

# **Biddenden Village Halls and Sports Committee**

Registered Charity 302684

## **Safeguarding Policy**

### **1 Statement of Intent**

- The Biddenden Village Halls and Sports Committee (VHSC), its staff and volunteers have a duty to safeguard vulnerable users of the hall and its premises and those who may come into contact with vulnerable users.
- They should respond to any concerns they may have regarding the physical, sexual, emotional or psychological safety of a vulnerable person or concerns relating to discriminatory or financial violation or exploitation of a vulnerable person.
- This policy is in place to protect all vulnerable persons regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, religion or faith. This policy applies to all VHSC managed facilities.

### **2 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 will not be permitted or tolerated.**

**The responsibility for ensuring the safety of children or vulnerable adults while at VHSC facilities rest with the individual or organisation hiring them.**

### **3 Policy Statement**

- No member of the committee of trustees, helpers, other volunteers or staff will have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults.
- All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child or vulnerable adult will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately.
- All staff and volunteers need to be aware of this policy, child protection, and vulnerable adult issues. A copy of the appendices will be provided to all whom request it.
- There will be a nominated and named **Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Representative (CPVAR)** to whom any suspicions or concerns should be reported. This person is **Joanna Piper** (contactable on 07790 821 192 or by e mail at [secretary@biddendenvillagehalls.org](mailto:secretary@biddendenvillagehalls.org))
- The trustees will endeavour to keep the premises safe for use by children and vulnerable adults and they recognise that a higher standard of safety is required where use is made by small children, those who cannot read safety notices and physically and mentally disabled adults.
- Any organisations or individuals hiring VHSC facilities for the purposes of holding activities involving children or vulnerable adults are confirming, by signing the terms and conditions of booking, that they have appropriate safeguarding policy in place.
- VHSC 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 Trust 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 VHSC premises.

This policy and procedures will be reviewed annually and updated as appropriate in the interim periods.

## Safeguarding Procedures

- All trustees, volunteers and staff will be given information about child protection awareness (<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/get-expert-training/child-protection-introduction/>).
- An annual review will take place to allow for any required up-date of policies and or procedures. New trustees, volunteers and staff must be given an induction to this policy and understand their responsibilities.
- A copy of the policy will be displayed for the attention of all in the village hall, on the VHSC website, and made available on request to hirers, together with a poster outlining how to report concerns (see Appendix 1 and 2).
- Organisations hiring VHSC facilities for activities for children will be asked to confirm that they have suitable Child Protection policies in place before the first booking commences. Individuals hiring a hall for activities for children will be made aware of this policy, as well as Ofsted requirement (see Appendix 3). Organisations hiring a hall for activities specifically involving vulnerable adults will be asked to confirm that they have a suitable Vulnerable Adults Protection policy before the first booking commences. Other organisations hiring a hall whose activities may involve vulnerable adults will be made aware of this policy.
- The committee will require hirers to report any damage, breakages or safety issues needing attention to the caretaker or a committee member, who will inform the appropriate persons. These will be dealt with as soon as practicable, in the light of the circumstances, with provision to prevent access by children and vulnerable adults pending repairs where and when appropriate.
- A hiring agreement that includes appropriate clauses will be entered into for all hiring for licensable activities. VHSC will ensure that these provisions are observed when holding any licensable activities itself.
- Contractors engaged to carry out work at VHSC premises must not be allowed unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults. All work should be undertaken when facilities are not in use, but appropriate supervision will be arranged if it is necessary to carry out work when this is not possible.
- If the premises might be used by more than one hirer, the attention of hirers will be drawn to the need to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are supervised when using toilets.
- The supervision of all groups remains the responsibility of the people who hire a VHSC facility and sign the terms and conditions of booking or rental agreement.

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### Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults: Handling Concerns

#### Users of VHSC facilities

It is the responsibility of VHSC facility users to report incidents to the relevant authority who will give guidance on what, if anything, needs to be done:

#### Incidents involving concerns about an adult

Contact Kent Social Services on 03000 41 61 61 or Email [social.service@kent.gov.uk](mailto:social.service@kent.gov.uk)

#### Incidents involving concerns about a child

Kent Social Services on 03000 41 11 11 or Email [social.services@kent.gov.uk](mailto:social.services@kent.gov.uk)

Outside normal hours call 03000 41 91 91

- Additional support is available through:
  - NSPCC on 0808 800 500 Email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)
  - 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Summary' [Layout 1 \(whatdotheyknow.com\)](http://whatdotheyknow.com)
  - Concerns about an adult [Report abuse - Kent County Council](#)

#### Don't know what to do?

If there is any doubt on what to do, or guidance is needed on the steps to be taken, the VHSC Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Representative should be contacted. This person is Jeanette Oatway (contactable on 01580291463 or by e mail at [jeannetteoatway@btinternet.com](mailto:jeannetteoatway@btinternet.com))

#### Incidences relating to VHSC staff, committee members and volunteers

In incidences relating to VHSC staff, committee members and volunteers the nominated Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Representative (CPVAR) will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the local authority Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult lead agency. The representative may choose to have a confidential discussion 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 CPVAR will:

- know who to contact at the local authority
- know who to contact in Social Services for advice and referrals
- know about helplines and other sources of help for children and young people and vulnerable adults
- ensure that there is an environment in which staff have the opportunity to raise any child protection or vulnerable adult protection concerns.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Ofsted Requirements**

If you work as a childminder, or provide day care for children under 8 years old for more than two hours each day you must register with Ofsted and be inspected regularly. Nursery education settings which are on their local authority's directory to provide free places for three to four year olds must also be inspected regularly by Ofsted. ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk))

These requirements cover playgroups, nurseries, after school clubs and holiday clubs, amongst others

*Policy presented to VHSC for adoption 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and approved 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018, reviewed September 2020, August 2022, and July 2023*