

Safeguarding

The welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount and it is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers, members and elected representatives to behave with integrity, maturity and good judgement.

Abuse of a position of trust

Staff, members and volunteers, including elected representatives, should be aware that they may be seen as role models by children, young people and adults at risk and therefore they must act in an appropriate manner at all times.

They must not engage in sexual activity or allow a sexual relationship to develop with any member under the age of eighteen years old.

It is essential that staff, volunteers, members and elected representatives do not:

- Conduct a sexual relationship with a child or have any form of sexual contact with a child involved in Co-operative Party activity. Any such behaviour between an adult member of staff, member, volunteer or elected representative and a child involved in Co-operative Party activity represents a serious breach of trust on the part of the staff member, party member or volunteer;
- Physically, emotionally or sexually abuse, maltreat or exploit any child or an adult at risk or neglect their basic physical and psychological needs;
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse or the abuse of adults at risk;
- Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to, or in front of, children or discuss adult sexual relationships in front of them;
- Rely on their reputation or that of the Co-operative Party or any elected office that they hold to protect them;
- Give or receive gifts and/or substances such as drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, e-cigarettes to or from a child;
- Encourage or appear to encourage children to drink alcohol or take drugs;
- Allow their judgment to be impaired by alcohol or any other substance when acting in a position of trust

Definitions

Child: A person under the age of eighteen years old. The fact that a young person has reached the age of sixteen, is living independently, is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or is in custody does not change their entitlement to protection.

Adult at risk: A person aged eighteen years old or over, who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is, or may be, unable to take care of him themselves, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Events

All members that take part in Co-op Party events must agree to our code of conduct - <https://party.coop/publication/events-code-of-conduct/>

Any members under 18 will need parental / guardian permission to attend.

Online Activity

Our safeguarding policy extends to online activity and events. We will monitor and moderate party-affiliated platforms for inappropriate content or behaviour and will report where necessary.

Action

Anyone who believes themselves or another person to be at risk should contact us at safeguarding@party.coop or speak to member of staff immediately.

Advice can also be sought from the NSPCC helping on 0808 800 5000 or emailing help@NSPCC.org.uk

If you are concerned that someone is in immediate danger, then please contact the police.

Any breaches of this policy or code of conduct by a member will be dealt with by our complaints procedure.