

AVH - Ashchurch Village Hall

Ashchurch Road, Ashchurch,
Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, GL20 8LA
(Registered Charity No. 1072493)

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

(Adapted from ACRE Model Policy – updated for compliance with Gloucestershire procedures)

1. PURPOSE

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk of abuse or neglect is a key priority of Ashchurch Village Hall Charity.

This policy defines how Ashchurch Village Hall operates to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk from abuse or neglect.

We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who enters our premises including children, young people, and adults at risk involved as visitors, hirers, or participants in any activities and events. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our trustees, volunteers, and staff.

This policy is designed to ensure compliance with:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- The Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP) Child Protection Procedures
- The Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (GSAB) Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures

2. DEFINITIONS

Children and young people

Persons under 18 years of age. This policy applies to all staff, contractors, volunteers, and committee members, and will be used to support their work.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Adult at risk of abuse or neglect

An adult (18 or over) who:

- Has care and support needs
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those needs, is unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect, or the risk of it

If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving services, they may still be an adult at risk.

Persons affected:

- All trustees, volunteers, and staff
- All those attending any activity or service delivered from the Village Hall
- All contractors and visitors

3. POLICY PRINCIPLES

Ashchurch Village Hall Charity has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

We recognise our duty under the Care Act 2014 to protect adults at risk and under the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 to safeguard children.

We are committed to promoting wellbeing, preventing harm, and responding effectively when concerns arise.

We will operate in line with the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP) and the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (GSAB) procedures.

Our principles are:

- The welfare of the child, young person, or adult at risk is paramount
- All children, young people, and adults at risk have the right to protection from abuse
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; each person and organisation must play their part

- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be properly reported and dealt with swiftly and appropriately
- The Hall Committee will maintain a safe culture in which safeguarding concerns can be raised openly and without fear of reprisal

4. PROCEDURES

A. Trustee Declarations

All committee members will sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office for Trustees confirming they have no convictions related to abuse.

B. Training

All trustees, staff, volunteers, and temporary workers will complete appropriate safeguarding training relevant to their role.

- All new staff and volunteers will receive a safeguarding induction, which includes:
 - a. The Charity's safeguarding policy and procedures
 - b. Contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
 - c. Guidance on how to recognise and report concerns
- All staff and volunteers undertake appropriate safeguarding training and ensure this training is kept up to date through regular refresher sessions, at intervals recommended by the GSCP and GSAB
- Refresher training will ensure everyone remains aware of current safeguarding procedures, local referral routes, and best practice guidance
- Records of all safeguarding training and renewal dates will be maintained by the Charity for monitoring and compliance

C. Culture and Awareness

- The Committee will promote a culture that enables safeguarding and welfare issues to be openly discussed and addressed.
- The Charity will ensure that all staff and volunteers (including temporary staff) are made aware of its arrangements for child protection and safeguarding.
- Copies of this policy, key safeguarding contacts, and procedures will be clearly displayed within the Village Hall and included in induction materials.
- Regular reminders, briefings, and updates will be provided to maintain awareness and reinforce good safeguarding practice.
- Staff and volunteers will be encouraged to raise any safeguarding concerns or training needs openly with the DSL or Chair of Trustees.

D. Supervision and Vetting

No committee member, helper, or volunteer will have unsupervised access to children or adults at

risk unless appropriately vetted through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

E. Safe Recruitment

The committee will follow safe recruitment practices, including:

- Checking identity and qualifications
- Taking up references
- Conducting DBS checks where required
- Providing induction and supervision

F. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

A named committee member will be responsible for safeguarding matters (the DSL). This person will ensure concerns are reported promptly to the relevant agency.

The named Safeguarding Lead is: Sue Mitchell

Appointed until: November 2026

If the DSL has an allegation made against them, this must be reported immediately to the Chair of Trustees, who will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for guidance and investigation under GSCP procedures.

If the Chair is implicated, another Trustee will assume responsibility for contacting the LADO to ensure impartial oversight and adherence to GSCP protocols.

G. Reporting and Referrals

All suspicions or allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and dealt with immediately.

The appointed person will contact the appropriate agency without delay:

- If a child is in immediate danger, call 999.
- If you are worried about a child, contact the Children's Helpdesk (Gloucestershire) at 01452 426565 or the Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) on 01452 614194.
- If you are worried about an adult at risk, contact the Adult Helpdesk (Gloucestershire) at 01452 426868.
- For allegations against someone who works with children, contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01452 426994 or email LADO@gloucestershire.gov.uk

All referrals and actions taken will be recorded and stored securely, in line with data protection and confidentiality requirements.