



MAYLAND PARISH COUNCIL

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

Adopted on 12th March 2024
Review March 2026

Principles

1. Mayland Parish Council is committed to the safeguarding of all children, young people and adults at risk with whom it has contact.
2. Everyone involved in the care of children, young people and adults at risk has a responsibility for the protection of those individuals from harm. It is also essential that we honour the trust of those who allow us to care for their children, young people and adults at risk.
3. There is a duty placed on public agencies under the Human Rights Act (1998) to intervene to protect the rights of citizens. Also the Children Act (1989) makes it clear that the welfare of the child is paramount and that everyone involved in the care of children has a responsibility to protect those children from harm.
4. In order to protect everyone from potential and actual abuse it is necessary for all staff and volunteers to have an understanding of the issues involved and that appropriate procedures are in place that are shared and understood by all concerned.
5. Mayland Parish Council safeguarding policy arises from the following principles:
 - The welfare of the child, young person or adult at risk is paramount;
 - Everyone, regardless of age, gender, disability or ethnic origin has a right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation;
 - It is not your responsibility as members of Mayland Parish Council to decide whether or not abuse is occurring, but it is your responsibility to act on any concerns and do something about it.

Objectives

6. The key objectives of this policy are to:
 - Explain the responsibilities Mayland Parish Council and its councillors, staff, and committee members have in respect of safeguarding children and adults at risk.

- Provide councillors, staff and committee members with an overview of child and adult safeguarding.
- Provide a clear procedure that will be implemented where a child or adult at risk safeguarding issue arises.

7. The Designated Safeguarding Office Essex (contact details below) whose role is to take action in respect of reports concerning safeguarding and / or poor practice and to lead on all matters to do with safeguarding.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is:

Essex Website:

<http://dnn.essex.gov.uk/escb2/engb/workingwithchildren/concernsaboutthewelfareofachild.aspx>

Tel: 0345 603 7627 (Children & Families Hub) Tel: 0345 606 1212 (Urgent and 24-hour contact)

Email: escb@essex.gov.uk Email: emergency.dutyteamoutofhours@essex.gov.uk

Definitions

8. A child is a child before their birth (i.e. during pregnancy) and until their 18th birthday.

9. An adult at risk is any adult who needs community care services because of mental or other disability, age or illness and who are, or may be, unable to take care of themselves against harm or exploitation. The term replaces “vulnerable adult” and “alleged victim”.

Identifying abuse and what to do if abuse is suspected.

10. The term ‘abuse’ is used to describe various ways that someone can be harmed or mistreated.

11. Abuse can happen anywhere and at any time, but research indicates that the perpetrators of abuse are likely to be known and trusted by the child or young person. For adults at risk evidence suggests that the perpetrators of abuse are often professional carers or other adults at risk.

12. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of any person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Participants may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger e.g. via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, a child or children. Victims of abuse frequently suffer more than one category of abuse.

13. The main forms of abuse encountered by adults at risk are:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional/Psychological Abuse
- Financial/material Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Discrimination
- Institutional/Organisational

- Domestic Violence, including honour-based violence
- Modern slavery
- Self-neglect Detailed

14. The main forms of abuse encountered by children and young people are:

- Neglect
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse

What to do if abuse is suspected

15. If any member of Mayland Parish Council suspect's abuse is taking place they should immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will decide whether or not to take the matter further. A log of the concern must be kept.

16. If the child is at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), please report the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, however if you consider that the child is at immediate risk as if so you might need to contact the Police on 999 and call the Children and Families Hub on Tel: 0345 603 7627 (Children & Families Hub) Tel: 0345 606 1212 (Urgent and 24-hour contact)

CSE is never the victim's fault, even if there is some form of exchange: all children and young people under the age of 18 have a right to be safe and should be protected from harm submission when we have a concern that:

- someone may be involved in the grooming or sexual exploitation of a child or multiple children or,
- we suspect that a location is being used for the grooming of, or sexual exploitation of children, for example private dwelling, car park, the fair or a hotel.

If Mayland Parish Council have concerns that a child is at risk of CSE and know that the child is open to Children's Social Work the Designated Safeguarding Officer will liaise with the child's social worker about our concerns so that they can complete the CSE risk assessment tool and ensure any information and concerns are collated within the CSE risk assessment tool.

17. Mayland Parish Council is expected to be vigilant and to identify ways of preventing people from becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism. Mayland Parish Council acknowledges that a radicalisation process includes exposure of an individual to extremist viewpoints that may eventually influence the person to carry out an act of violent extremism or terrorism. This could take weeks, months or even years. It is possible to intervene during this process and stop someone becoming a terrorist or supporting violent extremist activity.

Violent extremism is where people seek to justify or promote terrorism or encourage others to commit such acts. If you believe someone is at risk of radicalisation you can help them obtain support and prevent them becoming involved in terrorism by raising your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will then consider making a referral. You are expected to speak to the designated safeguarding lead to discuss your concerns.

18. If it is felt that there is a significant risk to a child / at risk adult and further investigation is required in order to keep them safe then the matter must be referred to the MASH team.

The MASH consultation line may be contacted at any time for advice and consultation. In the event of a referral to MASH all relevant information must be shared, including copies of correspondence, log of previous concerns and notes of any conversations with the child, their family or other staff.

19. If it is felt that further investigation is required in order to keep an adult at risk safe then the matter must be referred to Care Direct. Care Direct may be contacted at any time for advice and consultation. In the event of a referral to Care Direct to care all relevant information must be shared, including copies of correspondence, log of previous concerns and notes of any conversations with the adult at risk, their family or other staff.

20. The General Data Protection Regulation is not a barrier to information sharing where doing so is necessary to safeguard children or an adult at risk.

21. In the event that the designated safeguarding champion is not available or contactable this should not delay action being taken to protect a child or adult at risk may contact the local MASH or Care Direct to raise their concerns.

22. If there are any concerns about the immediate safety of a child or an adult at risk then the police must be contacted on 999 without delay.

Allegations against staff /Councillors

23. Any suspicion that a child, or an adult at risk, has been abused by a member of staff/Councillors or a volunteer must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer otherwise known as the Alerting Manager, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child or adult at risk in question and any other child who may be at risk.

24. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will refer the allegation to MASH who may involve the police, or will refer directly to the police if out-of-hours.

25. For abuse (or allegations of abuse) of children, Children's Social Care and the designated safeguarding officer will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose responsibility it is to:

- Provide advice and guidance;
- Liaise with the police and other agencies;
- Provide assistance in discussions regarding suspension and referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Details for the Essex LADO including a referral form can be found at: Essex Website: <http://dnn.essex.gov.uk/escb2/engb/workingwithchildren/concernsaboutthewelfareofachild.aspx>

Tel: 0345 603 7627 (Children & Families Hub) Tel: 0345 606 1212 (Urgent and 24-hour contact)

Email: escb@essex.gov.uk Email: emergency.dutyteamoutofhours@essex.gov.uk

26. The parents or carers of the child or adult at risk will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from MASH / or the police.

27. If the designated safeguarding officer (safeguarding champion) is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the concern must be made directly to MASH

28. Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation

- A child protection / safeguarding adult investigation
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation

Internal enquiries and suspension

29. The designated safeguarding champion will make an immediate decision about whether any individual suspected of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and Social Care enquiries.

30. Where an individual is suspended it is advised that other employees / volunteers should have no contact with them until enquiries have concluded.

31. Irrespective of the findings of Social Care or police enquiries the organisation will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated. The welfare of the child or adult at risk should remain of paramount importance throughout.

Capacity

32. N.B. The following section applies only to adults. As a general rule a child cannot be assessed for capacity under the Mental Capacity Act (2005) except in specific circumstances. (For more information on this you must access appropriate training).

33. In accordance with the Mental Capacity Act (2005), public agencies work from a presumption that an adult has capacity to make their own decisions unless a person's apparent comprehension of a situation gives rise to doubt. It is the right of adults who have capacity to make their own choices, irrespective of how wise we might consider that decision to be.

However, where:

- A crime is suspected or;
- Allegations involve a member of staff, paid carer or volunteer, or;
- There is a risk of significant harm to that person or any other adult at risk then relevant agencies must be informed and allegations must be investigated whether the alleged victim is willing to take an active part in the process or not.

34. Where adults lack the capacity to safeguard themselves, other people will need to make those decisions, and to ensure that this is done appropriately you may wish to ask the following agencies to support you: Essex County Council and Maldon District Council.

Record keeping

35. Any records kept in relation to safeguarding concerns for a child or an adult at risk must be kept securely and confidentially in an agreed place. Records must be factual, accurate and clearly written in black ink or typed, with a legible date, time and signature.

Additional related policies

36. Mayland Parish Council also has policies on the following related topics which all staff and councillors must be familiar with:

- Health and Safety
- General Data Protection Regulation
- Information Sharing
- Confidentiality