**WOODLAND PARISH COUNCIL**

**SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**Updated June 2025**

**1. Purpose**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect.

This policy defines how Woodland Parish Council operates to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who enters our premises including children, young people and adults at risk involved as visitors and/or as participants in all activities and events. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our trustees, volunteers, and staff.

**2. Definitions**

Children and young people are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old. This policy will apply to all staff, contractors and volunteers and will be used to support their work.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

• Protecting children from maltreatment

• Preventing impairment of children’s health and development

• Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

• Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding adult at risk of abuse or neglect

For the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to Section 42 of the Care Act 2014:

• has care and support needs

• is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect

• as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

Persons affected

• All Councillors, volunteers, and staff.

• All those attending any activity or service that being delivered by Woodland Parish Council

• All visitors and contractors.

**3. Policy principles**

There can be no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect. All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. People who are eligible to receive health and community care services may be additionally vulnerable to the violation of these rights by reason of disability, impairment, age, or illness Woodland Parish Council has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

Woodland Parish Council recognises that under the Care Act 2014, it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse. It also recognises its responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

Safeguarding

Woodland Parish Council is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.

Woodland Parish Council is aware of the work of their local safeguarding Board/Partnership and other support organisations on the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of children and adults at risk. The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

Woodland Parish Council is committed to the following principles:

• The welfare of the child, young person or adult at risk is paramount.

• All children, young people and adults at risk have the right to protection from abuse.

• Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and

• All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be properly reported to the relevant internal and external authorities and dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

**4. Procedures**

All members of the Parish Council will familiarise themselves with safeguarding responsibilities, undertake training where appropriate on safeguarding issues including;

A. whistleblowing where it is available and offered by their local safeguarding policy;

Purpose

B. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect.

C. This policy defines how Woodland Parish Council operates to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

D. We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who enters our premises including children, young people and adults at risk involved as visitors and/or as participants in all activities and events. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our Councillors, volunteers, and staff.

Definitions

E. Children and young people are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old. This policy will apply to all staff, contractors and volunteers and will be used to support their work.

F. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

G. Protecting children from maltreatment

H. Preventing impairment of children’s health and development

I. Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

J. Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding

K. Adult at risk of abuse or neglect

L. For the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to Section 42 of the Care Act 2014:

M. has care and support needs

N. is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect

O. as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

P. If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

Persons affected

Q. All Councillors, volunteers, and staff.

R. board/partnership or other local support organisation and ensure that they understand the principles set out in this policy.

S. All members of the Parish Council will work together to promote a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting welfare to be addressed.

T. All members of the Parish Council, helpers or other volunteers will not have unsupervised access to children or adults at risk unless appropriately vetted.

Safeguarding

AA The Parish Council will follow safe recruitment practices.

BB A member of the PC will be appointed to be responsible for child and adult at risk safeguarding matters. This person will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the relevant safeguarding agency.

CC The named person is Kate Wade. This shall be reviewed annually at the AGM.

DD All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child or adult at risk will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately. The appointed person will know who to contact and where to go for support and advice in relation to an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children or adults at risk who has:

• Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or adult at risk or may have harmed a child or adult at risk.

• Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or adult at risk; or

• Behaved towards a child (or children) or adult at risk in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or adults at risk.

Woodland Parish Council will carry out an annual review of this policy. Next review is due in June 2026

**Please raise safeguarding concerns to**

**Kate Wade**

**Safeguarding Lead**

**07528573503**

**or**

**email clerk@woodlandparishcouncil**

**Or contact**

**Durham County Council Social Care Direct – 03000 26 79 79**

**(To report an adult protection matter or to discuss a concern)**

**First Contact - 03000 267 979**

**(If you have a concern about a child)**