

Shere Village Hall (SVH)

Safeguarding Policy

This policy applies to SVH committee members and to volunteers who assist with the running of the cinema at the hall.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Provide SVH committee members, volunteers and hirers with overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.
- Protect children and vulnerable adults attending events and/or work for the SVH on a voluntary basis;

For the purpose of this policy:

- A child is defined as a person under the age of 18.
- A vulnerable adult is defined as a person aged 18 or over who is, or may be: in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and/or unable to take care of him/herself, and/or protect him/herself against harm or exploitation.

The SVH believes that children and vulnerable adults should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults and to keep them safe. We are committed to operating in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount, as enshrined by legislation.
- All children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Working in partnership with children and vulnerable adults, parents/guardians, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

We will seek to keep children and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them;
- Adopting practices for the protection of children and vulnerable adults through a Code of Conduct and Procedures for SVH committee members and Volunteers;
- Providing effective management for SVH committee members and Volunteers through supervision and support;
- Recruiting SVH committee members and Volunteers safely;

- Sharing information about the protection of children and vulnerable adults, and good practice, with children, vulnerable adults, parents/guardians, carers, and SVH committee members and Volunteers; and
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents/guardians, carers, children and vulnerable adults appropriately.

SVH Safeguarding Code of Conduct

All SVH committee members and volunteers are expected to provide a safe and supportive environment for children and vulnerable adults with whom they come into contact in connection with SVH activities.

This Code of Conduct aims to assist SVH committee members and Volunteers in monitoring their own standards and practice by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour.

Underpinning Principles

SVH committee members and volunteers:

- Are responsible for their own actions and behaviour, and should avoid any conduct which may lead a reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions;
- Should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way; and should promptly seek advice from the Safeguarding Officer on any incident which gives, or may give, rise to concern.
- Should keep records of any incident and the decision(s) made/action(s) agreed.
- Should know the name of the Safeguarding Officer and be familiar with this document and understand their responsibilities.
- Will ensure that all hirers of the hall have signed a hiring agreement. This will require hirers using 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 confirm that they have a Safeguarding Policy and that they have carried out relevant checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- Should be aware that breaches of the law could result in criminal prosecution.

Duty of Care

SVH committee members and Volunteers:

- Are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources, and protect children and vulnerable adults from discrimination and avoidable harm; and

- Have a duty to keep children and vulnerable adults safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm.

Exercise of Judgement

- No guidance can provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour.
- There may be occasions when SVH committee members and volunteers have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of the child or vulnerable adult, where no guidance has been provided.

Power and Positions of Trust

- As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, SVH committee members and volunteers may be in a position of trust in relation to a child or vulnerable adult with whom they come into contact in connection with SVH activities.
- There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable people, and SVH committee members and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Propriety and Behaviour

- SVH committee members and volunteers should adopt the highest standards of personal conduct in their dealings with children and vulnerable adults, in order to maintain the confidence and respect of children, vulnerable adults, parents/guardians, carers, SVH committee members and volunteers, and the general public.

Physical Contact

- SVH committee members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children and vulnerable adults with whom they meet in connection with SVH activities.
- Unavoidable physical contact should be strictly in response to the child's or vulnerable adult's needs at the time, of limited duration, and appropriate to the their age, disability, gender, racial heritage and religious belief. Such contact should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer.

One-to-One Situations

- SVH committee members and volunteers should endeavor to avoid situations where they are alone with children or vulnerable adults whom they meet connection with SVH activities.
- Ideally a child should be supervised by a parent/guardian and a vulnerable adult by a carer, but if this is not possible, any such interaction should be in sight of at least one other adult.

Safeguarding Process

The SVH has appointed Claire Dobson as the Safeguarding Officer.

The Safeguarding Officer

1. Is the first point of contact for SVH committee members and Volunteers who, based on their own observations and/or concerns expressed to them by another person, are concerned about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult who is a member of the SVH, attends events and/or works for the SVH on a voluntary basis;
2. Supports SVH committee members in deciding, when a concern is expressed about a child's or vulnerable adult's welfare, whether action needs to be taken, including (where appropriate) escalation to relevant authorities;
3. Is responsible for ensuring that the SVH Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Process are kept up to date;
4. Ensures that records are kept of any incidents and the decision(s) made/action(s) agreed.

If a concern is expressed by any person about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult the matter should be reported promptly to the Safeguarding Officer who should investigate the situation, consulting with other SVH committee members and Volunteers as appropriate, to determine to the best of his/her ability whether the concern:

1. Is unfounded;
2. Arises from poor practice or a breach of the SVH Safeguarding Code of Conduct by a SVH committee members and Volunteers or
3. Is a possible instance of abuse or a criminal offence by a SVH committee member and volunteer which needs to be escalated to relevant authorities, e.g. the Children's Social Work Services, the Local Safeguarding Children Board, the Local Authority Designated Officer and/or the Police.

In the case of (2):

- Where the poor practice or breach of the Code of Conduct is minor, the Safeguarding Officer should alert the SVH committee members or volunteer

concerned, remind him/her of the SVH Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct, and provide advice on how to avoid a recurrence of the incident.

- Material malpractice or breaches should be promptly referred to the SVH Chair to decide what action should be taken. e.g. asking the Committee Member or volunteer to stand down.

In the case of (3):

- The Safeguarding Officer should promptly advise the SVH Chair before escalating to relevant authorities.

In all cases, records should be kept of the incident and the decision(s) made/action(s) agreed.

1. The hall committee will ensure that all hirers of the hall have signed a hiring agreement. This will require users of 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 confirm that they have an appropriate Safeguarding Policy and that they have carried out relevant checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Policy Relating to the running of the cinema in the village hall

1. Sound levels

Investment in the cinema environment has resulted in the installation of systems capable of astonishing sound quality. While this is welcomed by the vast majority, the SVH is aware that on occasion it does give rise to concerns about sound levels. No cinema operator would of course wish to cause discomfort to audience members. Cinema technicians regularly test sound levels and set them within a comfortable range.

Any member of the audience who is experiencing discomfort about the noise levels within a cinema theatre should let a member of staff know.

2. Film Content

Film is a powerful medium which explores every aspect of life – including the best and worst of human behaviour. Certain subjects such as bad language, dangerous behaviour, discrimination, drugs, horror, nudity, sex, violence and sexual violence can be very upsetting for some viewers. SVH supports the need for filmmakers to have freedom of expression and recognises that the inclusion of such subjects is often necessary to support the meaning, message and artistic integrity of a film. We also recognise however that we have a duty of care to our local community, to our audience, and especially to children and vulnerable adults. We will reflect this duty of care in three ways:

1. Careful consideration in choice of films to be shown

2. Ensuring that when we show a film with explicit or disturbing content we make this clear in our advertising and communication
3. That we adhere to BBFC certification guidelines and do not allow children to view films which are inappropriate to their age.