

WYCHAVON

Keeping children and young people safe



**Good practice guidelines for
Wychavon's Councillors, Staff,
Volunteers and Partner Organisations**

 **WYCHAVON
DISTRICT COUNCIL**
good services, good value

This leaflet contains good practice guidelines aimed at making sure children and young people that you work with are safe at all times. Please follow these guidelines and be prepared to act on information that may indicate that a child or young person is at risk of harm.

How to behave towards children and young people

Do...

Set a good example at all times.

Children learn the majority of their behaviour and attitudes from adults.

Be welcoming, approachable, understanding and patient.

Listen to what children have to say - something may not seem important to staff but it is to the child. Good listening skills assist employees in building positive relationships with children and young people. A child is more likely to discuss issues of concern with staff if they know they will be listened to and taken seriously.

Be suitably dressed for interaction with children/young people.

Adults should wear clothing that:

- Is appropriate to their role
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans
- Is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive

Be polite and courteous at all times regardless if a child's attitude or behaviour. Employees should consider their own body language.

Give children and young people the opportunity for input into decisions that may affect them. Be aware of the United Nations Declaration of the rights of each child. Be professional, responsible of each child.

Be professional, responsible and trustworthy at all times.

It is important for employees never to divulge information a child or young person has given in confidence. The only exception to this is if the child is being abused or would be at risk if this information were not passed to the relevant authority.

Don't...

Use physical punishment - hitting, slapping, pushing, etc. In extreme cases it may be necessary to gently restrain a child in distress or a child who has a disability. Restraint may also be necessary when a child or young person is being physically abusive to another child or member of staff or is likely to cause him/herself harm.

Don't use foul or offensive language

Don't shout at children/young people

(unless to warn of danger)

Don't ridicule or humiliate children through words or gestures. Even in cases where children have been very rude or disruptive there is no excuse for employees to deliberately attempt to hurt or offend in return.

Don't divulge confidential information to unauthorised personnel.

Don't use sexualised behaviour of any nature.

This includes the telling of rude jokes or stories in the presence of children and young people; inappropriate touching; molesting or abuse of children, young people or adults.

How to protect yourself

Whilst the protection and welfare of children and young people is of paramount importance, it is also vital that employees in these roles take every care not to place themselves in a situation which could be misunderstood, misrepresented or exploited, for example:

- Divulging personal information about oneself or a colleague.
- Giving lifts to children
- Inviting a child or young person to your home
- Visiting a child or young person at their home uninvited and without checking with their parents first.
- Being alone with a child in a closed room unnecessarily or frequently giving one-to-one attention to a particular child away from the main group (unless of course the child has particular needs or a disability that requires one-to-one working). This particularly applies to swimming pools and leisure facilities where children may be seen in various states of undress.
- Openly showing favouritism to a particular child or group of children. It is accepted that staff will have better relationships with some children than with others but it is essential that all children are treated fairly at all times.



The Worcestershire Safeguarding Board

The Worcestershire Safeguarding Board (WSCB) consists of senior representatives of the main agencies which have a responsibility to safeguard children. It is a forum for establishing and guiding the services in Worcestershire to safeguard and promote the well-being of children. Inter-Agency working is at the heart of safeguarding and protecting children and the WSCB works to ensure that all the agencies communicate with one another in the interests of the child.

The Government consulted with children and families to find out what mattered most to children.

The five outcomes which were identified are:

- Being healthy: enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle
- Staying safe: being protected from harm and neglect
- Enjoying and achieving: getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood
- Making a positive contribution: being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour
- Economic well-being: not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life.

In Worcestershire it is the aim of the WSCB to enable all children to achieve these outcomes.

Further information

Staff are not expected to tolerate physical or verbal abuse from children and young people.
In such cases the 'Incident Reporting Procedure' must be followed.

For further information or clarification regarding the content of this Code of Practice, please contact:

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For more information relating to child protection:

www.worcestershiresafeguarding.org.uk

www.nspc.org.uk

Contacts

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Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board

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