Oake Village Hall Management Committee

Safeguarding Policy

1. **Purpose**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect

This policy defines how the management committee of Oake 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 as visitors/or as participants in all activities and events. All adults and children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation has an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our trustees volunteers and staff.

2. **Definitions**

Children and young people are defined as those aged under 18. This policy will apply to all staff, contractors, and volunteers to support their work.

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as :
- Protecting them from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of their health and development
- Ensuring that they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcome.

Adults 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 paragraph 14.2 of the Care Act 2015

- 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/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.

There are four main types of abuse, emotional, physical, sexual, and neglect. Financial abuse is also a consideration.

3. **Persons affected**

All trustees, volunteers and staff

All those attending any activity or service that is being delivered from the premises of Oake Village Hall.

4. Policy Principles

There can be no excuse for not taking all reasonable action to protect adults at risk of abuse, exploitation, radicalisation and mistreatment. All UK citizens 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.

The management committee of Oake Village Hall has a zero tolerance approach to abuse.

The welfare of vulnerable adults is paramount and is the responsibility of everyone.All children and vulnerable adults without exception have the right to protection from abuse such as physical, verbal, sexual, bullying, exclusion or neglect.

Any form of abuse will not be permitted or tolerated.

The management committee of Oake 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's Act 1989 and 2004

The management committee of Oake Village Hall is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.

The management committee of Oake Village Hall is aware of their local safeguarding Board/partnership and other support organisations on the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of adults vulnerable from abuse. This policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

The management committee of Oake Village Hall 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
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be properly reported to the relevant internal and external authorities and dealt with swiftly and appropriately

5.Procedures

Members of the committee will have signed the Trustee Statement of Eligibility form for trustees which includes a declaration that they have no convictions in relation to abuse.

All members of the committee will familiarise themselves with safeguarding responsibilities, undertake training on safeguarding issues where it is available, and understand the principles set out in this policy

All members of the committee will work together to promote a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting welfare to be addressed.

All members of the committee, helpers and other volunteers will not have unsupervised access to children or adults at risk, unless appropriately vetted.

The hall committee will follow safe recruitment practices.

A member of the committee will be appointed to be responsible for safeguarding matters. This person will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise.

The hall committee will ensure that all hall hirers have signed a hiring agreement This will require all hirers for activities which involve children or adults at risk, other than hire for private parties for invited friends and family, should produce a relevant DBS certificate, thus ensuring that they are fully cognisant of relevant and current safeguarding requirements.

When using the hall, hirers must adopt suitable procedures to ensure that they fully comply with the law, good practice and appropriate levels of supervision at all times.
The committee reserves the right to require hirers to provide copies of their own safeguarding policies and procedure and relevant training in order to give appropriate assurance as necessary.

The committee will monitor and evaluate the Policy annually or in the light of any changes to Government legislation and guidance.

Records will be kept of any referrals and any notes, records of conversations concerning that referral are kept by the management committee and stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people.

Responding to Abuse or an Allegation

- Reassure the person concerned.
- Listen to what they are saying
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief
- Tell them that the information will be treated seriously.
- Ask questions to ensure that you gather the full facts, but do not start to investigate or ask detailed probing questions
- Don't promise to keep it a secret
- Tell the child or adult at risk what you are going to do next to keep him/her safe

Recording an Allegation

- Use the adult at risk/child's words where possible.
- Record what they are saying.
- Record what you have been told/witnessed as soon as possible.

Allegations Made Against a Volunteer or Paid Member of Staff

This should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead. If appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead will consult with/make a referral to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

Making a Referral.

Please dial 999 if the person is in immediate danger.

For Concerns about a Child.

If you have a concern about a child or a young person, please contact Somerset Children's Services on the below number.

For Concerns about an Adult.

If you have a concern about an adult, please contact Somerset Adult Social Care on the below number.

A member of the committee will be appointed to be responsible for safeguarding matters

Somerset Children's Services	03001232224
Somerset Adult Social Care	03001232224
NSPCC	0808 800 5000
Childline	0800 1111
National Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 2000 247
Hourglass (Action on Elder Abuse)	0808 8088 141
The Samaritans	116 123
Stop It Now (Child Sexual Abuse)	0808 1000 900
Family Lives (Parenting & family support)	0808 800 2222
Police non emergency	101
Police emergency	999

The **Safer Halls** poster is displayed on the noticeboard in the hall and includes the numbers noted above.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the hall committee on 2nd December 2024

Sue Earthrowl and Kirsten Horton are the designated Safeguarding officers for Oake Village Hall

This policy will be reviewed annually