

Safeguarding & Whistle Blowing Policy.

This statement of policy and procedures applies to users of, and activities in, Linton Village Hall.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Safeguarding is the action taken to promote the welfare of children or other vulnerable groups and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- 1.2 Linton Village Hall committees have a duty of care as trustees of the charity to all those using the village hall. This includes all volunteers, staff and contractors undertaking work etc. All reasonable steps need to be taken to prevent harm and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.
- 1.3 Safeguarding policies and procedures that everyone has read and understood and are in place and used in the day-to-day operation of Linton Village Hall.
- 1.4 There are several important pieces of legislation that promote and safeguard children and adults at risk. The Care Act 2014 sets out the processes and definitions and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 provides the framework for The Vetting and Barring Scheme and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. The Children Act 1989 and 2004, and the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and The Children's Act 1989.

2.0 Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect is in place. This policy defines how Linton Village Hall operates to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse or neglect, who receive services or attend activities at Linton Village Hall.
- 2.2 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 and/or as participants in all activities and events. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our trustees, volunteers, and staff.
- 2.3 This policy also includes the children of adults who use or hire of Linton Village Hall.
- 2.4 The policy provides the Trustees, event and activity organisers, staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to Safeguarding and child protection.
- 2.5 This policy is made available to all adults who use Linton Village Hall for any activities, including those who run events or activities on behalf of the Trustees. In most cases

children will be accompanied by an adult (a parent or carer), who will take responsibility for them. Young people, (defined as secondary school age or above for the purposes of this policy) are more likely to attend on their own. Vulnerable Adults may attend activities independently and may need additional protection accordingly.

This policy includes Child and Adult Protection Procedures and Whistle Blowing.

- 2.6 The Linton Village Hall committee is committed to ensure that robust safeguards are in place, that policies and procedures are current and fit for purpose, and that complaints are investigated and handled promptly, efficiently, sensitively and without fear or favour.
- 2.7 Enquiries about the operation of this policy may be made in the first instance to Linton Village Hall Booking Clerk, at villagehall.linton@gmail.com.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 Children and young people are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old. This policy will apply to all staff, contractors and volunteers and will be used to support their work.
- 3.2 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:
- protecting children from maltreatment
 - preventing impairment of children's health and 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.

3.3 Adult at risk of abuse or neglect

For the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to Section 42 of the Care Act 2014:

- has care and support needs
 - is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
 - as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.
- 3.4 If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

Persons affected

- All trustees, volunteers, and staff.

- All those attending any activity or service that is being delivered from the village hall charity property.
- All visitors and contractors.

4.0 Policy principles

- 4.1 There can be no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect. All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. People who are eligible to receive health and community care services may be additionally vulnerable to the violation of these rights by reason of disability, impairment, age, or illness.
- 4.2 Linton Village Hall Committee has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.
- 4.3 Linton Village Hall Committee recognises that under the Care Act 2014, it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse. It also recognises its responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004.
- 4.4 Linton Village Hall Committee is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.
- 4.5 Linton Village Hall Committee is aware of the work of their local safeguarding Board/Partnership and other support organisations on the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of children and adults at risk.
- 4.6 The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.
- 4.7 Linton Village Hall Committee is committed to the following principles:
- 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: for services to be effective each
 - professional and organisation should play their full part; and
 - All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be properly reported to the relevant
 - Internal and external authorities and dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

5.0 Procedures for Safeguarding

- 5.1 Groups and individuals hiring the Hall are responsible for their own safeguarding arrangements. The Hall's only responsibility is to ensure that any hirer who runs events or activities specifically for Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults, maintain the required levels of disclosure, supervision and have appropriate training. Organisers of activities attended by vulnerable persons must have appropriate measures in place to ensure sufficient protection is afforded to

those persons. Organisers of such activities must disclose those measures to Linton Village Hall upon request.

- 5.2 Use of Linton Village Hall may be refused where adequate protection for such vulnerable groups cannot be demonstrated to Linton Village Hall's reasonable satisfaction.
- 5.3 Groups which serve the under 3, 3 - 5 and 5 - 11 age groups will follow the Ofsted guidelines for levels of supervision. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-safeguarding-policy>
- 5.4 If any user of the Hall has concerns about the behaviour or actions of anyone associated with the Hall, they should immediately inform the named person in their group initially responsible for Safeguarding and / or Linton Village Hall Booking Clerk, at villagehall.linton@gmail.com
- 5.5 Anyone acting in an unsafe or unwise manner maybe subject to referral to the relevant authorities.
- 5.6 Any concern disclosed to a user or hirer of the Hall should be recorded by them as soon as practicable.
- 5.7 Leading questions should not be asked but a clear factual written record made of what has been disclosed. All referrers should follow the following summary guidance:
- Record the time and date
 - Don't promise to keep what you're told a secret
 - Tell the child or young person what you will do next
 - Don't make promises you cannot keep
- 5.8 All disclosures should be immediately reported to the named Safeguarding person for the hiring group who should as soon as possible inform the Linton Village Hall responsible person see section 7- Committee Procedures (G)
- 5.9 Confidentiality cannot be promised in any case where an individual may be in danger of any form of abuse. Abuse can include physical, sexual, emotional or neglect. Linton Village Hall may without reference to any person seek assistance from or make a referral to any competent authority for them to advise or take appropriate further action, with the adult responsible for the individual who has made a disclosure being notified if appropriate.

Persons making relevant disclosures to Linton Village Hall must co-operate fully with Linton Village Hall and any competent authority in dealing with investigations into complaints, must follow appropriate recommendations and carry out any recommended further actions.

6.0 Whistle Blowing

- 6.1 Linton Village Hall committee will, under this policy, protect any individual making a referral. Should the individual making the referral feels that insufficient action/follow up has taken place they should inform the Chairperson of the Management Committee without fear of repercussion.
- 6.2 Procedures for Whistle Blowing include:
- Protecting those who make referrals under the Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedures so that there is a culture of informing without reprisal or negative consequence.
 - As far as possible protecting the anonymity of the whistle blower, (except where so doing could endanger another individual).
 - Keeping accurate records.

7.0 Committee Procedures

- A. All members of the Linton Village Hall committee will sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for trustees which include a declaration that they have no convictions in relation to abuse.
- B. All members of the committee will familiarise themselves with safeguarding responsibilities, undertake training where appropriate on safeguarding issues including whistleblowing where it is available and offered by their local safeguarding board/partnership or other local support organisation and ensure that they understand the principles set out in this policy at 3 above.
- C. All members of the committee will work together to promote a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting welfare to be addressed.
- D. All members of the committee, helpers or other volunteers will not have unsupervised access to children or adults at risk unless appropriately vetted.
- E. Linton Village Hall Committee will follow safe recruitment practices.
- F. A member of the committee will be appointed to be responsible for child and adult at risk safeguarding matters. This person will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the relevant safeguarding agency.
- G. The named safeguarding and whistle blowing persons are Marie Styring and Alison Smith, until 1 August 2026.
- H. All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child or adult at risk will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately. The appointed person will know who to contact and where to go for support and advice in relation to an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children or adults at risk who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or adult at risk or may have
 - harmed a child or adult at risk.
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or adult
 - at risk; or
 - Behaved towards a child (or children) or adult at risk in a way that indicates
 - they may pose a risk of harm to children or adults at risk.
- I. Linton Village Hall committee will ensure that all hirers of the hall have signed a hiring agreement. This will require all hirers who wish to use the hall for activities which include children and adults at risk, other than for hire for private parties arranged for invited friends and family, to either produce a copy of their Safeguarding Policy and evidence that they have carried out relevant checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) when requested to do so or, confirm that they have understood and will adhere to the hall's principles and procedures with regard to safeguarding.
- J. Linton Village Hall committee will carry out an annual review of this policy.

Appendix A- Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Trustee Statement of Eligibility ** The Charity Commission Declaration of Eligibility and Responsibility can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/confirmation-of-charity-trustee-eligibility>

Name of Charity: Linton Village Hall Charity Registration No: 520470

Declaration by Charity Trustees

I have received and studied the governing document of the charity and support its purposes.

I realise that as a member of Linton Village Hall committee I am one of the organisation's managing or charity trustees, and I understand the duties and responsibilities as explained to me and indicated in the Charity Commission Leaflet CC3a: Responsibilities of Charity Trustees.

I am not under 18 years of age and am not disqualified from serving as a member of the committee, and in the event of my becoming disqualified, will take no further part in the affairs of the charity whilst such disqualification lasts.

Trustee eligibility and responsibility

By completing and signing this form, you declare that you:

- are willing to act as a trustee of the organisation named above
- understand your organisation's purposes (objects) and rules set out in its governing document
- are not prevented from acting as a trustee because you:
 - a. have an unspent conviction for one or more of the listed offences,
 - b. have an IVA, debt relief order and/or a bankruptcy order,
 - c. have been removed as a trustee in England, Scotland, or Wales (by the Charity Commission or Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator)
 - d. have been removed from being in the management or control of a body in Scotland (under relevant legislation)
 - e. have been disqualified by the Charity Commission or are a disqualified company director,
 - f. are a designated person for the purposes of anti-terrorism legislation,
 - g. are on the sex offenders register or have been found in contempt of court for making (or causing to be made) a false statement,
 - h. have been found guilty of disobedience to an order or direction of the Charity Commission.

Name (please Print):	
Home Address:	
Date of Birth:	
Date: Signature:	