

Rowsley Village Hall

Safeguarding Policy

Our Safeguarding Policy

Rowsley Village Hall believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. **We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe.** We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

We have a duty to safeguard all vulnerable users of the hall and its premises and those who may come into contact with vulnerable users. Vulnerable users could include children, young people, adults with learning difficulties or physical disability, frail people, elderly people and carers.

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Rowsley Village Hall.

Principles

The welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount and is the responsibility of everyone. All children and vulnerable adults, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse, whether physical, verbal, sexual, bullying, exclusion or neglect. Bullying, shouting, physical violence, sexism and racism towards children and vulnerable adults will not be permitted or tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is:

To protect children, young and other vulnerable people who receive Rowsley Village Hall services and this includes the children of adults who use our services.

To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children and vulnerable people, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children

We recognise that:

All children and vulnerable people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

Some children and vulnerable people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

Working in partnership with children and vulnerable people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

We will seek to keep children and vulnerable people safe by:

Valuing them, listening to and respecting them

Adopting protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers

Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures

Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training

Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made

Sharing information about protection and good practice with children, vulnerable people, parents, staff and volunteers

Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents, children and vulnerable people appropriately

Always responding to any concerns regarding the physical, sexual, emotional or psychological safety of a child or other vulnerable person.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Policy & Procedures Statement

1. No member of the trustees, helpers or other volunteers or staff will have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults unless they have been through the safe recruitment procedure and introductory Child Protection or Vulnerable Adults Protection training.
2. All suspicions or allegations of abuse against vulnerable adults or a child will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately.
3. All staff and volunteers need to be aware of this policy, child protection, and vulnerable adult issues, and should be offered introductory training.
4. There will be a nominated and named Safeguarding representative to whom any suspicions or concerns should be reported. This person is to be nominated annually at the AGM.
5. The management committee will endeavour to keep the premises safe for use by children and vulnerable adults. The committee recognises that a higher standard of safety is required where use is made by small children, those who cannot read safety notices and physically disabled adults.
6. Any organisations or individuals hiring the hall for the purposes of holding activities where Ofsted registration is required should show their registration and their own child protection policy. Safe recruitment processes should be used to appoint staff who will be working with children or vulnerable adults in any kind of activity.
7. The committee will ensure that hirers are made aware of their obligations under the Licensing Act 2003 to ensure that alcohol is not sold to those under the age of 18. The committee will ensure that hirers are aware that no children may be admitted to films when they are below the age classification for the film or show. No gambling or entertainment of an adult or sexual nature shall be permitted on the premises.
8. These policies and procedures will be reviewed annually and updated as appropriate in interim periods.

Safe Recruitment Procedures

All staff working directly for the village hall must:

- Complete an application form which shows their employment history
- Provide at least two references
- Undergo a criminal records check processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if requested by the Rowsley Management Committee

- If working directly with young people or vulnerable adults, one of the references should come from someone who has supervised them working with children, young people or vulnerable adults before.
- For certain roles an enhanced check will be required, to include certain information held on the children and adults barred list, together with any information held locally by police forces that is reasonably considered to be relevant to the applied for post.
- When a check has been processed by the DBS and completed the individual receives a DBS certificate and the Rowsley Village Hall Committee will retain a Central Record of DBS checks made, including certificate number, update service number, and date of issue.

These checks are to assist employers in making safer employment and licensing decisions.

Any volunteers working for the Village Hall Committee and having unsupervised access to vulnerable users may also be required to go through these procedures.

Reporting Incidents

The nominated Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding & Protection representative will have responsibility for reporting concerns as a matter of urgency to the Local Authority Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult lead agency.

The representative may chose to have a confidential conversation with others in order to clear up any misunderstandings or to corroborate and support any suspicions before reporting a concern to the lead agency.

The nominated person will:

- Know who to contact at the local authority
- Know who to contact in social services for advice and referrals
- Know about help lines and other sources of help for children and vulnerable people
- Ensure there is an environment in which staff and volunteers have the opportunity to raise any child protection or vulnerable person protection concerns.

Signed _____

Safeguarding Officer, Rowsley Village Hall Management Committee

Signed _____

Chairperson, Rowsley Village Hall Management Committee

This policy was last reviewed in **August 2022**