West Meon Village Hall – Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Safeguarding policy for children and vulnerable adults

This document is the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy of the West Meon Village Hall (the 'Village Hall')

Guiding 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.

This policy is in place to protect all vulnerable persons regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, religion or faith. It is based on the guidance and example document in the ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) Information Sheet 5, "Village halls, children and young people".

A copy of this policy will be displayed in the Village Hall and on the West Meon Parish Council website. Emergency contact numbers will be displayed in the Village Hall.

The Village Hall Management Committee (the 'management committee'), its volunteers and staff have a duty to safeguard vulnerable users of the Village Hall 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.

Policy Statement

1. **Policy**
   No member of the management committee, helpers or other volunteers will have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults unless appropriately vetted. Ideally a minimum of 2 appropriately vetted adults will be present whenever there are children or vulnerable adults to be supervised.
   Procedure
   All members of the management committee, helpers or other volunteers will be made aware of this policy and the relevant vetting procedures. Hirers must ensure that any activities for children, young people and other vulnerable adults are only provided by fit and proper persons in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and any subsequent legislation (the 'Acts'). If requested, hirers must provide the management committee with a copy of their Safeguarding Policy and evidence that they have carried out relevant checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The management committee must follow safe recruitment practices.

2. **Policy**
   A member of the management committee will be appointed to be responsible for child and vulnerable adult protection matters. This person will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to relevant protection agency.
   Procedure
   The named person is **Caroline Butcher**
   until **1 March 2027**

3. **Policy**
   All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child or vulnerable adult will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately.
   Procedure
   The appointed person will:
   - Know who to contact for advice and referrals
   - Know about helplines and other sources of help for children and young people and vulnerable adults
   - Ensure an environment that gives the opportunity to raise any child protection or vulnerable adult protection concerns

4. **Policy**
   All members of the management committee and volunteers will be required to become aware of safeguarding all hall users and the name of our safeguarding officer.

Procedure
Copies of the relevant Acts and Department of Health guidelines will, if necessary, be held by the named person as reference material for volunteers. Appropriate training for members of the management committee will be encouraged. Appendices A, B and C in ACRE's Information Sheet 5, Village halls, children and young people, should be made available to all members of the management committee, helpers and volunteers.

5. Policy
The members of the management committee will endeavour to keep the premises safe for use by children and vulnerable adults. The management committee recognises that a higher standard of safety is required for small children and those who cannot read notices such as adults with physical or learning disabilities.

Procedure
The members of the management committee will carry out regular health, safety and fire risk assessments in line with current legislation. The management committee will require hirers to report any damage, breakages or safety issues needing attention to the named person which will be dealt with as soon as is practicable.

Organisations hiring the Village Hall for activities for children may be asked to show their Child Protection policy, and organisations hiring the Village Hall for activities specifically involving vulnerable adults may be asked to show their Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy, before the first booking commences. Other organisations or individuals hiring the Village Hall whose activities may involve children or vulnerable adults will be made aware of this policy.

Contractors engaged to carry out work at the Village Hall must not be allowed unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults. Appropriate supervision will be arranged if necessary.

6. Policy
The management 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. Only activities permitted by the Premises Licence will be allowed.

Procedure
The hiring agreement for the Village Hall will set out the obligations of the hirer with regard to alcohol and other licenced entertainment.

7. Policy
The policies and procedures will be reviewed annually.

Procedure
New management committee members and volunteers will be provided with

i. an understanding of their responsibilities in matters of protection for children and vulnerable adults
ii. a copy of this policy and any documents referred to in it