

Worminghall Village Hall

Safeguarding Policy & Procedure

Introduction

Worminghall Village Hall (WVH) is a community organisation with charitable status. It is managed by a Board of Trustees and run by a voluntary management committee, with the aid of additional volunteers.

Policy Purpose

This policy defines how WVH operates to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse or neglect, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, religion, or faith.

The trustees have a formal duty of care and are legally required to provide a safe environment for everyone who accesses their premises including children, young people and adults at risk involved as visitors and/or as participants in all activities and events. They also have a duty to safeguard and support fellow trustees, volunteers, and staff.

In accordance with the government's [Regulatory and Risk Framework](#), the Charity Commission can hold trustees to account if things go wrong and can check that trustees followed guidance and the law. The Commission can look at how trustees have acted to protect beneficiaries, staff, volunteers and anyone else who comes into contact with their charity.

As part of their duty of care, WVH Trustees recognise that safeguarding responsibilities extend beyond identifying and reporting suspected abuse and neglect. The following policies have been developed to help provide a safe and well managed environment:

- Health & Safety policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy
- Harassment policy
- Safe Recruitment policy
- Privacy policy
- Hiring policy

Policy principles

This policy is primarily about helping to stop abuse and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur. Worminghall Village Hall charity has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

There can be no excuses 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 in 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.

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WVH 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 for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

WVH commits to the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of children and adults at risk. It recognises and supports the important work of the Charity Commission, the Local Authority including Social Services, and the Police in this space.

WVH 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 full part; and
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be properly reported to the relevant internal and external authorities and dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

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 for the purposes of this policy, adult at risk 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 an health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

Persons affected

- All trustees, volunteers, and staff.
- All beneficiaries including those attending any activity or service that is being delivered/provided from the village hall charity property.
- All visitors and contractors.

Commitments & responsibilities

WVH Board of Trustees & WVH Management Committee

1. All Trustees and Committee members will familiarise themselves with safeguarding responsibilities and ensure that they understand the principles set out in this policy.

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2. To ensure accountability for reporting, the Trustees will nominate a Safeguarding Lead to have oversight of all safeguarding related issues.
3. WVH Management Committee will nominate a Safeguarding Officer to work with the Safeguarding Lead to ensure this policy is implemented and to provide effective cover for when the Safeguarding Lead is absent.
4. Both the Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Officer will undertake training where appropriate on safeguarding issues.
5. The Trustees will annually review this policy to ensure it is a.) compliant with the law and relevant safeguarding regulations b.) facilitating a safe environment for everyone accessing WVH
6. All Trustees and Committee members will work together to promote a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting welfare to be addressed.
7. The trustees will follow WVH's safe recruitment policy and support the Whistleblowing policy which help underpin this safeguarding policy.

WVH staff, volunteers & helpers

8. All Trustees, Committee members, staff, helpers or other volunteers will not have unsupervised access to children or adults at risk unless an appropriate risk assessment has been conducted.
9. All volunteers will familiarise themselves with safeguarding responsibilities and ensure they understand the principles set out in this policy.
10. All volunteers should report any safeguarding concerns to either the Safeguarding Lead or the Safeguarding Officer.

Contractors

11. Contractors engaged to carry out work at the premises must not be allowed unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults. Appropriate supervision will be arranged if necessary.

Hirers and beneficiaries

12. Hirers of the hall should consult the bookings flow chart before making a booking.
13. All hirers of the hall will be required to sign a hiring agreement when finalising a booking.
14. Hirers of the hall for a public one-off event which is for children and/or adults at risk (i.e. they are direct beneficiaries) will be required to provide the Safeguarding Lead with copies of the following documents before the booking is finalised:
 - Completed risk assessment including first-aid considerations
 - Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check: [Request a basic DBS check - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/request-a-basic-dbs-check)
 - Appropriate insurance
15. Hirers of the hall for a club or reoccurring activity which is for children and/or adults at risk will be required to provide the Safeguarding Lead with copies of the following documents before the booking is finalised:
 - Completed club booking application form
 - Completed risk assessment including first-aid considerations

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- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check: [Request a basic DBS check - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/request-a-basic-dbs-check) *
- Appropriate insurance
- Safeguarding policy
- Data protection policy (if applicable)
- Safe recruitment procedures (if applicable)

From **1 September 2026**, child-facing volunteers may need an Enhanced DBS check with a Children's Barred List check. The change mainly applies to volunteers who directly teach, train, coach, care for or supervise children often enough to meet the regulated activity rules. This could include youth groups, sports coaching, playgroups and children's activities.

Who to contact

The nominated Safeguarding Lead, who has oversight of all child and adult at risk safeguarding related matters, is Dr Elizabeth Hodges, Secretary:
hodgeselizabeth68@gmail.com

The nominated Safeguarding Officer working with the Safeguarding Lead, and deputising for the Safeguarding Lead when required, is Chris Glover, Grounds & Buildings:
traccg@hotmail.co.uk

If you wish to hire the hall for a public event and have queries relating to safeguarding matters or this policy, please contact the Safeguarding Lead in the first instance.

If you wish to report safeguarding concerns relating to suspected abuse or neglect, please contact either the Safeguarding Lead or the Safeguarding Officer.

Contact the emergency services (by calling 999) if there is a potential life-threatening situation including imminent danger to a child, young person, or adult.

The NSPCC has [guidance](#) and a telephone helpline available if you are worried about the safety of a child.

If you are a child who needs to talk to someone, you can contact Childline free for help and you don't have to let them know your name: childline.org.uk/kids | 0800 1111

The Ann Craft Trust has [guidance](#) and a telephone helpline available if you are worried about the safety of a vulnerable adult.

If WVH Board of Trustees are the subject of your concerns, you can instead report your concerns to The Charity Commission: You can report things that have happened, are happening, or are likely to happen. Only report issues to them that are of serious harm such as if someone's health or safety is in danger, for example if a charity does not implement its safeguarding policy.

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WVH Reporting Procedure: Child & Adult protection concerns

It is understandable that those raising concerns relating to suspected abuse or neglect will be worried about possible repercussions. WVH encourages openness and will support those who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken and no wrongdoing is found. WVH wants to promote and encourage an open and honest environment where concerns can be freely raised.

A report/disclosure to the Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Officer can be made in writing (by email or by letter to the Village Hall postal address) or reported verbally. Concerns raised should provide as much supporting evidence as possible about the grounds on which the disclosure is being made and about the grounds for believing that abuse or neglect has occurred.

All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child or adult at risk will be taken seriously and acted upon. 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 children) or adult at risk in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or adults at risk.

Dealing with Child or Adult Protection Concerns

The Safeguarding Lead has responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the relevant safeguarding agency. The Safeguarding Lead is required to:

- Take action no matter if the information received is non-recent or from an anonymous source.
- Contact the emergency services if there is a potential life-threatening situation including imminent danger to a child, young person, or adult.
- Within 24 hours of receiving a report/disclosure of current suspected abuse or neglect, make appropriate referrals and consultations to a.) Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board or b.) Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Keep a record of all information received and actions taken. Unless one or more of the Trustees is implicated in the disclosure, provide a summary of the disclosure to be shared in confidence with WVH Trustees and agree appropriate action.
- If there is an immediate risk, put in place agreed interim safeguarding measures: for example, the suspension of an individual that reported concerns relate to.

The Safeguarding Adults Board or Safeguarding Children Partnership will advise the Safeguarding Lead if the matter reaches the threshold for their involvement. Until this advice is received, the Safeguarding Lead **will not inform** the subject of the allegation (the person against whom the allegation has been made) about the complaint/disclosure.

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If the matter does not meet the statutory threshold, and is passed back to WVH to deal with, an internal investigation may be conducted by the Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Officer. The Safeguarding Lead, as appropriate, shall update the person making the disclosure including the nature of the investigation to be undertaken, the likely timescale, and whether the subject of the allegation will be informed about the complaint/disclosure.

In all cases, the matter shall be investigated as speedily as is consistent with thoroughness and fairness. The Safeguarding Lead and Chair of Trustees, as appropriate, may report in each case to the Board of Trustees, the Charity Commission, or other regulatory body (such as OFSTED, the Police, Social Services) the final outcome of any investigation and of any action that might arise from it. The action taken, including, in broad outline, the outcome of any investigation, shall be reported to the person making the disclosure and in the event that no action is taken that person shall be given an explanation.

Welfare concerns

This is when no one has been harmed in any way, but a child, young person or adult shows signs of being in need. It's when there are noted concerns for their health, wellbeing or safety if they don't get help.

Within seven days, the safeguarding lead or safeguarding officer should speak with the person in need about the concerns raised. If it is appropriate, they may also need to speak with their family or carer. This is to ensure that the person in need and their family/carer have the support they require. This may include the Safeguarding Lead:

- Facilitating access to support services, advice or information.
- If the person or family already has a lead professional, for example a social worker, speaking to them about concerns raised.

Responding to historic or non-recent concerns

Historical allegations of abuse will be taken as seriously as contemporary allegations. It's never too late to report abuse.

The Safeguarding Lead can:

- Help an individual make a formal complaint to the police about non-recent abuse
- Help facilitate a referral to social services, with the consent of the person who experienced the abuse if appropriate/possible.
- Signpost the person who experienced the abuse to relevant support groups that can help them.

Policy adopted: September 2021, Revised January 2023, July 2024, October 2026