



CRONDALL VILLAGE HALL

CHILD, YOUNG PERSON AND VULNERABLE ADULT POLICY

STATEMENT OF INTENT

All children, young people and adults have an absolute right to be safe from harm. Crandall Village Hall Management Committee recognises its duty of care and will take all necessary steps to ensure that everyone with whom it works are enabled to be emotionally and physically safe.

AIMS

- Raising the awareness of the duty of care responsibilities relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults throughout the Crandall Village Hall Hirers and volunteers.
- Actively encouraging good practice amongst all Hirers and volunteers throughout the Organisation and promoting wider awareness wherever possible i.e. partnership organisations and user groups.
- Creating a safe and healthy environment with all our services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Listening to children, young people and vulnerable adults, minimising dangers and working closely with other agencies.
- Recruiting, training, supervising and supporting staff and volunteers who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and themselves against false allegations. Staff and volunteers who Regularly work with children, young people and vulnerable adults will be subject to the appropriate level Disclosure & Barring Service check.
- Responding to any allegations appropriately.
- Requiring Hirers and volunteers to adopt and abide by the Crandall Village Hall Child, Young Person and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and procedures and code of conduct.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide appropriate training for volunteers to enable them to recognise the potential signs and indicators of abuse and to improve good practice.
- To aid volunteers to respond sensitively and seriously to a child or young person or vulnerable adult who discloses information about abuse, and be confident and able to take appropriate action swiftly, regardless of whom the allegation is about, e.g. carer/member of the public/volunteer.
- To maintain a level of good working practice at all times and therefore reducing the risk of children, young people and vulnerable adults under the care of our staff and volunteers.
- To promote the general welfare and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults during and within the Village Hall.
- To develop and implement effective procedures for recording and responding to incidents and accidents.
- To develop and implement effective procedures for recording and responding to complaints of alleged or suspected abuse.

WHAT IS ABUSE?

It is recognised that there are four main areas of abuse:

A person may abuse or neglect a child, young person or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children, young people and vulnerable adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

The Main Forms of Abuse

It is generally accepted that there are four main types of abuse. The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults (Department of Health, Home Office, Department of Education and Employment, 1999) (National Assembly for Wales 2000); Co-operating to Safeguard Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults (2002) (Northern Ireland); Protecting Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults- A Shared Responsibility (Scottish Executive 1998).

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child or young person whom they are looking after. The situation is commonly described as factitious illness, fabricated or induced illness in children and young people or 'Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy' after the person who first identified the situation. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child, young person or vulnerable adult.

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of a deliberate act, can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child or young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child or young person's emotional development. It may involve making a child or young person feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or young people. It may also involve causing children and young people to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child or young person.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child or young person, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse forcing or enticing a child and young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child or young person is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling.

Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children and young people in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children and young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from different walks of life.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child or young person's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, leaving a young child home alone or the failure to ensure that a child or young person gets appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or young persons basic emotional needs.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only, i.e.: Protection Liaison Officer, Social services and the police.

It is extremely important that allegations or concerns are not discussed, as a breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the child, young person or vulnerable adult, their family and any protection investigations that may follow.

Informing the parent or carers of a child, young person or vulnerable adult you may have concerns about needs to be dealt with in a sensitive way and should be done in consultation with social services.

Any individual under supervision has the right to be notified about the cause for concern. This should be done in joint consultation with social services and the police. It is important that the timing of this does not prejudice the investigation.

Recorded information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to PLO's in line with data protection laws (e.g. the information stored is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

If enquiries arise from the public (including parents) or any branch of the media, it is vital that all staff and volunteers are briefed so that they do not make any comments regarding the situation. Volunteers should be informed who the relevant designated spokesperson will be, and all enquiries directed through them. Volunteers should reply 'no comment' to all questions/enquiries.