

Norham Village Hall

Policy for the Protection Of Children & Vulnerable Adults (Safeguarding)

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to identify the procedures, roles and responsibilities that will ensure that all trustees, staff and volunteers working on behalf of Norham Village Hall deal with safeguarding concerns in relation to the protection of children & vulnerable adults appropriately and promptly.

Context

For the purpose of this procedure a child is a person under the age of 18 and a vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over, who is less able than others to protect him or herself and / or has some difficulty making his or her wishes and feelings known.

The Village Hall committee has a duty of care to all those who use the premises, with the intention of providing a safe environment in which all users can enjoy their chosen activity - including the young, the frail, the elderly, the physically less able, those with visual or hearing problems and those with learning difficulties.

Definition of abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into financial or sexual transactions to which they have not consented. Abuse can occur in any relationship and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

The main types of abuse are:

- **Physical abuse**- including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.
- **Sexual abuse**- including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.
- **Psychological abuse**- including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

- **Financial or material abuse-** including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Neglect and acts of omission-** including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Discriminatory abuse-** including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, age or sexuality and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

The role of staff, volunteers and trustees

All trustees, staff and volunteers working on behalf of Norham Village Hall have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of children and vulnerable adults.

Trustees, staff and volunteers may receive disclosures of abuse and observe children and vulnerable adults who are at risk. The policy will enable staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific protection issues.

Any concern raised will be listened to carefully, taken seriously and dealt with speedily.

The hire of the hall

While trustees, staff and volunteers working on behalf of Norham Village Hall accept their role and responsibility in relation to all matters of safeguarding, those who hire the hall also have responsibilities in this regard.

Any private person, private group, commercial provider or business group who/ which hires the hall for the purposes of pleasure or business must have an understanding of their immediate obligations to their guests or participants in relation to safeguarding for the duration of their activity and hire of the hall.

It is expected that all such user groups will take appropriate precautions and follow the necessary procedures to protect all those with vulnerabilities attending their event.

Procedure in the event of a disclosure

A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information. This should include information in relation to the date, the time, the place where the alleged abuse happened, the name and the names of others present, the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the child or adult who has allegedly been abused, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed, the account which has been given of the allegation.

The concern will be reported as soon as possible to the named Safeguarding officer, who will liaise with the committee as necessary.

Promises of confidentiality will not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.

Any incidents should be reported to Northumberland County Council as soon as possible through the Onecall number - 01670 536 400

In a situation where it is considered that the safety of a person is at immediate risk or under threat, a phone call to the police emergency services using 999 should be made as well as reporting the matter to the safeguarding officer.

The responsibility of making a decision to report a concern to the statutory authorities lies with the designated safeguarding officer and not with the person raising the concern. The responsibility of determining whether an allegation of abuse is to be investigated lies with the statutory bodies.

Safer recruitment

Safer recruiting procedures will be followed when the employment of paid staff is considered, including a history of previous work and appropriate / relevant references. At the present time we employ one person part-time to clean the hall.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

Any person working directly for the hall will be required to undergo a DBS check.

Confidentiality

Child and vulnerable adult protection raises issues of confidentiality, which should be clearly understood. Information relating to a concern raised with the designated officer should only be shared on a need to know basis. Trustees, staff and volunteers have a responsibility to share relevant information about matter with appropriate professionals, in particular the police agencies and social services.

All personal information regarding a vulnerable adult will be kept confidential. All written records will be kept in a secure area for a specific time as identified in data protection guidelines.

Where possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information. The safety and welfare of the individual is the priority therefore in some circumstances obtaining consent may not be possible.

Role of Designated Safeguarding Officer

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer is to deal appropriately with any instance relating to child and/or adult protection that arises within the use of Norham Village Hall and to provide a response to all protection concerns and enquiries. Any

concerns or suspicions should be reported to the designated safeguarding officer in the first instance and in her absence or if the allegation involves the Designated Safeguarding Officer, concerns should be reported to one of the other village hall committee members named below.

Training in Safeguarding to be carried out by the Safeguarding Officer every 3 years.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is:-

Dr Janet Young, Chair of the Village Hall Committee

70, Castle Street, Norham TD15 2LQ; 01289 382736;

Janetyoung.lazda@gmail.com

Safeguarding training to leadership level 2024

Other committee members who could be contacted:-

Miss Sarah Bougourd;

Mrs Janet Heywood

A copy of the policy is displayed on the noticeboard in the hall and is available on request to all those who wish to hire the hall.