

# *RUSPIDGE MEMORIAL HALL*

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Approved by the Trustees of Ruspidge Memorial Hall  
Charity Number : 1050287

Date Approved: 1st March 2022  
Date of Review : 1st March 2025

Chair of Trustees : Lesley Dunckley

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 contracted workers

### **Introduction**

This policy has been approved by the Trustees of Ruspidge Memorial Hall who are committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable persons who use the hall, and to endeavouring to that their well-being is maintained. It is the intention that high standards are adopted in relation to the welfare and safety of all children and vulnerable people who visit and take part in activities at the hall and its grounds (referred to as the Premises) While it can never be certain that harm will not be caused at the hall, by implementing and following the policy should confer a degree of confidence that all reasonable steps have been taken to prevent harm.

### **Objectives and Application of the Policy**

The Policy sets out the procedures for the promotion of safeguarding with the objectives of the prevention of abuse and the protection of children. It includes procedures for taking appropriate action when safeguarding concerns are raised relating to children who attend the hall for activities and events

**It is the prime responsibility of anyone booking the hall to be accountable for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable persons who take part in any activity in the hall to help to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect of these persons and to act in accordance with the Policy.**

It is also the responsibility of anyone involved with the hall to help to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect of these persons and to act in accordance with the Policy. This includes Trustees , Volunteers and individual other users.

Throughout, the term 'children' will be used but implicit in this is the inclusion of vulnerable adults .A child in the UK is deemed to be under 18 years of age.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The UN convention on Human Rights of the Child and ratified by the UK

The term 'Parental Consent' also encompasses Carer consent for vulnerable adults

### **Responsibilities**

1. The Hall trustees have a duty of care to all who use the Hall and for always maintaining confidentiality. However, they may disclose information to relevant agencies/people if there is a situation where they consider that not to do so would place someone at risk of harm
2. It must be made clear which adult has primary responsibility for children at hall events or activities when they are not accompanied by their parents
3. An appropriate adult/child ratio must be agreed for any events/activities primarily involving children. Variation will be necessary because of the nature of the activity and the age/abilities of the children
4. No child will be left unsupervised, by an appropriate and responsible adult, in any part of the premises
5. Parents have the responsibility to ensure that travelling to and from the hall is safe for their child

### **Disclosure and Barring**

1. Individuals, User Groups and other organisations hiring and using the hall for activities for Children are themselves responsible for deciding whether any DBS (Disclosure and Barring) check is necessary. This should be taken in line with Government advice.
2. The Trustees will not ask for proof that DBS checks are in place (Minutes March 2017) but a reminder that they are necessary in given circumstances, will be made at the time of booking. They will also be directed to this policy with compliance as a basic condition of hire.
3.
  - Events and groups organised by schools and national associations e.g. Brownies, will be assumed to be in compliance with DBS and Safeguarding requirements
  - Personal non-commercial events such as birthday parties will be assumed to have parents present. However, the hirers have the responsibility to check on the safeguarding arrangements for anyone supplying entertainments or transport for that event
  - An unpaid friend of the parents who is looking after a child will be exempt
  - An organisation running a group for children would need a designated person with DBS clearance in charge. That person would need to supervise volunteers for the group and ensure that they were familiar and compliant with any Safeguarding policy

### **Information Security**

1. Any information about children e.g. names and addresses, will be treated in total confidence. It should be kept securely by the group supervisor and only for as long as

is necessary . It must be disposed of in a way to maintain confidentiality e.g by shredding

2. Names of children must not be used in any publication or media site without parental consent. Group leaders or event organisers will take appropriate steps to ensure that no inappropriate photographs or video recordings are taken in the Hall.

### **Preventing Abuse**

1. Activities involving children should be organised in a way which promotes a safe environment and healthy relationships yet minimises opportunities for harm, misunderstanding or false accusations.
2. For each event/ group risk assessments should be made . These can be simple and easy to understand and follow. Records of attendees for group activities should be maintained
3. All groups which have a physical nature to them e.g. Junior football, should arrange for insurance for the activity.

In addition everyone associated with the hall will:

- Take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any Child at the hall
- Prevent any child being put into a situation in which there is significant risk to their health and safety
- Take appropriate action if they become aware of anyone abusing a Child physically , mentally or sexually
- Respect the wishes of a Child
- Respect the privacy of a Child
- Ensure that behaviour , language and gestures in the presence of a Child are appropriate and act as a good role model
- Be aware of Child Protection issues and take an open and concerned approach to any issues which are raised

### **Guidelines for Working with Children**

It is important to understand that adults involved in the events should be equally protected from any detrimental accusations by adhering to robust guidelines. The following aim to help the avoidance of situations in which well -intentioned actions might be misinterpreted:

- Do not use language or behavior with any sexual connotations e.g. flirting, innuendo
- Do not use casual physical contact which might be mis-understood. Any physical contact must be in the presence of others; it must be appropriate to the situation; it must take into account the age, gender and culture of the Child and should be in response to the needs of the Child, not the adult
- Do not spend time alone with a Child unseen by others
- Do not discriminate against a Child, or ignore discrimination or bullying by others. These should be challenged.
- Do not ridicule a Child - even in 'fun'
- Do not have any electronic communication with a Child except with parental consent.

- There is “safety in numbers”. Thus, any one-to-one contact with a Child should be with specific parental consent. Safety in numbers can be construed as numbers of any other people - children and/or adults.

### **Allegations of Abuse**

Any allegations or concerns about abuse will be dealt with expediently, openly and calmly. The need for such discussion will, hopefully, be very rare. However, it is better to be prepared for the eventuality so that the matter can be dealt with sensibly. Consider the following possibilities:

- There is suspicion that a child is being abused by someone associated with the Hall
- A child accuses someone associated with the Hall of abusing them
- Abuse takes place or is suspected to have happened at the Hall by someone who is not connected with the Hall
- A child discloses abuse happening elsewhere, e.g. at home

In all cases:

- A prompt, confident and professional approach is necessary
- Leading questions are not appropriate. Record exactly what questions have been asked
- Record what the response is using the child’s own words
- Do not promise to keep something ‘secret’ if you are told of probable or potential harm to a child
- Medical help should be sought if considered necessary
- Do not confront anyone accused of abuse - this is probably the job of other agencies.
- Where an allegation suggests a criminal offence may have been committed, report the issue as soon as possible to the police.
- A Trustee of the Hall must be informed of all instances of possible abuse which are alleged to have happened at the Hall

### **Nominated Child Protection Officer**

The Nominated Child Protection Officer for Ruspidge Memorial Hall will oversee this Policy and who will be the first point of contact for any concerns raised about Safeguarding, is the Chair of the Trustees. Contact details will be kept on the Hall Notice Board.

