

# Stretton-on-Fosse Village Hall

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

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### 1. Introduction and Context

- 1.1 Stretton-on-Fosse Village Hall seeks to provide a safe and secure venue for a range of services, activities and events. These can be accessed by members of the local and neighbouring communities including children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Trustees & Committee recognise the importance of ensuring the safeguarding and welfare of all hall users.
- 1.2 This policy will be made available to all adults who book the hall for any activities, *via* the village hall web site, covering expectations on those adults, including any committee members who run events or activities on behalf of the hall. A copy of the policy will be available in the information folder kept in the kitchen drawer for reference as required.
- 1.3 In most cases children will accompanied by an adult (a parent/guardian 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 In addition to our own policies and procedures the Trustees endeavour to be conversant with current Government expectations and recommendations for safeguarding and to follow them fully.
- 1.5 The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that appropriate safeguarding measures are in place and that policies and procedures are up-to-date and fit for purpose.
- 1.6 For the purpose of this policy the relevant authority is **Warwickshire County Council Safeguarding Team**. A serious safeguarding incident will also be reported to the Charity Commission.
- 1.7 The policy covers two areas concerning children, young people and vulnerable adults of which all individuals involved with the hall need to be aware: firstly, the need to ensure that all hall users are safe with all staff, volunteers and other users; secondly, that something which happens outside the scope of the hall may be disclosed to a committee member, volunteer or other hall user.
- 1.8 Safeguarding policies are subject to annual review and procedures updated as necessary, (i.e. when regulations or recommendations change or in the light of any case reviews).

## 2. Procedures for Safeguarding

- 2.1 All Village Hall organised events and activities where unsupervised children, young people or vulnerable adults may be present should be supervised by at least two responsible adults.
- 2.2 Hirers are responsible for their own safeguarding arrangements and should ensure that anyone running events or activities specifically for children, young people or vulnerable adults has appropriate levels of supervision and safeguarding training in place and has D.B.S. checks as required.
- 2.3 Groups dealing with the under 3, 3-5 and 5-11 age groups are recommended to follow the applicable Ofsted guidelines for appropriate levels of supervision.
- 2.4 Any committee member or hall user with concerns about the behaviour or actions of anyone using or otherwise associated with the hall, including, but not limited to inappropriate, abusive or unsafe activity, should immediately inform the relevant authorities (see 1.6). Such behaviour could also lead to exclusion from use of the hall and associated facilities. Failure to report an incident or disclosure may be considered an offence.
- 2.5 Any hall user may potentially be the recipient of a safeguarding disclosure in circumstances where it is not appropriate to pass on the disclosing individual to a third party. Initial response should be limited to listening carefully. If someone makes a disclosure, this might be the only time they tell anybody what is happening. Please:
  - Listen.
  - Remain calm.
  - Take what is said seriously.
  - Take account of the person's age and level of understanding.
  - Offer reassurance that disclosure is the right thing to do.
  - Use only open questions.
  - Explain that information will need to be shared with the appropriate people.
  - Elicit only as much information as is needed to be able to report what is said to have happened, when and where.
  - As far as possible, check that you have understood everything correctly.
  - Ask what the person hopes will result from the disclosure.
  - Tell the person what you are going to do next.
  - If appropriate, make brief notes at the time. Write them up in detail as soon afterwards as possible.
  - Record the date, time, place and how the person appeared to you. If possible, try to record the actual words used, including swear words or slang.
  - Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions.
  - Keep your original notes in case they are required by the statutory authorities.



- Don't speculate or jump to conclusions.
  - Don't make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
  - Don't make promises you can't keep (e.g. that you won't share the information).
  - Don't attempt to investigate the issue independently.
  - Don't contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
  - Don't carry out a physical or medical examination.
  - Don't share the information with anyone other than the statutory authorities.
  - It is not appropriate to have ongoing contact with the individual making a disclosure.
- 2.6 All disclosures should be reported to the relevant authorities immediately. If you think that the individual is at immediate risk, contact **Warwickshire Police** at once by dialling **999**. Otherwise, please contact **Warwickshire County Council Safeguarding Team**. Up-to-date contact numbers will be displayed at the entrance, on both noticeboards and elsewhere in the village hall.
- 2.7 Confidentiality cannot be promised in any case where an individual may be in danger of any form of abuse. Abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional or neglect, often it is a combination of these factors. Everyone who is party to this policy is expected to record and report any concerns as part of a duty of care and needs to advise individuals that it is not acceptable to refrain from doing so.

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

- 3.1 Currently the Hall does not employ staff. Contractors who clean the hall do not have contact with the groups or individuals using the hall and consequently do not need D.B.S. checks. If conditions change for these or any future workers, each post should be assessed and relevant checks carried out accordingly.
- 3.2 Persons who have a criminal record are not permitted to act as Trustees or as Committee members of Stretton-on-Fosse Village Hall and should not seek to serve in either capacity.

### **4. Code of Behaviour for Village Hall Users**


- 4.1 Safeguarding of all hall users is the shared responsibility of the Trustees, Committee members, hirers and volunteers.
- 4.2 All hirers and volunteers are required 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 the relevant authorities.

- 4.4 All hall users are expected to be familiar with expectations of behaviour when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults including but not limited to:
- Respecting privacy and preserving dignity at all times.
  - Having sufficient personnel to ensure no individual is in an isolated situation with a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
  - Avoiding physical contact other than where necessary for the care of individuals and being aware of what constitutes acceptable boundaries 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. Monitoring

- 5.1 All trustees, committee members, hirers, volunteers and hall users are responsible for monitoring behaviour within the hall, reporting and following up any concerns.
- 5.2 Should the Trustees or Committee be made aware of a referral they should do nothing which might betray individual confidentiality or potentially interfere with an investigation by the authorities.
- 5.3 Should the Trustees or Committee be made aware of an incident by a statutory authority, appropriate advice will be sought to identify improvements to procedures that will help prevent reoccurrence.
- 5.4 Policies and procedures will be subject to annual review and will be updated when circumstance or regulations change.

Signed on behalf of Stretton-on-Fosse Village Hall:



Date: 19/03/23

Date of next review: 03/24