



Huish Champflower Village Hall

Vulnerable Adult and Child Protection Policy

The Huish Champflower Village Hall Committee recognises that abuse can take many forms, whether it is physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. The Village Hall Committee is committed to practice that which protects children and vulnerable adults from harm. All members of the Village Hall Committee accept and recognize their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues, which cause such harm

The Huish Champflower Village Hall Committee have a duty to safeguard children and vulnerable adults who utilise the hall and its facilities, and those who may come into contact with vulnerable users.

The Village Hall Committee believes that:

- The welfare of the child and vulnerable persons is paramount.
- All children and vulnerable adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All Committee Members, Volunteers and employees of the Village Hall should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

The Village Hall Committee will ensure that:

- All children and vulnerable adults will be treated equally and with respect and dignity.
- The duty of care to children will always be put first.
- A balanced relationship based on mutual trust will be built which empowers the children and vulnerable persons to share in the decision making process.
- Enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism.
- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned.
- All adult Committee Members, Volunteers and employees of the Village Hall provide a positive role model for dealing with other people.
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- It will keep up-to-date with health & safety legislation.
- It will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children and undertakes to follow relevant emerging requirements and recommendations in a timely and fulsome manner.

Definitions

Abuse - abuse is described as “a violation of an individual’s human or civil rights by any other person or persons”

Vulnerable Adult - a vulnerable adult is defined as a person who: “may be in need of services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness: and who may not be able to take care of him or herself, or is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.”

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Responsibilities of the Village Hall

At the outset of any production involving children the Village Hall will:

Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process.

Identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for child protection.

Ensure that children are supervised at all times.

Know how to get in touch with the local authority social services, in case it needs to report a concern.

Unsupervised Contact

The Village Hall Committee will ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children.

There will always be two adults in the room when working with children.

Suspicion of abuse

Should anyone see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of the Village Hall, they should make their concerns known to the Chairman or any committee member.

A note should be made of what was witnessed as well as any response, in case there is a follow-up investigation.

Disclosure of abuse

If a child confides in any member of the village hall committee, volunteer or employee of the village hall that abuse has taken place they should:

- Remain calm and in control but not delay taking action.
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to explain, at their own pace, and to ask questions only for clarification. Questions that suggest a particular answer should not be asked.
- Not make a promise to the child to keep a secret.
- Use the first opportunity to share the information with the person with responsibility for child protection.
- Make it clear to the child that there may be a need to share the information with others.
- Make it clear that only people who need to know, and who should be able to help, would be informed
- Reassure the child that ‘they did the right thing’ in telling someone.
- Tell the child what will happen next.
- Speak immediately to the person with responsibility for child protection. It is that person’s responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually social services or the police.

- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, a note of what was said, using the child's own words should be made..

Recording

In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, the details of an allegation or reported incident will be recorded, regardless of whether or not the concerns have been shared with a statutory child protection agency.

An accurate note should be made of the date and time of the incident or disclosure, the parties involved, what was said or done and by whom, any action taken to investigate the matter, any further action taken. The record should be signed and dated.

The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

Rights & Confidentiality

If a complaint is made against a volunteer, employee or Committee Member of the Village Hall, he or she will be made aware of his rights under the Village Hall's disciplinary procedures.

All concerned parties have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998. It should be remembered that any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.

In criminal law the Crown, or other prosecuting authority, has to prove guilt and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

This policy will be reviewed by Huish Champflower Village Hall Committee

- *on an annual basis at the Annual General Meeting and/or*
- *when changes occur in National Legislation or Procedures*

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Village Hall policies

- *Equal Opportunities Policy*
- *Health & Safety Policy.*

Note

The Somerset Safeguarding Children Board has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the well being of children and young people in Somerset and to ensure the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements. If anyone is worried about a child suffering from neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse, they should call: 0300 123 2224. or visit

<https://slp.somerset.org.uk/sites/somersetlscb/SitePages/Home.aspx>

