

# **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**Pakenham Parish Council**

**Approved: February 2026**

**Reviewed: February 2027**

## **1. Policy Statement**

Pakenham Parish Council strongly believes that all children, young people and adults at risk have the right to protection from all forms of abuse and harm, including sexual abuse, harassment, exploitation, neglect, and any other harm that may impact their safety and wellbeing. It has as a zero-tolerance policy for any abusive or harassing behaviour and is committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activities associated with the Council.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and every councillor, lay member, volunteer, and staff member who supports us whatever their role, will play their part in keeping people safe.

This policy sets out how Pakenham Parish Council operates to keep adults at risk of abuse or neglect, and children safe from abuse. The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

## **2. Definitions & Recognising Possible Signs of Child/Adult Abuse**

For the purposes of this policy 'Safeguarding' is the overarching term to describe what Pakenham Parish Council has put in place to prevent children and adults at risk being harmed and how it will respond when, despite every best effort, harm does happen.

- A child/ young person is any person under the age of 18 years.
- An adult at risk is someone who is aged 18 years or over and who is;
  - In need of care and support, and;
  - Experiencing or being at risk of abuse and neglect and;
  - As a result of those care needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

## **3. Responsibilities of the Parish Council**

Pakenham Parish Council will create an environment where everyone feels able to raise safeguarding concerns and feels supported with their safeguarding responsibilities. The Council will:

- Ensure that all councillors, members of staff and volunteers are familiar with this policy and associated procedures, understanding their responsibilities therein
- Ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that everyone is safe and secure in any facility or environment it provides or facilitates

- Raise awareness of safeguarding to ensure that everyone can play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect
- Work with other agencies within the framework of both the Local Safeguarding Board and the Suffolk Safeguarding Adults Board
- Ensure all contractors/partners working directly with the Parish Council meets the safeguarding standards as expected by the Council (A copy of this safeguarding policy will be given to any contractor/partner)
- Review this policy annually or in the light of any changes to Government legislation and guidance
- Ensure records are kept of any referrals and any notes, records of conversations concerning that referral are kept and stored in a secure place with access limited to designated people.

A Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) will be appointed from within the Council. The Council will ensure that the DSO undertakes endorsed safeguarding children and safeguarding adults training for this role and that they attend refresher training every three years.

#### **4. Safeguarding Principles**

This policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- Empowerment – Supporting individuals to make their own decisions
- Prevention – Taking action before harm occurs
- Proportionality – Responding appropriately to the level of risk
- Protection – Supporting those in greatest need
- Partnership – Working with communities and professionals
- Accountability – Transparency in safeguarding practices.

#### **5. Related Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Parish Council policies: Equality and Diversity, Data Protection, Complaints Policy and any others deemed appropriate.

#### **6. Types of Abuse**

##### **Safeguarding Adults:**

The primary legal framework for adult safeguarding in the UK is the Care Act 2014, which places a statutory duty on local authorities to make enquiries (or cause others to) if an adult with care and support needs is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect and is unable to protect themselves as a result of those needs. The following are types of abuse:

- Physical Abuse – Hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint
- Sexual Abuse – Rape, sexual assault, sexual acts without consent, inappropriate touching
- Psychological/Emotional Abuse – Threats, intimidation, humiliation, isolation.
- Financial/Material Abuse – Theft, fraud, misuse of property or benefits

- Neglect and Acts of Omission – Ignoring medical or physical care needs, withholding necessities
- Discriminatory Abuse – Harassment or unfair treatment based on race, gender, disability, etc
- Organisational Abuse – Poor care practices in institutions or services
- Modern Slavery – Human trafficking, forced labour, domestic servitude
- Self-Neglect – Failure to care for oneself, including hoarding or not seeking help
- Domestic Abuse – Includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse, and coercive control.

### **Safeguarding Children:**

Child safeguarding legislation in the UK is primarily based on the Children Act 1989 and 2004, alongside the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. The following are types of abuse:

- Physical Abuse – Causing physical harm through hitting, shaking etc.
- Emotional Abuse – Persistent emotional maltreatment, rejection, or humiliation
- Sexual Abuse – Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities
- Neglect – Failure to meet a child’s basic physical and emotional needs
- Exploitation – Using children for financial gain, sexual purposes, or criminal activity
- Online Abuse – Grooming, cyberbullying, and exposure to harmful content
- Radicalisation – Encouraging extremist views or terrorism-related activities
- Child Criminal Exploitation – Involving children in criminal activities like drug trafficking
- Child Sexual Exploitation – Manipulating or coercing children into sexual activity.

The Parish Council publishes this policy on its website and disseminates it as appropriate. The policy will be reviewed annually or whenever there are changes in law or statutory guidance.

### **Appendix 1 - Safeguarding Procedure**

Suffolk - Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

#### **Safeguarding Concern identified/suspected**

- Please dial 999 if the person is in immediate danger
- If it’s a safeguarding concern but not an immediate emergency, speak with the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)
- If appropriate, the DSO will seek further advice from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Tel: 03456 061499 or Customer First if it is out of hours Tel: 0808 8004005

## **Making a Referral:**

**Concerns about a Child** - if there is a concern about a child or a young person, the DSO can complete and submit a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) using the secure Suffolk Children and Young People's Portal:

### **[CYP Portal - Suffolk County Council](#)**

**Concerns about an Adult** - If there is a safeguarding concern about an adult, the DSO can make a referral using the Suffolk County Council Adult Care Portal.

### **[Adult Portal - Suffolk County Council](#)**

These Portals are easy to use, secure spaces where the DSO can complete and send forms directly to the right services team.

Things to remember:

- Reassure the person concerned
- Listen to what they are saying
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief
- Tell them that the information will be treated seriously
- Ask questions to ensure the full facts are gathered but do not start to investigate or ask detailed probing questions
- Don't promise to keep it a secret
- Tell the child or adult at risk what you are going to do next to get help to keep them safe
- Record what you have been told/witnessed as soon as possible
- Comply with the Parish Council's Data Protection Policy.

## **Allegations Made Against a Councillor/Volunteer/Paid Member of Staff in relation to a child or young person**

If the concern relates to a councillor, volunteer or paid member of staff at the Council, the DSO will consult with/make a referral to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) on 0300 123 2044. If the DSO is implicated the Parish Clerk will take the lead.