act 1989). However, this policy may also be used to protect vulnerable adults.

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The scope of this policy will include:

- Children undertaking work experience,
- Children participating in 'take a Child to Work days', an event promoted by some schools for children of all ages to spend a day at a parents workplace.
- Children attending events at any council owned property, including activities under the control of other groups.
- Children present at any Lostwithiel Town Council owned property/facilities, this will include Play Areas.

## **Good Practices**

All personnel should adhere to the following principles, and ensure that:

- All current Health and Safety Legislation applicable to any activity in which the Child will participate are strictly adhered to. This may include restricted or prohibited use of equipment.
  - Nominate an Officer to be the first point of contact for the Child whilst in the care of Lostwithiel Town Council
  - Children enjoy and benefit from any work experience with Lostwithiel Town Council.
  - Children are treated fairly and not subjected to bullying.
  - Personnel are good role models and do not drink alcohol or smoke when working with young people.
  - Treat all young people equally, this means giving both the more and less able similar attention, time, respect and dignity.
  - Respect the developmental stage of each young person and structure any tasks allocated to them accordingly.
  - Wherever possible conduct any training and meetings in an open environment, avoiding one to one contact in unobserved situations. If one to one meetings are unavoidable, ensure office doors are kept open at all times.
  - Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people.
  - Be aware of any medical conditions, food allergies, existing injuries and medicines that should be taken at specific times.
  - Ensure a qualified first aider or emergency medical support is available at all
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times, and the Child is aware of emergency procedures in the event of a fire alarm sounding.

- Any injury or incident is accurately recorded.
- Comply with any rules/recommended by a school or parent.
- Be totally sure that any instructions given to a child are appropriate and understandable.

## **Poor Practices**

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with one child away from others.
- Never engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Never allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Never allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Never make sexual suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Never reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Never allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Never do things of a personal nature for a child that they can do for themselves.
- Never give children gifts of any nature.
- Never indicate to any child that any activity or discussion is secret and should not be disclosed to anyone else.
- Never take photographs, videos or use any other photographic device to record images of any child without the prior consent of the child's parents/ carers.

## **Observations**

If any member of staff notices a child exhibits signs of physical injury, such as cuts and bruising, scratches etc. where a satisfactory explanation cannot be given, this should immediately be notified to the Responsible Officer and recorded.

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## **Disciplinary Procedures**

Any employee considered to be behaving inappropriately toward any child will be subject to immediate suspension and disciplinary procedures currently in place with Lostwithiel Town Council.

Any employee with concerns that they may be mistakenly reported for or suspected of any behaviour that may be deemed appropriate, must request an immediate interview with the Appropriate Officer, who will instigate the appropriate investigations for the protection of that employee.

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