**Child Protection Matters – Contact Details**

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| **Local Contacts** |  |
| Norfolk County Council | 0344 8008020 |
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| Police | 101 or 999 |
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| **National Contacts** |  |
| The NSPCC  Weston House  42 Curtain Road  London  EC2A 3NH | 0808 800 5000 (Helpline) |
| Childline UK  Freepost 1111  London  N1 0BR | 0800 1111 |

**Code of Conduct When Working with Children and Young People**

Council members, staff and volunteers are encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from allegations of abuse. This information sheet provides practical guidance for those working at Council premises or engaged in Council events that involve contact with young people, to ensure that they and the young people with whom they are working are protected.

**Good Practice:**

* Always work in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations;
* Treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity;
* Keep a safe and appropriate distance from the young people;
* Involve other people – eg group leaders, parents/carers and other key influencers – whenever possible;
* Be an excellent role model – don’t smoke or drink alcohol in the company of young people, or use inappropriate language;
* Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than criticism;
* Obtain parental consent in writing to act *in loco parentis,* if the need arises to give permission for the administrations of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment;
* Obtain written consent prior to any photographs, video/audio recording.

**Bad Practice:**

* Spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others;
* Taking young people to your home where they will be alone with you;
* Allowing young people to travel on their own with you in a vehicle;
* Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
* Sharing a room with a young person;
* Entering a toilet with young people unless another adult is present or gives permission (this may include parent, teacher or group leader);
* Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate contact;
* Allowing or encouraging abusive peer activities (eg any game/activity where an individual may be held up to ridicule);
* Allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
* Making sexually suggestive comments to, or within the hearing of a young person;
* Reducing a young person to tears as a form of control;
* Allowing allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
* Doing things of a personal nature for young people that they can do for themselves

**How to Respond when an Allegation is Disclosed by a Child or Young Person**

Listen and reassure

* Maintain confidentiality but do not promise to keep the disclosure secret. Explain that the information will have to be passed on and how that will be done.
* Be calm and reassuring and make it clear that you are glad that they have told you.
* Show that you are taking the child seriously and that you understand and believe them.
* Allow the child to make the disclosure at their own pace, in their own way.
* Try not to interrupt the disclosure: if you have to ask questions keep them open and not leading – do not probe for information which the child has not volunteered.
* Try not to show shock or disapproval while listening to the disclosure.
* Don’t jump to conclusions.
* Remember that the child/young person may not regard the experience as either bad or painful, and may not feel guilty or angry about it.
* Be aware of your own feelings, which may be different to those of the child/young person.
* Take care of yourself by making sure that you have the opportunity to discuss your feelings with someone at a later stage.
* Do not destroy any evidence, as it may be useful in a court of law.
* Record the conversation and report it to the Council’s Designated Officer as soon as possible.

**Please note:** Initial disclosure, even if retracted, must still be referred.