

# Woolpit Village Hall Charity (RCN 275859)

Mill Lane, Woolpit, Bury St. Edmunds, IP30 9QX

## Policy for Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults and Whistleblowing

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### 1. Introduction and Context

- 1.1 Woolpit Village Hall provides a safe and secure venue for a range of services, activities and events. These can be accessed by all members of the local and neighbouring communities including Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults. The trustees recognise the importance of ensuring, and makes all efforts to secure, the safeguarding and welfare of all hall users.
- 1.2 This policy is made available to all adults who book the hall for any activities, covering expectations on those adults, including any trustee members who run events or activities on behalf of the Hall.
- 1.3 In most cases children will be accompanied by an adult (a parent or carer), who will take responsibility for them. Young People, (defined as school age or above for the purposes of this policy), and Vulnerable Adults may attend activities independently and need additional protection accordingly.
- 1.4 This policy includes child and adult protection procedures, recruitment and selection of paid staff and volunteers, Code of Behaviour, Whistle Blowing and monitoring.
- 1.5 In addition to our own policies and procedures the Trustees ensure that they are fully conversant with and following the Government and Suffolk County Council current expectations and recommendations for safeguarding.
- 1.6 At least one Trustee will be named for Child Protection. The Trustees have a responsibility for ensuring that safeguards are completely in place and that policies and procedures are current and fit for purpose. Chris Jennison and Julie Coleman, both Trustees, have been appointed for overseeing Safeguarding and Child Protection.
- 1.7 For the purpose of this policy the relevant authority will be informed through Suffolk County Council's Customer First phone line 0808 800 4005
- 1.8 Safeguarding policies are subject to annual review and the procedures are updated as and when necessary, (i.e. when regulations or recommendations change or in the light of any case reviews).

## 2. Procedures for Safeguarding

- 2.1 Any Village Hall organised events/activities where unsupervised children, young people or vulnerable adults are present will have at least one committee member with appropriate experience, training and full DBS check in attendance.
- 2.2 Groups and individuals hiring the hall are responsible for their own safeguarding arrangements. The Hall's responsibility is to ensure that anyone who runs events or activities specifically for Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults have the appropriate levels of disclosure, supervision and training.
- 2.3 Groups which serve the under 3, 3 - 5 and 5 - 11 age groups will follow the Ofsted guidelines for levels of supervision. In addition, Suffolk County Council provide guidelines which will be followed to ensure that all activities are suitably supervised.
- 2.4 If any member of the committee or hall user has concerns about the behaviour or actions of anyone associated with the hall should immediately inform the named safeguarding person or chair of trustees. Anyone acting in an unsafe or unwise manner will be subject to referral to the relevant authorities, (see 1.7), and exclusion from the Hall.
- 2.5 If a disclosure is made to a hall user it must be recorded. Leading questions should not be asked but a clear factual record made of what has been disclosed. If a concern is noticed, (such as evidence of physical abuse, severe neglect or distress), this should be reported in the same way as for disclosures. All referrers should follow the summary guidance:
  - Record the time and date
  - Don't promise to keep what you're told a secret
  - Tell the child or young person what you will do next
  - Don't make promises you cannot keep
- 2.6 All disclosures should be immediately reported to the named safeguarding person for the relevant group who will in turn inform relevant authorities, (see 1.7). Where appropriate, responsible adults (i.e. parents, guardians and carers), will be informed unless such a disclosure would cause significant distress or threat to the individual making it. This decision will be made by the relevant safeguarding named person.
- 2.7 Confidentiality cannot be promised in any case where an individual may be in danger of any form of abuse. Abuse can include physical, sexual, emotional or neglect. Staff and volunteers are expected to record and report any concerns and need to advise individuals that it is not appropriate to refrain from this. Referral is made to the relevant authorities, (see 1.7), with the adults responsible for the individual who has made a disclosure being notified if appropriate, (see 2.6).
- 2.8 Once the matter has been referred to the named person, they will take the necessary action and follow up as required. It is not usually appropriate to feed back to the individual making the disclosure although they should check that the information has been passed on.

2.9 Any individual making a referral will be protected by the Trustees under whistle blowing procedures. Similarly, if the individual making the referral feels that insufficient action/follow up has taken place they should inform the Trustees without fear of repercussions, (see 5).

### **3. Recruitment and Selection of Paid Staff and Volunteers**

- 3.1 The Village Hall Trustees are committed to carrying out relevant DBS checks for any staff or volunteers who have unsupervised access to Children, Young People and/or Vulnerable Adults. Suitable training will be offered to these individuals.
- 3.2 Currently the Hall does not employ staff. The person who cleans the hall does not have contact with the groups or individuals using the hall and consequently do not need DBS checks. If conditions change for these or any future workers each post will be assessed and any checks carried out accordingly.
- 3.3 Volunteers are assessed for level of activity and DBS checked if appropriate. Any unchecked person would be supervised by a suitably checked and trained person if assisting with activities involving unaccompanied Children, Young People and/or Vulnerable Adults.

### **4. Code of Behaviour for Paid Staff and Volunteers**

- 4.1 Safeguarding of all hall users is a shared responsibility for the Trustees, hall members, and volunteers.
- 4.2 All staff and volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves with the hall's Safeguarding policy and procedures.
- 4.3 Any disclosures or concerns about the behaviour of anyone connected to the hall should be reported immediately to one of the two named safeguarding people.
- 4.4 All hall users are expected to be familiar with expectations of behaviour when working with Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults including:
- Respecting privacy and preserving dignity at all times.
  - Having sufficient personnel so that there are no occasions where the worker is in an isolated situation with a child, young person or vulnerable adult other than in a public area.
  - Fully understanding the expectations of staff working with that particular age group and having clear procedures for any intimate care, (such as changing nappies).
  - Avoiding physical contact other than that necessary for the care of individuals and being aware of what is acceptable for them.
  - Knowing that all forms of verbal abuse, aggression or manipulative behaviour are totally unacceptable, refraining from such acts and reporting any infringements.

## 5. **Whistle Blowing Policy**

5.1 Any individual making a referral will be protected by the Trustees under whistle blowing procedures. Similarly, if the individual making the referral feels that insufficient action/follow up has taken place they should inform the Directors without fear of repercussion.

5.2 Procedures for Whistle Blowing include:

- Protecting those who make referrals under the whistle blowing procedures so that there is a culture of informing without reprisal or negative consequence.
- As far as possible protecting the anonymity of the whistle blower, (except where so doing could endanger another individual).
- Thoroughly investigating any reported incidents regardless of how unlikely they seem.
- Keeping accurate records so that any patterns in behaviour can be monitored.

## 6. **Monitoring**

6.1 All Trustees, volunteers and Hall users are responsible for monitoring all behaviour within the hall, reporting and following up any concerns.

6.2 Named individuals for Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection have overall responsibility for receiving referrals and reporting any incidents or concerns to the relevant authorities. They will scrutinise records, monitor incidents and identifying any patterns which need following up.

6.3 The Committee will receive reports of any referrals but not be given any details which break individual confidentiality or potentially interfere with an investigation by the authorities.

6.4 Named people will seek feedback from the relevant authorities in order to review and improve practice.

6.5 Any incidents will be analysed at a case review which will identify any improvements to procedures which are needed to prevent reoccurrence.

6.6 Policies and procedures will be subject to annual review or be updated when circumstance or regulations change.

Version Number	Author (revision only)	Date Agreed	Review Date
2.0	Tracey Osborne- Lomax	7/1/26	