



# Bishop Middleham Village Hall

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY

This Policy defines how Bishop Middleham Village Hall ('the Village Hall') operates to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

We 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. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our trustees, volunteers, and staff.

### 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 and young people 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**, for the purposes of this Policy refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to 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/herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

### Persons affected:

- All Trustees, volunteers, and staff.
- All those attending any activity or services that is being delivered from the Hall premises.
- All visitors and contractors.

## **Philosophy and Principles**

There can be no excuse for not taking all reasonable action to protect children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect. All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. People who are eligible to receive health and community care services may be additionally vulnerable to the violation of these rights by reason of disability, impairment, age, or illness.

Bishop Middleham Village Hall has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

Bishop Middleham Village Hall recognises that under the Care Act 2014, it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse. It also recognises its responsibilities under the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

Bishop Middleham Village Hall is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.

Bishop Middleham Village Hall is aware of the work of Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership and Durham Safeguarding Adults Partnership and other support organisations on the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of children and adults at risk. This Policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

Bishop Middleham Village Hall is committed to the following principles:

- The welfare of the child, young person or adult at risk is paramount.
- All children, young people and adults at risk have the right to protection from abuse.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. For services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their part.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be properly reported to the relevant internal and external authorities and dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

## **Procedures**

1. All members of the Village Hall Committee will sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for Trustees which includes a declaration that they have no convictions in relation to abuse.
2. All members of the Village Hall Committee will familiarise themselves with safeguarding responsibilities, undertake training where appropriate on safeguarding issues including whistleblowing where it is available and offered by the local safeguarding board/partnership or other local support organisation and ensure that they understand the principles set out in this Policy.

3. All members of the Village Hall Committee will work together to promote a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting welfare to be addressed.
4. All members of the Village Hall Committee, helpers or other volunteers will not have unsupervised access to children or adults at risk unless properly vetted.
5. The Village Hall will follow safe recruitment practices.
6. One or more members of the Committee will be appointed to be responsible for child and adult at risk safeguarding matters. This person(s) will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to Durham Safeguarding Partnership (Telephone 03000 267979, more guidance is available from [www.durham-scp.org.uk](http://www.durham-scp.org.uk)).
7. The named person(s) is Jane Brownlee (Chair of the Trustees) telephone 07880 980906. Alternatively, you can contact Julie Thomson (Administrator) on 07765 435500.
8. If a child or adult at risk is in immediate danger, the police should be contacted on 999.
9. All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child or adult at risk will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately. The appointed person(s) will know who to contact and where to go for support and advice in relation to an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children or adults at risk who has:
  - Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or adult at risk or may have harmed a child or adult at risk.
  - Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or adult at risk.
  - Behaved towards a child or adult at risk in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm.
10. The Village Hall has updated the Terms & Conditions for Hirers to reflect the importance of safeguarding and the requirement for the Hirer to have their own safeguarding policy where appropriate. The Hirer may be asked to produce a copy of their policy and evidence that the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks have been completed.

**This Policy will be reviewed annually.**

**Dated 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023**