



## WEST BLETCHLEY COUNCIL

### Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy

#### 1. Statement of intent

West Bletchley Council is committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of every person in our community, of whatever age. It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect of every member of our community, and particularly the abuse of those most vulnerable among us, including children and young people. The welfare of the child is paramount. All children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children' is defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015* as:

- Protecting Children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or 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

Keeping children safe is everybody's business. It is the additional responsibility of West Bletchley Council staff to raise awareness, provide support and take appropriate action. All workers have a duty to report any child protection or safeguarding concerns, and to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm. There is guidance for staff to ensure that concerns are properly dealt with, and that information is shared appropriately with relevant agencies.

All staff will receive appropriate safeguarding children training to ensure they are aware of their role in the recognition of abuse or neglect and of the appropriate procedures to follow. Staff and volunteers are expected at all times to conform with good practice in their work, undertaking mandatory safeguarding training at a level appropriate to their role. *West Bletchley Councillors will be given the opportunity to attend safeguarding training provided for staff.*

West Bletchley Council staff will work in accordance with the multi-agency child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through Milton Keynes Safeguarding Children Board (MKSCB), which are based on the statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DfE 2015).

It is our policy that no-one shall work with children and young people within West Bletchley Council who:

- Has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning an offence against children as listed in the First Schedule of the Children and Young People's Act 1933; or
- Has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children and young people.
- Is included on the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) barred lists of individuals unsuitable for working with children or adults.

This means that:

- West Bletchley Council will comply with HM Government recommended practices, by taking all reasonable steps to ensure that persons who have been convicted or have received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children or young people shall not undertake work with children and young people under the auspices of West Bletchley Council.
- Those responsible for the appointment will ensure that enhanced checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are undertaken for all eligible staff and volunteers who work with children and young people under the auspices of West Bletchley Council.
- Enhanced DBS checks for eligible staff and volunteers will then be carried out at least every five years.

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

The named Child Protection Representative for West Bletchley Council is:

- Helen Hupton, Clerk to the Council

The Deputies are:

- Michael McGann, Community Resource Centre Co-ordinator
- Trish Hunter, Head of Council Services

These persons will take on the responsibility for:

- Ensuring the policy is being put into practice.
- Being the first point of contact for child protection issues.
- Keeping a record of any concern expressed about child protection issues.
- Where necessary, taking further steps, such as referring concerns to other agencies including referral to the Milton Keynes Multi Agency Referral Hub (MASH) and completion of the Children and Families Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF). The MASH can be contacted on 01908 2530169/253170 (email [children@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:children@milton-keynes.gov.uk)) or out of hours on 01908 265545.
- Ensuring that paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate training and support on safeguarding children and young people.
- Ensuring that everyone involved with the organisation is aware of the identity of the Child Protection representatives.

All workers have a duty to report any child protection or safeguarding concerns, and to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.

In the first instance staff or volunteers will discuss their concerns with the Child Protection Representative or one of the deputies to agree the appropriate action.

### **3. Safer Recruitment and Selection**

It is our policy that all staff and volunteers, temporary personnel and helpers who have contact with children and young people will be subject to a careful and rigorous selection and vetting process with the elements listed below.

- Completion of an application form and checking the person's identity by their birth certificate or passport, something with a photograph if possible.
- Taking up references, preferably someone who has experience of their work or contact with children
- An interview by at least two people.
- Identifying reasons for gaps in employment or inconsistencies.
- Carrying out enhanced checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service for all eligible staff, via an appropriate local umbrella agency. The Disclosure and Barring Service is able to provide checks on the following:
  - Police criminal records via the Police National Computer
  - The DBS barred lists of individuals unsuitable for working with children or adults. Information on this can be obtained from the DBS at [www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check](http://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check)
- Allowing no unsupervised access to children and young people until this has been completed.
- Advice is sought about recruiting someone with a criminal record, and a risk assessment undertaken.
- A comprehensive induction process that includes our child protection policy and procedures.

### **4. Code of conduct for Staff and Volunteers**

All staff and volunteers must follow the Council's code of conduct for staff and volunteers working with children and young people.

### **5. Working with External Agencies**

External agencies who work in partnership with West Bletchley Council to provide services for children and young people or families will be required to provide evidence of their child protection/safeguarding policy or commit their staff to adopt this policy.

### **6. Contractors or visitors to Council premises**

Contractors undertaking work on behalf of the Council and any visitors to Council premises will NOT be left unsupervised with children and young people at any time.

### **7. Review**

This policy will be reviewed by the Child Protection Representative on an annual basis to ensure it is meeting its aims.

**Adopted June 2017**