

The Reef

Safeguarding Policy – Adopted 9th December 2025

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy defines how The Reef (Colehill and Wimborne Youth and Community Centre) operates to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse or neglect. It is based on the [Model policy for safeguarding for village halls](#), issued by Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE).

1.2 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. Definitions

2.1 **Children and young people** are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old.

2.2 **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.

2.3 **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.

2.4 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.

3. 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. 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 The Reef charity has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

4.3 The Reef charity 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 The Reef charity is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.

4.5 The Reef charity 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. The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

4.6 Specifically for Dorset the following groups exist:

- The [Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) between Dorset Council, BCP, Dorset Police & NHS who ask that any safeguarding concerns about children be reported to the [Children's Advice and Duty Service \(ChAD\)](#).
- The [Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board](#), established to protect and safeguard vulnerable adults in Dorset.

4.7 The Reef Trustees are 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. Types and Indicators of Abuse

5.1 Government guidance on '[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)' includes details on the warning indicators that might suggest a child is being abused or neglected.

5.2 The document details the 4 main categories of abuse and neglect, and the specific warning indicators associated with each of these:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse & exploitation
- Neglect.

6. Procedures

6.1 All trustees will sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for trustees which includes a declaration that they are not on the sex offenders register.

6.2 All trustees and staff 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 4 above.

6.3 All trustees will work together to promote a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting welfare to be addressed.

6.4 No trustee, helper or other volunteer will have unsupervised access to children or adults at risk unless appropriately vetted.

6.5 The trustees will follow safe recruitment practices if recruiting anyone who may work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

6.6 Two trustees and/or staff members will be appointed, as lead and deputy, to be responsible for child and adult at risk safeguarding matters. They will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the relevant safeguarding agency.

6.7 The named safeguarding lead is currently **Emma Cross** and the deputy **Nigel Bridle**.

6.8 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.

6.9 The trustees will ensure that all hirers of the hall have agreed to our Terms & Conditions of Hire. 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 evidence that they have carried out relevant checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) when requested to do so and to produce on request a copy of their Safeguarding Policy which must as a minimum align with The Reef's principles and procedures with regard to safeguarding.

7. Contact Details for Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

7.1 Local [procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns](#) can be found on the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership website.

Version History

Date	Summary of Changes
20/7/23	New Policy
26/7/24	Safeguarding lead and deputy names updated
29/11/24	New sections added on types and indicators of abuse and contact details for reporting safeguarding concerns
9/12/25	Reviewed, no changes

This Policy will be reviewed annually.