Marlesford Community Council Safeguarding Policy 2026

1. Purpose

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

This policy defines how Marlesford Community 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 any of 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.

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 paragraph 14.2 of the Care Act 2015:

- 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.

3. Persons affected

- All trustees, volunteers, and staff
- All those attending any activity or service that is being delivered from the Community Centre Committee property or other properties under our management
- All visitors and contractors

4. Policy principles

There can be no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect adults at risk of abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, and mistreatment. 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.

Marlesford Community Centre Committee has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

Marlesford Community Centre Committee recognises that under the Care Act 2015, 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.

Marlesford Community Centre Committee is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.

Marlesford Community Centre Committee is aware of the work of the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership and other support organisations on the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of adults vulnerable from abuse. The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

Marlesford Community 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.

5. Procedures

a. All members of the committee will familiarise themselves with safeguarding responsibilities, undertake training on safeguarding issues including whistleblowing where it is available and offered by their local safeguarding board/partnership or other local support organisation **and** ensure that they understand the principles set out in this policy at 3 above.

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

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

d. The Community Centre Committee will follow safe recruitment practices.

e. A member of the committee 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.

The named person is Lesley Bensley

f. 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 or concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children or adult 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.

g. The committee will ensure that all hirers of the Community Centre or properties hired out on behalf of the Community Centre Committee have signed a hiring agreement. This will require all hirers who wish to use the properties for activities which include children and adults at risk, other than for hire for private parties arranged for invited friends and family, to produce a copy of their Safeguarding Policy and evidence that they have carried out relevant checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

h. The Community Centre management committee will carry out a biennial review of this policy.

Signed : L. Bunstey

On behalf of Marlesford Community Council Committee

Date : 14 January2026

Review Date : 13 January 2028