

Alresford Village Hall Safeguarding and Vulnerable Persons Policy Statement

Alresford Village Hall, Ford Lane, Alresford CO7 8AT Registered Charity ref 301233 is managed on behalf of the Village by Trustees that include representatives from regular village organisations and elected village representatives. The hall consists of a main hall with kitchen and toilets, a small function/meeting room with access to separate toilet from main hall. Both are accessed separately via entrance foyer.

All Alresford Village Hall Management Committee members, staff and volunteers have a duty to safeguard vulnerable users of the hall and its premises and those who may encounter vulnerable users. (Vulnerable users could include children, young people, adults with learning difficulties or physical disability, frail, elderly people, and carers).

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.

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.

Policy 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 (see box below) and introductory Child Protection or Vulnerable Adults Protection training.
2. All suspicious or allegations of abuse against a vulnerable adults or 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. A copy of the appendices will be provided to all who request it.
4. There will be a nominated and named Vulnerable Users representative to who any suspicions or concerns should be reported. This person is the Chair of the Alresford Village Hall Management Committee.
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 individual 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 the interim periods.

Safe Recruitment

All staff, working directly for the village hall must:

- complete an application form which shows their employment history
- provide at least two references

If working directly with children or 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
- An employer may request a criminal record check processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as part of its recruitment process.
- For certain roles the check will also include information held on the DBS's children and adults barred lists, together with any information held locally by police forces that is reasonably considered to be relevant to the applied for post.
- These checks are to assist employers in making safer recruitment and licensing decisions. However, a check is just one part of robust recruitment practice. When a check has been processed by the DBS and completed the individual will receive a DBS certificate.

Any volunteers working for the village hall committee and having unsupervised access to vulnerable users (e.g. running children's entertainment) may also be required to go through these procedures.

Reporting Incidents

The nominated Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult representative 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 to clear up any misunderstanding or to corroborate and support any suspicions before reporting a concern to the lead agency.

The nominated person should:

- 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.

Ofsted Requirement

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 years olds must also be inspected regularly by Ofsted. (www.ofsted.gov.uk). These requirements cover playgroups, nurseries, after school clubs and holiday clubs, amongst others.