

# **Sturminster Marshall Memorial Village Hall.**

Charity No. 301186

## **Safeguarding Policy**

### **Introduction/Purpose**

Safeguarding is the action taken to promote the welfare of children or other vulnerable groups and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Village Hall Committees have a duty of care as trustees of the charity to all those using the village hall. This includes all volunteers, staff and contractors undertaking work etc. All reasonable steps need to be taken to prevent harm and to respond appropriately when harm does occur. Safeguarding policies and procedures that everyone has read and understood must be in place and used in the day-to-day operation of the hall.

There are several important pieces of legislation that promote and safeguard children and adults at risk. The Care Act 2014 sets out the processes and definitions and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 provides the framework for The Vetting and Barring Scheme and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. The Children Act 1989 and 2004 is also key but there are many other important pieces of legislation.

There are 6 main principles of safeguarding as outlined in the Care Act 2014;

EMPOWERMENT – PREVENTION – PROTECTION – PROPORTIONALITY –  
PARTNERSHIPS - ACCOUNTABILITY

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 within 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. Sturminster Marshall Memorial Village Hall has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

### **Aims and Responsibilities**

This policy defines how Sturminster Marshall Memorial Village Hall operates to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse or neglect. We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who enters our premises including children, young people and adults at risk involved as visitors and/or as participants in all activities and events. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our trustees, volunteers, and staff.

### **Definitions:**

**Children and young people** are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old.

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 a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

### **Persons affected**

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

### **Policy principles**

Sturminster Marshall Memorial Village Hall:

- 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.
- is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.
- is aware of the work of their local safeguarding Board/Partnership and other support organisations on the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of children and adults at risk. The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.
- 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.

- All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child or adult at risk will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately. The appointed person will know who to contact and where to go for support and advice in relation to an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint.
- 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; or
  - 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.

### **Hiring Agreement**

The Trustees will ensure that all hirers of the hall have signed a hiring agreement. This will require all hirers who wish to use the hall for activities which include children and adults at risk, other than for hire for private parties arranged for invited friends and family, to either produce a copy of their Safeguarding Policy and evidence that they have carried out relevant checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) when requested to do so or, confirm that they have understood and will adhere to the hall's principles and procedures with regard to safeguarding.

### **Review and Action**

- We will discuss and regularly review this policy annually, and adjust our practices as required, to ensure that it reflects up to date legislation and best practice.
- We will assess any significant new or revised policy or and procedure as it relates to **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect.**
- All Trustees will sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office which includes a declaration that they have no convictions in relation to abuse.
- All trustees, staff and volunteers and Users will familiarise themselves with safeguarding responsibilities, undertake training *where appropriate* on safeguarding issues where it is available and offered by their local safeguarding board/partnership or other local support organisation and ensure that they understand the principles set out in this policy.
- All trustees, staff and volunteers will work together to promote a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting welfare to be addressed.
- No trustees, staff and volunteers will have unsupervised access to children or adults at risk unless appropriately vetted..
- The village hall will follow safe recruitment practices.

- A Trustee will be appointed to be responsible for child and adult at risk safeguarding matters. This person will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the relevant safeguarding agency.
- *Please contact one of the Trustees.*

Policy Agreed and Adopted     3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025

Review date:                      3<sup>rd</sup> June 2027

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 3 June 2025