

St. Alphege, Seasalter Safeguarding Code of Practice

(In this Code of Practice “individual” means a child, a young person, or an adult when they are vulnerable.)

- Work in an open area with the individual or with the door to the room open. If possible avoid being with an individual 1 to 1.
- Keep everything open. Set appropriate boundaries, both physical and emotional. Remember a hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors. And a cuddle and a hug are two very different things.
- Be guided by the individual with regard to physical contact; touch should be in response to the needs of the individual, not yours.
- Respect an individual’s right to privacy.
- Do not show favouritism amongst the individuals in your care
- Do not give individuals a lift in your car unless permission is given by their parent/carer – if possible, have another adult in the car too. Only in an emergency should you travel alone with an individual.
- Do not take a child or young person off the premises or allow them to leave on their own unless permission has been given by their parent/carer.
- Do not allow yourself to be drawn in to inappropriate attention seeking behaviour by an individual.
- Only build up a relationship with an individual that has their best interests at the core. Do not disclose things of a personal nature or seek to gratify your needs through the relationship.
- Do not store photos or videos of individuals on your personal camera or device. Be aware of those individuals whose parents/carers have denied permission for photos to be taken.
- Help all staff and volunteers to take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact with children. If necessary, challenge another worker appropriately. Concerns about possible abuse should always be reported.
- Do not believe ‘it could never happen to me’. Although it is extremely rare always be aware of the possibility that an innocent person could be suspected of inappropriate behaviour. Actions may be misinterpreted, no matter how innocent, so be aware of how your behaviour may appear to others.

What to do if abuse is disclosed to you

1. **Listen/Reassure** - Listen carefully to what the individual is telling you and reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you. DO NOT PROMISE TO KEEP WHAT THEY ARE TELLING YOU A SECRET.
2. **Repeat** – repeat the words the individual has used back to them to confirm understanding. DO NOT PROBE – we are not investigators and this may hamper a police investigation.
3. **Record** – AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, while it is fresh in your mind, record what has been said to you, using the actual words and phrases that the individual has used as much as possible and your responses to them. Write down as many facts as possible, named people, dates and places, where and when it was disclosed and circumstances leading up to it, any bruises or marks on the individual, the physical and emotional appearance of the individual (e.g. crying etc). Date and sign your record.
4. **Report** – using your written record report the disclosure to the Safeguarding Coordinator. Do not discuss this with others unless it is necessary for the individual's safety. As soon as possible pass your written record on to the appropriate Safeguarding Coordinator.

In rare cases where the immediate safety of an individual may be at risk the Police or Social Services should be contacted immediately. If the individual needs urgent medical attention the appropriate emergency services should be called or the person taken to the nearest A and E department. Hospital staff should be told of any suspicions and the appropriate Safeguarding Coordinator and Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor informed.

What to do if abuse is suspected or

You have a concern about the behaviour of a leader.

- Irrespective of circumstances it is **never** your responsibility to investigate a concern, but it is **always** your responsibility to report **any** concern. Prompt action is paramount – doing nothing is not an option when any kind of abuse, however minor, is suspected.
- Contact the appropriate Safeguarding Coordinator to report your concern immediately.
- Make a factual record of what has been said, heard and/or seen and sign and date it. As soon as possible pass this on to the Coordinator.