



Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

1. General statement of policy

Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall management/trustees are committed to the belief that all children and adults have a right to be protected from harm whilst using the Hall's facilities and whilst engaging with Hall representatives. WOTG VH recognises it's responsibility for the protection of children and of adults.

(The legal definition of a child is up until the age of 18 years)

All WOTG VH's volunteers and contractors are required to comply with this policy. In summary WOTG VH will:

- Promote good practice;
- Enable all volunteers and hirers of the VH to make informed and confident responses to specific issues around safeguarding children and adults; and
- Provide an understanding of who to contact and how to act if there are safeguarding concerns identified.

2. WOTG VH: working with children and adults

The role of WOTG VH is to provide facilities for recreation, education and amenity and to encourage a community spirit, with the objective of improving the conditions of life for the residents of Weston on the Green and the surrounding area.

This entails managing Weston on the Green Village Hall, which is available for hire, and providing community and fundraising events and activities. Contact between the VHC and volunteers of WOTG VH and children and adults are through use of the premises by external groups or clubs, or individual attendance at events and activities.

WOTG VH is not a provider of regulated activity. If any villagers/leaders of a club were to be involved in regular contact with children and vulnerable adults, as part of their role leading a group/club, they would be required to be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check; this check to be undertaken prior to commencement of this contact.

3. Responsibilities

Any suspected incident, allegation or other issue relating to child and adult protection is to be reported using the reporting procedures detailed in this policy. Any incident must be reported to the Chair of the VHC and the relevant authorities.

- The Chair of the Management Committee must be informed of issues which arise under this Policy. It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that appropriate action is taken following any expression of concern and to ensure that any required referrals have been made to the appropriate agencies.
- The Chair of the Management Committee will act as the responsible officer.

4. Reporting procedures

All volunteers and others working in direct or indirect contact with children and vulnerable adults as part of the environment where the activities take place, must be alert to the signs of abuse and harm.

Anyone who suspects that abuse is or has taken place or to whom a child or vulnerable adult discloses issues relating to safeguarding matters including radicalisation, should contact the Chair of the Management Committee.

Any suspicion or allegation of abuse must be recorded in writing by the observer, which must be kept strictly confidential and stored securely following Data Protection procedures. All stages of the reporting procedure must be documented.

When recording a concern, it is important to avoid giving opinion; stick to facts as seen or heard and write down as best and as quickly as possible exactly what was said.

It is not the responsibility of anyone volunteering with WOTG VH to decide whether or not abuse has taken place.

However, there is a responsibility to act on and to report any concerns with the appropriate authorities.

Contact should be made with relevant statutory professionals such as Children's and Adults Social Services (and the Police in an emergency) as quickly as possible.

Oxfordshire Council Safeguarding contact – over the phone by calling 0345 050 7666 during office hours or the Emergency Duty Service number (0800 833 408) outside of these hours.

[Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 050 7666 during office hours (8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Thursday, 8.30am to 4pm, Friday)

Out of hours Emergency Duty Team on 0800 833 408.]

The Chair will represent WOTG VH at any external safeguarding meetings held in relation to reported abuse and will also liaise, as required, with statutory agencies.

The Chair can be contacted on 01869 350992

5. Allegations against trustees or volunteers

When any form of safeguarding concern is made against a Village Hall employee or volunteer it must be taken seriously. The complaint must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Management Committee.

If it is the Chair against whom a safeguarding concern has been made, they will be excluded from the processing of the complaint. The Management Committee will in these circumstances appoint a Committee member to be representative.

It may be necessary to suspend a trustee or volunteer in the event of an allegation pending investigation and the outcome may be- reinstatement or exclusion from further involvement dependent upon findings.

6. Good practice guidelines

Staff and volunteers at WOTG VH may come into contact with children and vulnerable adults at community events and activities, and in these situations good practice involves:

- Always working in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication;
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance;
- Treating all children/young people and adults equally with respect and dignity;
- Always putting the welfare of each child or adult first;
- Making activities fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play;
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust and empowering children and adults to share in decision making;
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly;
- Involving parents/carers as much as possible;
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism;
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given. This should be recorded-in the accident book located in the Hall's main kitchen; and
- Group organisers should secure parental consent in writing in case the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.

8. Use of cameras and filming equipment

WOTG VH may take photographs of children, young people and adults participating in activities and events, but at all times written permission will be obtained from parents and guardians in respect of children and consent from the adults concerned before

photographs are taken. If there is any doubt about the ability to consent then photographs etc., should not be taken.

WOTG VH may prohibit use of cameras, videos and mobile telephones with picture taking capacity on its premises if this is required to ensure the safety of children and adults.

9. Outside organisations

Any club, society, organisation or individual undertaking any activity that has been sanctioned by WOTG VH will be required to adopt WOTG VH's Safeguarding Policy or show proof that they have their own robust policies.

10. Medical emergency

Hall users should call an ambulance if a child or adult requires emergency medical treatment. Ambulance or hospital staff should be informed immediately if there is any suspicion that the injury may be non-accidental.

Volunteers should not transport children or vulnerable adults in their own cars.

Parents/guardians or carers should be contacted immediately.

Group organisers should secure parental consent in writing, in case the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.

11. Policy review

This policy has a review date due by September 2026.