

Safeguarding & Vulnerable Persons Policy

Stratford St. Mary Village Institute

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how Stratford St. Mary Village Institute (“the Institute”) safeguards children and vulnerable adults who use the hall or attend activities on the premises.

The Institute is committed to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment and to responding appropriately to safeguarding concerns.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- trustees and committee members;
 - volunteers acting on behalf of the Institute;
 - contractors working on the premises;
 - organisations and individuals hiring the hall for activities involving children or vulnerable adults.
-

3. Safeguarding Principles

The Institute:

- recognises that children and vulnerable adults have the right to be protected from harm;
- does not tolerate bullying, intimidation, harassment, discrimination, or abuse in any form;
- takes all safeguarding concerns seriously and acts promptly.

Safeguarding applies regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or background.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for:

- ensuring appropriate safeguarding policies and arrangements are in place;
 - assessing safeguarding risks through the Institute's **Risk Assessment Framework and Risk Register**;
 - determining, based on risk, what checks, supervision, or controls are required for trustees and volunteers;
 - ensuring safeguarding concerns are handled appropriately and referred to the relevant authorities when required.
-

4.2 Volunteers and Contractors

Volunteers and contractors must:

- comply with this policy and act in a way that supports safeguarding;
 - avoid unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults unless appropriate arrangements, determined by the Trustees based on risk, are in place;
 - report safeguarding concerns promptly.
-

4.3 Hirers and Organisations Using the Hall

Where activities involve children or vulnerable adults, **hirers are responsible for safeguarding during the full period of hire.**

The Institute does **not supervise activities run by hirers** and does not assume safeguarding responsibility for them beyond the requirements set out in this policy.

Hirers must:

- ensure appropriate supervision at all times;
- ensure compliance with age-related licensing and classification requirements;
- ensure alcohol is not supplied to anyone under 18;
- ensure that helpers, contractors, or volunteers do not have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults unless appropriate safeguards are in place.

Where activities involve **regular sessions, unsupervised children or vulnerable adults, or are open to the public**, hirers may be required to provide evidence of:

- their own safeguarding or child protection policy;

- relevant registrations or permissions (for example, Ofsted where applicable);
 - public liability insurance.
-

5. Safer Recruitment and Access

Trustees, staff, or volunteers acting on behalf of the Institute who may have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults must comply with safeguarding arrangements determined by the Trustees based on risk.

This may include appropriate checks, supervision, or restrictions on roles.

6. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Any safeguarding concern must be reported **without delay** to the **Chair of the Trustees**.

If the Chair is unavailable or is not an appropriate person to contact, the concern must be reported to **another Trustee**.

The Trustee receiving the concern will:

- seek advice from, and refer concerns to, the relevant local safeguarding authority as appropriate;
- ensure concerns and actions are recorded securely and handled confidentially.

Anyone who believes a child or vulnerable adult is at immediate risk should contact the emergency services without delay.

7. Records and Confidentiality

Safeguarding records will be:

- kept securely;
 - accessed only by those with a legitimate need;
 - handled in accordance with data protection requirements.
-

8. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and following any significant safeguarding incident or change in guidance.

Safeguarding risks and actions will be monitored through the Institute's **Risk Register**.

Policy Adoption Date: April 2025

Policy Review Date: April 2026