

Harringworth Village Hall

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Purpose

This policy defines how Harringworth Village Hall Trustees (the “Trustees”) act to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse or neglect. The Trustees have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who enters our premises including children, young people and adults at risk involved as visitors and/or as participants in all activities and events. The Trustees also have a duty to safeguard and support our trustees, volunteers, and any staff.

All Trustees and volunteers have a duty to safeguard vulnerable users of the hall and its premises and those who may come into contact with vulnerable users. They should respond to any concerns they may have regarding the physical, sexual, emotional or psychological safety of a vulnerable person or concerns relating to discriminatory or financial violation or exploitation of a vulnerable person. This policy is in place to protect all vulnerable persons regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, religion or faith.

As the Trustees’ responsibilities focus on such items as the maintenance and upgrade of the building’s facilities and usually exclude running events where safeguarding concerns may be identified, this policy is designed to align with those responsibilities. Should the Trustees start taking on more responsibility for running events, then the principles of this policy will still apply, however the implementation of the policy may need greater rigour.

Definitions

Children and young people are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old. This policy will apply to all staff, contractors and volunteers and will be used to support their work.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children’s health and development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Adult at risk of abuse or neglect refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to Section 42 of the Care Act 2014:

- has care and support needs
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

Persons affected are:

- All trustees, volunteers, and staff

- All those attending any activity or service that is being delivered from the village hall property.
- All visitors and contractors.

Principles

The Trustees of the Haringworth Village Hall are committed to the principles that:

- The welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount and is the responsibility of everyone. All children and vulnerable adults, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse or neglect.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and there are no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect.
- There is a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and that under the Care Act 2014, the trustees have a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse. They also recognise their responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

Policy Statement

1. All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately.
2. All staff and volunteers need to be aware of this policy, child protection, and vulnerable adult issues, and shall be offered introductory training, and will acknowledge their responsibilities regarding safeguarding as part of their induction.
3. No member of the trustees, helpers or other volunteers or staff will have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults as part of their role unless they have been through introductory child protection or vulnerable adults protection training. For clarity, the Trustees, helpers or other volunteers or staff do not expect to manage or run events as part of their roles, so no unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults is expected
4. The chair of the Trustees is responsible for child and adult at risk safeguarding matters. This person will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the relevant safeguarding agency.
5. If there are safeguarding concerns and/or when dealing with a safeguarding disclosure, the Trustees will act in accordance with the guidance in Appendix A (Disclosure Guidance)
6. The Trustees will require that all hirers of the hall have signed a hiring agreement. This will require all hirers who wish to use the hall for activities which include children and adults at risk, other than for hire for private parties arranged for invited friends and family, to either produce a copy of their safeguarding policy and evidence that they have carried out relevant checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) when requested to do so or, confirm that they have understood and will adhere to the hall's principles and procedures with regard to safeguarding.
7. These policies and procedures will be reviewed annually and updated as appropriate in the interim periods.

APPENDIX A: DISCLOSURE GUIDANCE

If You Have Concerns

Speak to your local safeguarding agency:

North Northants Council Adult Social Care: <https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/adult-social-care/report-safeguarding-concern-about-adult>

Northamptonshire Children's Trust/Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):
<https://nctrust.co.uk/report-a-concern-or-request-support>, 0300 126 7000

It may not be a referral but all concerns can be recorded and can lead to a referral or evidence later.

Dealing With a Safeguarding Disclosure

- Stay calm and listen carefully, offer reassurance, take concerns seriously
- Be transparent about what you will do with the information - you must not offer to keep it a secret
- Acknowledge that the person may be upset and may need appropriate support
- Ask the person what they would like to do now (for example do they want to contact a relative or friend for support)
- As soon as possible make a detailed record of what has been said and done ideally using the person's own words
- Use reflective listening and ask open non-judgemental questions for clarification only (e.g. what/ when/ who/ where/ how) - not leading ones
- Record the exact words they say
- Seek further advice from your safeguarding lead (or MASH team) if required
- Consider the persons immediate safety
- If you are concerned about a child explain to the parents that you are referring your concern, unless by doing so you think you put the child at increased risk of significant harm.
- **Do NOT:**
 - Discuss the issue with anyone other than those who need to know
 - Interfere with anything that could be used as evidence
 - Ask detailed or probing questions
 - Ignore the issue and hope it will go away
 - Contact the alleged abuser
 - Get the alleged abuser to contact the victim
 - Investigate the matter yourself in anything other than the basic detail
 - Make promises that you cannot keep or tell the person what might happen
- You must make a referral for a vulnerable adult if:
 - The adult considers they are being abused
 - The adult has been in distress or there is a deliberate attempt to cause the adult distress
 - Incidents are repetitive and targeted
 - A crime has been committed
 - The incident involves a member of staff
- If in doubt, contact your local safeguarding agency