Kirton in Lindsey Town Council

Policy 13: Safeguarding Children Policy

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure

Name of Organisation	Kirton in Lindsey Town Council
Address	Diamond Jubilee Town Hall, High Street, Kirton in Lindsey, North Lincolnshire, DN21 4LZ
Telephone	01652 648978
Date Policy Agreed	28th October 2026 – *FC2610/08 v20261*
Date of Next Review	October 2027
Signature	Town Mayor: Town Clerk:
Name and telephone number of Designated Protection Person	Neil Taylor-Matson 01652 648978 or 07518 284173
Name and telephone number of Deputy Designated Protection Person	Cllr Hazel Fox – Mayor 07966 787044

1. Policy statement on safeguarding children

The values held by Kirton in Lindsey Town Council are:

Kirton in Lindsey Town Council recognises that all children have a right to protection from abuse. Kirton in Lindsey Town 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; including child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, domestic abuse and controlling and coercive behaviour;
- 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

Kirton in Lindsey Town Council recognises that many children and young people today are the victims of physical, emotional, sexual abuse and/or neglect. They may also be victims of child exploitation, domestic abuse including coercive control and other types of abuse such as Honour Based Abuse, Forced Marriage and/or Female Genital Mutilation. Accordingly Kirton in Lindsey Town 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 Kirton in Lindsey Town Council and who work with children. Every individual has a responsibility to inform the designated person, in respect of safeguarding 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	As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, 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 Neil Taylor-Matson Designated Child Protection Person on 01652 648978 0r 07518 284173 who is nominated by Kirton in Lindsey Town 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 Hazel Fox on 07966 787044. 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 the One Family Approach - Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire document and Children's MARS Policy and Procedures for Assessing Need and Providing Help

b. If the allegations relate to the designated person, then the deputy designated person, North Lincolnshire Children's Services or the Police should be contacted.

c. Concerns or allegations 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 or the police if they have concerns or an allegation has been made. However this policy should be followed where possible.

e. Allegations against staff or volunteers will be investigated following local procedures. The Local Authority Designated Officer should be contacted and further information can be found at Children's MARS Procedures for Managing Allegations Against People who work with children

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 or the deputy designated person.

c. If an allegation has been made about a staff member or volunteer, write down exactly what you have been told or have witnessed including what is outlined in the 'What should you do if you suspect abuse' above if applicable

6. Maintenance of records

The retention, storage and destruction of records where they relate to child welfare concerns or concerns about possible risk posed by members, officers or volunteers will be in line with the policy of Kirton in Lindsey Town Council on the retention of information.

Hard copy records will be stored in a locked cabinet only accessible by the Clerk. Digital records will be stored on electronic systems only accessible by the Clerk. Records which have reached the time of disposal will be shredded by the Clerk if in hard copy and deleted from electronic systems by the Clerk where stored digitally meeting the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations.

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	• Hard copy records will be stored in a locked cabinet only accessible by the Clerk. • Digital records will be stored on electronic systems only accessible by the Clerk.
Destruction	Records which have reached the time of disposal will be shredded by the Clerk if in hard copy and deleted from electronic systems by the Clerk where stored digitally meeting the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations.

7. Volunteer recruitment

Kirton in Lindsey Town 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, Kirton in Lindsey Town 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. eSafeguarding and acceptable use policy for electronic equipment

Digital equipment owned by Kirton in Lindsey Town Council, including desktop computer, laptop, mobile phone and other devices which connect to the World Wide Web are only used for the purposes of carrying out the duties and responsibilities of Town Council work.

Employees and volunteers are made aware that random checks authorised by the Council can be carried out by any member of the Town Council to ensure compliance.

Access to all digital equipment is by personal username and password which is not to be shared, except in a time of emergency when access to a sealed envelope will be authorised by emergency contingency measures.

Information from digital systems is stand alone, backed up on external hard drive and stored in a secure fireproof safe.

Any photographs taken at events or to publicise the work of Kirton in Lindsey is done so only with explicit written permission and information is provided on how the images will be used, published or stored.

Where possible general photographs of events or places are taken in a manner not to identify individuals unless it is a requirement for which explicit written permission (including usage and storage) is obtained.

Kirton in Lindsey Town Council provides no access to sources of public wi-fi provision.

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.

Any person with concerns or wanting to raise any issues about Kirton in Lindsey Town Council and safeguarding where it refers to any member or officer of Kirton in Lindsey Town Council or about the practices of the Council can contact the following services in confidence. These organisations work independently of Kirton in Lindsey Town Council and can assure you of commitment to investigation any issue which you raise believing it to be true, and that they will treat you fairly and keep the matter confidential.

Children's safeguarding concerns – North Lincolnshire Children's Services, Church Square House, Church Square, Scunthorpe, DN15 6XQ, Telephone 01724 296500 or 01724 296555 (extended hours) or the Police on 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergencies only)

General practice or other complaints about Kirton in Lindsey Town Council or its members and officers – North Lincolnshire Council Legal and Democratic Services, Church Square House, Church Square, Scunthorpe, DN15 6XQ, Telephone 01724 296230

10. Contact information

	Name	Telephone Number
Main Contact for the Organisation	Neil Taylor-Matson	01652 648978
Designated Protection Person	Neil Taylor-Matson	01652 648978
Deputy Designated Protection Person	Cllr Hazel Fox (Mayor)	07966 787044
National or support body for the organisation	East Riding and Northern Lincolnshire Local Councils Association (via Tom Clay)	01652 661617
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 (LADO) Independent Reviewing Service		01724 298293