Berryfields Parish Council

Safeguarding Policy

1. Policy Statement and Scope

Berryfields Parish Council (BPC) believes that children, young people and adults at risk have the right to live their lives to the fullest potential, to be safe, listened to, treated with dignity and respect, and protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation. We will take all reasonably practicable steps to promote safe practice in our services, venues and activities, and to safeguard those who may be at risk.

This policy applies to everyone working for or on behalf of BPC (employees, councillors, volunteers, agency workers, contractors and partners) and to all Council-run or commissioned services, events and venues, including Roman Park Hall and the Parish Council Youth Club.

Specific safeguarding arrangements for Roman Park Hall and the Youth Club are set out in Sections 18-21 and should be read alongside the Hall Access & Safeguarding Protocol.

2. Legal and Local Framework

BPC recognises its responsibilities under relevant legislation and guidance, including:

- Children Acts 1989 and 2004, where applicable
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Care Act 2014 (safeguarding adults)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended
- Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR
- Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Trust), where applicable
- Current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) guidance.

BPC operates in accordance with relevant Buckinghamshire safeguarding procedures and local referral pathways, including First Response and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Local contact details are set out in Section 15.

3. Principles

- **Welfare is paramount**
- **Prevention first:** create safe environments and culture
- **Proportionality:** act on risk using the least intrusive response compatible with safety
- **Partnership:** work with statutory services and local partners
- **Accountability & transparency:** clear roles, routes and records.
- **Non-discrimination:** equal protection regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex or sexual orientation.

4. Definitions

- **Child / young person:** under 18.
- **Adult at risk:** an adult who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and as a result is unable to protect themselves.

- **Abuse (children):** physical, emotional, sexual, neglect. Extended risks include Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), County Lines, extremism/radicalisation, online abuse and child-on-child abuse.

5. Prevention

BPC will:

- Maintain safe, welcoming environments where people feel able to raise concerns
- Provide clear codes of conduct for staff, councillors, volunteers and contractors
- Embed safeguarding messaging (including e-safety) in youth-facing activity
- Ensure appropriate supervision at Council premises and events, with no inappropriate unsupervised 1:1 contact.
- Ensure access to Roman Park Hall is appropriately controlled during private hires, Council-managed activities and sessions involving children or young people, in accordance with the Hall Access & Safeguarding Protocol.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Council (corporate): Overall accountability for safeguarding arrangements, resources and oversight.

Clerk/Manager: Day-to-day operational oversight; ensures policy implementation, training, and record-keeping.

Parish Council Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Anthea Cass - 01296 925750

Parish Council Deputy DSL (DDSL): Sarah Tomlin - 01296 925750

Roman Park Hall Safeguarding lead: Lisa Gibson – 01296 925755

Youth Club Safeguarding Lead: Laurilee Green – 07921 653498

The Roman Park Hall and Youth Club Safeguarding Leads are responsible for safeguarding arrangements within their respective areas and will liaise with the Parish Council DSL as appropriate.

Overall responsibility for safeguarding within Council-operated activities remains with BPC.

If a concern relates to a safeguarding lead, it must be reported to an alternative designated contact or the appropriate external safeguarding authority.

All staff, councillors and volunteers must:

- Know signs of abuse/neglect and additional risks including CSE, CCE, County Lines and Extremism
- Report concerns promptly via the routes in section 8 (doing nothing is not an option)
- Follow safer working practice and data handling requirements
- Comply with relevant safeguarding and access arrangements.

Contractors/Partners: Must have appropriate safeguarding arrangements or agree in writing to comply with the relevant requirements of this policy.

7. Safer Recruitment & Suitability

BPC will ensure:

- Role-appropriate DBS checks, identity, references and employment history checks for posts engaging with children, young people or adults at risk
- At least one safer-recruitment trained person on each recruitment process where the role involves work with vulnerable groups including Youth Club

- Clear induction covering this policy, code of conduct, reporting routes and professional boundaries including online conduct
- Ongoing supervision and periodic reassessment of suitability as appropriate.

From 1 September 2026, the supervision exemption for regulated activity with children has been removed. BPC will assess relevant staff and volunteer roles against the current regulated activity criteria and ensure that appropriate DBS checks, including Children's Barred List information where legally eligible and required, are undertaken.

DBS eligibility and safeguarding arrangements will be reassessed when duties or the nature of a role change.

8. Responding to Concerns or Disclosures

If a child, young person or adult at risk is in **immediate danger**, **call 999**.

Otherwise:

1. Listen and reassure. Do not promise confidentiality; explain you must share with people who can help. Avoid leading questions; use *Tell, Explain, Describe*
2. Record promptly, factually and accurately, including the date, time, person's own words where possible, action taken, referrals made and advice received
3. Report concerns immediately to the DSL/DDSL. If unavailable, contact the relevant statutory safeguarding service directly where necessary
4. Do not investigate yourself or confront the alleged perpetrators.
5. Where a child is at risk of significant harm, information may be shared without consent where necessary and lawful.

Adults at risk: Follow the same listen-record-report steps. Consider capacity and consent under the Care Act and Mental Capacity Act. Where there is a risk of serious harm, information may be shared without consent where necessary and lawful.

9. Allegations About Staff, Councillors, Volunteers or Contractors

- Notify the Named Lead for Managing Allegations (Anthea Cass, anthea.cass@berryfields-pc.gov.uk) immediately.
- If an allegation concerns the Named Lead or DSL, contact the DDSL or LADO directly, as appropriate.
- Allegations meeting the LADO threshold must be referred promptly, normally within one working day, in accordance with Buckinghamshire procedures.
- Do not investigate or interview those involved before seeking appropriate safeguarding advice where this could prejudice a statutory investigation.
- Consider appropriate interim safeguarding measures while allegations are assessed.
- Follow relevant disciplinary and HR procedures where appropriate.

10. Information Sharing, Confidentiality and Recording

- Share information lawfully, proportionately and on a need-to-know basis in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018
- Store records securely with restricted access
- Retain safeguarding records in accordance with applicable legal requirements, safeguarding guidance and the Council's retention arrangements.
- Record concerns, referrals, advice received, decisions made and actions taken.

- Follow Buckinghamshire safeguarding procedures where concerns require referral or escalation.

11. Specific Risks and Indicators (Children)

- **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**: Use relevant safeguarding tools and refer where risks are identified
- **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) & County Lines:** Remain alert to indicators and refer concerns
- **Domestic abuse:** Recognise the impact on children and follow appropriate safeguarding procedures
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** Treat concerns as safeguarding matters and seek appropriate statutory advice
- **Forced marriage:** Do not approach family members where doing so could increase risk
- **Online safety**: Maintain professional boundaries and use appropriate communication channels
- **Child-on-child abuse:** Recognise that bullying, harassment, physical violence, harmful sexual behaviour, exploitation and inappropriate image-sharing can occur between children and must be taken seriously.

12. Photography, Images and Media

- Obtain written parental/carer consent before taking or using images of children for publicity or promotional purposes, explaining where and how they will be used
- Do not publish identifying or sensitive information about children (e.g., name, address) alongside images without an appropriate lawful basis and safeguarding consideration.

13. Training and Awareness

- Relevant staff, councillors and volunteers will receive appropriate safeguarding training at induction and refresher training at least every three years, with role-specific training where necessary
- Youth Club volunteers will receive training appropriate to their safeguarding responsibilities
- Maintain records of safeguarding training completed.

14. Supervision, Culture and Whistleblowing

- Promote open and transparent working practices, avoiding inappropriate one-to-one situations with children
- Provide appropriate supervision arrangements for Council-run activities
- Encourage early reporting and escalation of concerns
- Follow the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and protect those raising genuine concerns in accordance with applicable requirements.

15. Local Contacts (Buckinghamshire)

- **Immediate danger:** 999
- **Buckinghamshire Council – Children's First Response:** 01296 383962
- **Out-of-hours Children's Safeguarding:** 0800 999 7677 or 0300 131 6000 (option 2)
- **Buckinghamshire Council – Adult Safeguarding:** 0800 137915
- **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):** 01296 382070
- **Police (non-emergency):** 101

- **Parish Council DSL/DDSL and Roman Park Safeguarding Lead:** See section 6

Current contact details and referral procedures should be checked regularly against Buckinghamshire Council's published information.

16. Linked policies

- Equality & Diversity
- Health & Safety
- Lone Working
- DSE Policy
- Data Protection & Privacy Notices
- Whistleblowing
- Complaints
- Disciplinary
- Code of Conduct
- Roman Park Hall Access & Safeguarding Protocol
- Relevant Youth Club risk assessments and operating procedures.

17. Governance, Monitoring and Review

- The Clerk will report significant safeguarding matters to Council where appropriate, maintaining confidentiality and complying with data protection requirements.
- The DSL will provide an annual safeguarding report covering relevant training, incidents and learning, without unnecessarily disclosing personal information.
- This policy will be reviewed annually or following significant changes to legislation, guidance, Council activities or safeguarding arrangements, or after a serious incident.

18. Roman Park Hall – Safeguarding Arrangements

1. Roman Park Hall is owned or managed by BPC. The Council is committed to providing a safe environment for everyone using the premises.
2. The Hall Safeguarding Lead will oversee relevant safeguarding arrangements at the premises and liaise with the Parish Council DSL/DDSL where necessary.
3. Access to the building will be managed in accordance with the Hall Access & Safeguarding Protocol, taking account of the nature of activities, hirer arrangements, public access and safeguarding requirements.
4. Safeguarding-related access controls must not compromise fire safety or emergency evacuation.
5. Councillors, contractors and visitors do not have unrestricted access to safeguarding-controlled activities solely because of their position or role. Any access must be legitimate, authorised and managed appropriately.
6. The Council will ensure that relevant staff understand the arrangements for dealing with unexpected visitors, unauthorised access and safeguarding concerns.

19. Parish Council Youth Club

1. The Roman Park Youth Club is operated by BPC, with activities delivered by volunteers under the leadership of Councillor Laurilee Green. BPC retains overall safeguarding responsibility

2. Councillor Laurilee Green is the Youth Club Leader and Safeguarding Lead, responsible for day-to-day safeguarding arrangements and for liaising with the Parish Council DSL/DDSL and Roman Park Hall Safeguarding Lead as appropriate
3. Youth Club volunteers must:

    - Follow this policy and the relevant codes of conduct and Youth Club rules
    - Maintain appropriate professional boundaries
    - Complete relevant safeguarding training
    - Report concerns promptly
    - Follow agreed supervision and access arrangements
    - Maintain confidentiality and comply with applicable health and safety requirements
    - Not communicate privately with individual children through personal social-media accounts
    - Report safeguarding concerns to the Youth Club Safeguarding Lead and, where necessary, directly to the Parish Council DSL or statutory safeguarding services.

4. BPC will maintain a Youth Club risk assessment covering, as appropriate:

    - Age and needs of participants
    - Activities and supervision
    - Suitability and training of volunteers
    - Building layout and access
    - Toilets and privacy
    - Arrival and departure arrangements
    - Emergency arrangements
    - Online activity and communications
    - Additional needs
    - Bullying and child-on-child abuse

5. Allegations involving Youth Club volunteers or other adults working with children will be managed in accordance with Section 9.
6. Children attending the Youth Club must have appropriate arrangements for arrival, collection or independent departure, communicated to parents and carers.

20. Roman Park Hall – Access During Youth Club, Lone Working and Private Hire

- **Youth Club:** During Youth Club sessions, the building will be treated as a controlled environment, with access restricted in accordance with the Hall Access & Safeguarding Protocol.
- During Youth Club sessions, the entire Community Building is for the exclusive use of the Youth Club. General access, including access to toilet facilities by tennis-court users, is not permitted, except for an emergency or otherwise authorised and appropriately managed.
- **Unauthorised access:** Staff and volunteers should establish the identity and purpose of unexpected visitors and seek assistance where necessary. They must not put themselves or children at risk by confronting or physically removing individuals.
- **Lone working:** Staff working alone must follow the Council's Lone Working Policy, risk assessment and Hall Access & Safeguarding Protocol.

- Access to public toilets when staff are working alone must be managed in accordance with the Hall Access & Safeguarding Protocol, taking account of the safety of the staff member and others using the building.
- **Private or exclusive hire:** Where the whole building is hired for a private function, access will be managed in accordance with the booking conditions and relevant hall procedures. Members of the general public who are not attending the event will not have unrestricted access.
- Where only part of the building is hired, shared access arrangements must be managed by authorised hall staff in accordance with the Hall Access & Safeguarding Protocol.
- External spaces used by the public or by hall hirers must be considered separately when assessing safeguarding responsibilities. Where the Youth Club uses an external area as part of its activities, the relevant arrangements must be included in its risk assessment.
- Appropriate arrangements must be made for contractors, councillors and other authorised visitors during safeguarding-controlled activities.
- All access-control arrangements must comply with the building's fire risk assessment and must never prevent safe evacuation.

21. Hall Hirers and Other Organised Activities

- Organisations and individuals hiring Roman Park Hall for their own activities remain responsible for appropriate safeguarding arrangements within those activities.
- Hirers conducting activities involving children or adults at risk must have safeguarding arrangements suitable for the nature of their activities.
- BPC may request information about safeguarding arrangements and relevant checks where appropriate.
- Hirers must comply with applicable hall terms and conditions, access requirements and safeguarding procedures.
- Where safeguarding incidents occur, the hirer must report them through appropriate statutory safeguarding routes and notify BPC where relevant and lawful.

The following appendices provide supporting declarations, notices and operational guidance. They should be read alongside the Council's Hall Access & Safeguarding Protocol and Lone Working Policy.

Appendix A - Youth Club Volunteer Declaration

I confirm that I have read and understood Berryfields Parish Council's Safeguarding Policy and the safeguarding arrangements applicable to Roman Park Youth Club.

I understand that I am acting as a volunteer on behalf of Berryfields Parish Council when undertaking Youth Club duties.

I understand my responsibility to report safeguarding concerns promptly, maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and comply with the Council's safeguarding procedures.

Volunteer name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Safeguarding training completed: Yes / No

Date: _____

DBS check required: Yes / No

DBS check completed: Yes / No / Not applicable

Date: _____

Appendix B – Youth Club Access Notice

YOUTH CLUB IN SESSION

The community hall is currently being used exclusively by the Parish Council Youth Club.

The building is not open to general public access during the Youth Club session.

This includes access to the toilet facilities.

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe environment for our young people.

Appendix C – Lone Worker / Public Toilet Notice

BUILDING CLOSED TO GENERAL PUBLIC ACCESS

The building is currently staffed by one member of staff.

Toilet facilities remain available to members of the public.

Please **ring the bell** for assistance.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix D – Key Operating Rules

Youth Club

Whole building: Exclusive Youth Club use.

Public access: Not permitted during sessions.

Tennis-court users: No access to the building/toilets during Youth Club sessions.

Volunteers: Appointed by and acting on behalf of the Parish Council.

Safeguarding: Overall responsibility remains with the Parish Council.

Staff Working Alone

Main door: Locked.

Public toilet access: Available by ringing the doorbell.

Other public access: Not permitted unless authorised.

Unexpected visitors: Access controlled by the staff member.

Threatening behaviour: Staff member should not confront the person; seek assistance/police where appropriate.

Private/Exclusive Hire

Booked Area: Under the control of the private hirer for the duration of the booking. Exclusive use of the whole building applies only where specifically agreed.

General public: No unrestricted access.

Toilets: For authorised users of the private booking.

Fire Safety

At all times: Safeguarding and access-control arrangements must not prevent safe emergency evacuation.

Document History

Version	Date Approved	Changes/Action	Approved By	Minute Ref
1.0	February 2022	New BPC policy	Full Council	
1.0	June 2023	Reviewed by the Parish Council		
2.0	January 2026	Reviewed and amended by Deputy Clerk/checked by Clerk	Full Council	26.9
3.0	21/10/2026	Reviewed and expanded to incorporate safeguarding arrangements for Roman Park Hall and the Parish Council Youth Club, including current safeguarding and DBS requirements.	Full Council	26.10