

Hough, Basford & Chorlton Village Hall

Registered Charity 520065

SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

This policy is to be reviewed at the first Management Committee Meeting after every AGM.

Policy Statement

1. All Management Committee members and staff (if any) have a duty to promote and safeguard the welfare and safety of children and vulnerable adults who use Hough, Basford & Chorlton Village Hall and its facilities. This policy is in place to protect all vulnerable persons regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, religion or faith. The Management Committee will maintain up-to-date awareness, with relevant training where necessary, of relevant legislation and guidelines.

2. This policy describes the safeguarding undertakings required of Organisations who hire the hall for activities which cater for children or vulnerable adults.

3. The Management Committee do not normally directly organise events and activities which involve the need to supervise children or vulnerable adults as part of their function. When the Management Committee does organise events which children or vulnerable adults attend then the policy is always that children or vulnerable adults must be accompanied by parents, guardians or their carers.

4. DBS checks are, therefore, not normally required by Committee members. Should any Committee member have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults as part of a specific activity organised by the Committee, then DBS checks will be undertaken in compliance with the Protection of Children Act [1999], The Childrens Act [2004] and part V of the Police Act [1997] and any succeeding legislation.

Definitions

5. Safeguarding relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Safeguarding is defined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013' 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 and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

6. Trustees of charities which work with vulnerable groups must always act in their best interests and ensure they take all reasonable steps to prevent harm to them. Having safeguards in place not only protects and promotes the welfare of children and vulnerable adults but also it enhances the confidence of trustees, staff, volunteers, parents/carers and the general public [Charity Commission].

7. For the purposes of child protection legislation the term 'child' refers to anyone up to the age of 18 years. A vulnerable adult is a person 'who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation". (Who Decides, Lord Chancellor's Department – 1997]

8. Abuse is a violation of a child or vulnerable adult'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 an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it [The Department of Health in its 'No Secrets' Report].

Procedures

9. All Hirers of the hall who provide activities for children or vulnerable adults, be they organisations or individual professionals, will be given a copy of this policy as part of the Hire Agreement.

10. Organisations must provide the Bookings Officer with a copy of their Safeguarding Policy for Children and/or Vulnerable Adults. Professional individuals will be required to show their Disclosure and Barring Service [DBS] disclosure certificate and the disclosure number will be recorded.

11. The Hirer must ensure that any activities for children under eighteen years of age comply with the provisions of The Children Act of 1989 and 2004 and any relevant succeeding legislation. Only fit and proper persons who have passed the appropriate DBS checks are to have access to the children or vulnerable adults.

12. The Hirer retains the overall responsibility to safely supervise the children or vulnerable adults within this safeguarding policy and cannot delegate this responsibility to any other person or organisation. Hirers who are providing activities for children or vulnerable adults have the responsibility within their own Safeguarding Policy to report to the Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Officer or the police any concerns they have about risks or abuse.

13. Notwithstanding these responsibilities of hiring organisations and individuals, the first priority of the Management Committee is always to ensure the safety and protection of children and vulnerable adults. To this end it is the responsibility of all Committee Members, staff, volunteers and visitors to the hall to act on any suspicion or evidence of abuse or neglect (see the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998). Where Committee Members, staff, volunteers or visiting members of the public do receive disclosures of abuse or observe children or vulnerable adults who may be at risk this must be taken seriously and dealt with speedily.

14. Any concerns must be passed on immediately to the named Safeguarding Lead within the Management Committee – [Liz Prince – Tel no. 07801 353033]. This lead Committee Member has the responsibility for reporting concerns that arise and seeking appropriate advice from Cheshire East Council’s Designated Safeguarding Officer or the police. In emergencies, people concerned about possible abuse must contact the Lead Cheshire East Council’s Designated Safeguarding Officer on 0300 123 5010 [8:30am to 5pm Monday to Thursday and 8:30 am to 4:30pm Friday or 0300 123 5022 at all other times including bank holidays] or contact the police directly.

15. With respect to one-off activities such as children’s parties, it is the Hirer’s responsibility to ensure the safety of children who attend the party. The Hirer must ensure and that sufficient responsible adults, including parents, are present to assist with the supervision and safety of children. The supervision of children must be visible at all times. The Hirer must ensure that entertainers who they may hire are suitable for the purpose.

Summary

16. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Management Committee and/or when changes occur in National Legislation or Procedures. New Management Committee members will be provided with an understanding of their responsibilities in line with this policy.