

Etal Village Hall - Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding policy first adopted on October 11th, 2018, committee meeting.

To be reviewed each year at October meeting.

Reviewed 3rd October 2019

Reviewed 19th October 2022

Reviewed 25th October 2023

Reviewed January 22nd 2025

Next review January 2026

Definitions and principles:

All Etal Village Hall Committee members, volunteers, and any staff the hall might in future employ, have a duty to safeguard vulnerable users of the hall and its premises 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.

This policy is in place to protect all vulnerable persons regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, religion or faith.

The welfare of the child, young person 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 will not be permitted or tolerated.

For these purposes children includes anyone below the age of 18.

A vulnerable adult is defined as: - 'a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or may be in need of community care services by reason of 'mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'.

Policy Statement

1. No member of the trustees/management committee, 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 suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child/vulnerable adult will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately by the designated safeguarding person.
3. All members of the committee and volunteers need to be aware of this policy, and aware of how to spot signs of possible abuse – information on this is contained in Appendix A. A copy of the appendices will be provided to all members.
4. 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.
5. Any organisations or individuals hiring the hall for the purposes of holding activities where Ofsted registration is required (see table below) should show their registration and their own safeguarding policy. Safe recruitment processes must be used to appoint staff who will be working with children or vulnerable adults in any kind of activity.
6. 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 on show. No gambling or entertainment of an adult or sexual nature shall be permitted on the premises.
7. This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary in the interim periods.

Safe Recruitment :

Volunteers working for the village hall committee, and having unsupervised access to children, young people or vulnerable adults may need to be registered with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). They will need to be registered if they are undertaking Regulated Activity but only if it is done regularly. 'Regularly' means carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more) or on four or more days in a 30-day period (or in some cases overnight). For more information see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Useful Procedures to support Safeguarding:

1. All trustees and volunteers will be given information about safeguarding (See Appendix A) and should have the opportunity to attend introductory level Child Protection training and Protection of Vulnerable Adults training where relevant.
2. A copy of the policy will be made available to all on the Management Committee, displayed inside the hall and on the hall website, and made available to all hirers.
3. Organisations hiring the hall for activities for children and/or vulnerable adults will be asked to show their own safeguarding policy before the first booking commences.
4. Individuals/organisations hiring the hall for activities for children or vulnerable adults will be made aware of the hall's safeguarding policy. Acceptance of the Village Hall's safeguarding policy is part of the agreed contract taken out on hiring the hall.
5. The committee will require hirers to report any damage, breakages or safety issues needing attention to the booking secretary, who will inform the appropriate people. These will be dealt with as soon as practicable, in the light of the circumstances, with provision to prevent access by children and vulnerable adults pending repair where appropriate.
6. A hiring agreement which includes appropriate clauses will be entered into for all hiring's for licensable activities. The committee will ensure that these provisions are observed when holding any licensable activities itself. The committee will give written instructions to those selling alcohol concerning the licensing offences which must be avoided.
8. Contractors engaged to carry out work at the premises must not be allowed unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults. Appropriate supervision will be arranged if necessary.
9. If the premises might be used by more than one hirer, the attention of hirers will be drawn to the need to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are supervised when using toilets.

Guide to Appendices:

Appendix A – Forms and signs of abuse – how to recognise it.

Appendix B - Guidelines for dealing with disclosure or signs of abuse.

How to respond and what to do.

Contact details of Designated Persons on Etal Hall committee.

Contact details (Northumberland county) for DP making a referral or discussing concerns.

Copy of concern form to be used when recording an incident that needs referral.