Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure

Name of Organisation	Owston Ferry Parish Council
Telephone	07876194049
Date Policy Agreed	
Date of Next Review	
Signature	
Name and telephone number of Designated Protection Person	Cllr Pettman 07478732105
Name and telephone number of Deputy Designated Protection Person	Cllr Coy 07880258242

1. Policy statement on safeguarding children

The values held by Owston Ferry Parish Council are:

Owston Ferry Parish Council recognises that all children have a right to protection from abuse. Owston Ferry Parish Council takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people. We will:

- respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse and neglect;
- provide parents and children with the opportunity to voice their concerns;
- have a system for dealing with concerns about possible abuse and neglect.

2. The policy

Owston Ferry Parish Council recognises that many children and young people today are the victims of physical, emotional, sexual abuse and/or neglect. Accordingly Owston Ferry Parish Council has adopted the following policy guidelines. The policy sets out agreed guidelines for responding to allegations of abuse/neglect, including those made against staff and volunteers. These guidelines have been prepared in accordance with North Lincolnshire Children's MARS Policies and Procedures. They will be kept under review and be supported by appropriate training.

The policy applies to all staff and volunteers who act on behalf of Owston Ferry Parish Council and who work with children. Every individual has a responsibility to inform the designated person, in respect of child protection or their deputy, of concerns relating to safeguarding children. The designated person should decide if the concerns should be communicated to North Lincolnshire Children's Services or the Police. However all staff and volunteers can contact North Lincolnshire Children's Services directly if necessary.

3. Definitions of Abuse (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023)

A concern should be raised if any of the following circumstances have or are happening to a child:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Neglect
- Domestic abuse including controlling or coercive behaviour

Physical abuse	A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocation or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child
Emotional abuse	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone
Sexual abuse	Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children

Child sexual exploitation	Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victims needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
Child criminal exploitation	Child criminal exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
Neglect	The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: • provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); • protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; • ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or • ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Domestic abuse including controlling or coercive behaviour	Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse. Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and adolescent to parent violence. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Domestic abuse has a significant impact on children and young people. Children may experience domestic abuse directly, as victims in their own right, or indirectly due to the impact the abuse has on others such as the non-abusive parent. Also known as coercive control, the use of control and coercion in relationships is a form of domestic abuse and, since December 2015, a criminal offence. It is described as: • Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour; and • Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim Coercive control is a form of abuse that involves multiple behaviours and tactics which reinforce each other and are used to isolate, manipulate and regulate the victim. This pattern of abuse creates high levels of anxiety and fear. This has a significant impact on children and young people, both directly, as victims in their own right, and indirectly due to the impact the abuse has on the non-abusive parent. Children may also be forced to participate in controlling or coercive behaviour towards the parent who is being abused.

4. What you should do if you suspect abuse

a. You must report concerns as soon as possible to Cllr Rebecca Pettman Designated Child Protection Person on 07478732105 who is nominated by Owston Ferry Parish Council to act on their behalf in referring allegations of suspicions of abuse or neglect to North Lincolnshire Children's Services. In the absence of the designated person, the matter should be brought to the attention of the deputy designated person Cllr Bridget Coy on 07880258242. If it is an emergency, and the designated person(s) cannot be contacted, then North Lincolnshire Children's Services or the police should be contacted at the numbers given below. For further information, see Helping Children and Families 2020-2024 (northlincscmars.co.uk) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (northlincscmars.co.uk).

b. If the suspicions relate to the designated person, then the deputy, North Lincolnshire Children's Services or the Police should be contacted.
c. Suspicions should not be discussed with anyone, other than those named above.
d. It is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to North Lincolnshire Children's Services. However this policy should be followed where possible.

5. Recording

a. Write down exactly what the child has said in their own words. Write down the conversation held, where it was held, when and what was happening beforehand. Alternatively write down what you have observed, details of any witnesses, location, and your specific concern if you believe that a child has been abused or neglected. Record dates and times of the events and when the record was made. Keep all notes secure.
b. Report your discussion as soon as possible to the designated person.
c. Allegations against staff or volunteers will be investigated following local procedures. For further information see the Children's MARS Managing Allegations procedures

6. Maintenance and security of records

Retention	• For concerns raised and acted upon, a record should be kept until the child is 25 years old. • For concerns not acted upon, a record should be kept for 6 years after the child has ceased association with the organisation. • For concerns regarding staff or volunteers (even if they are no longer associated with the organisation) they should be kept on their personal file until retirement age 67 years old or for 10 years whichever is longer.
Storage	• Records are kept electronically and password protected in line with GDPR regulations.
Destruction	• Confidential waste will be destroyed through the use of an approved waste company.

7. Volunteer recruitment

Owston Ferry Parish Council undertakes to adopt best practice guidelines for recruiting volunteers and we further undertake to:

- specify what the role is and what tasks it involves
- request identification documents if appropriate
- as a minimum meet and chat with the applicant before they commence work
- where appropriate, when regular unsupervised contact with children is likely to take place, (Owston Ferry Parish Council) will request and check references and ask that individuals apply for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in line with local Children's MARS for North Lincolnshire procedures.

8. E safeguarding and acceptable use policy for electronic equipment

- No electronic equipment is available for use by anyone other than the Clerk.
- No photos taken of any children without the permission of the parent/guardian.

- Social media is managed by the Parish Clerk and under certain circumstances a nominated individual.

9. Whistle blowing procedures

It may be very hard to report a concern but as with all other difficulties people will come across, the safety and protection of a child at risk must be the priority in any decision that is made.

Owston Ferry Parish Council is committed to ensuring that all individuals have the ability to raise genuine concerns in good faith without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

The person to approach with regard to 'whistle blowing' is the Designated Protection Person or the Chair of Personnel.

10. Contact information

	Name	**Telephone Number**
Main Contact for the Organisation	Clare Boyall Parish Clerk	07876194049
Designated Protection Person	Cllr Rebecca Pettman	07478732105
Deputy Designated Protection Person	Cllr Bridget Coy	07880258242
National or support body for the organisation	NALC	0207 6371865
North Lincolnshire Children Services Church Square House Church Square Scunthorpe DN15 6XQ		01724 296500 or 01724 296555 (extended hours)
Police Non Emergency		101
Police Emergency		999
Local Authority Designated Officer Independent Reviewing Service		01724 298293