

**Arkenstall Village Centre**  
**7 Station Road Haddenham Ely Cambs CB6 3XD**

## **Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2018**

- 1. Introduction** The Arkenstall Village Centre is a charity run by local organisations for the benefit of the local community. Its aim is to provide high-class facilities for local groups to meet in and to act as a focus for the village's many social and recreational activities. The charity is managed by a main committee on which every local organisation is entitled to have a representative. This way, the running of the facilities is guaranteed to be in the best interests of the local community.

One of the main events each year is the local Pantomime which acts to bring together over 100 local people (including between 30 – 40 young people) as performers and backstage crew, to raise money for the running of the Centre and other charities, and to provide entertainment for the 1000 audience members who come each year. A committee drawn from members of the main committee and other village residents supervises the running of the pantomime.

The Arkenstall Village Centre Committee and its sub committees are committed to working with children in a safe and secure environment, and will follow the procedures below in relation to child protection.

### **Safeguarding children is the responsibility of everyone**

- 2. Policy Statement** The Children Act, 1989 defines a child as being up to the age of 18 years old. Extensions of this exist for children who have special needs and for those in local authority care settings. The Children's Act makes it clear that the welfare of the child is paramount and it gives everyone involved in the care of children a responsibility for the protection of those children.

Streamlined and simplified regulations, the Children (Performances and Activities)(England) Regulations 2014 came into force on 6 February 2015. These will affect the annual pantomime and the requirements in respect of applications for, and the conditions that apply to, licences issued by local authorities in England under section 37 of the 1963 Act for performances and similar activities.

The AVC is committed to provide a safe environment for children, staff and visitors and promote a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns that they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.

The AVC believes that all children, regardless of age and background, have at all times and in all situations, the right to enjoy the activities of the group in a happy, safe and secure environment. The AVC will ensure that this is the case by rigorously implementing this policy.

---

Document: Child Protection Policy and  
Procedures  
Status: Adopted  
Date: 15 May 2018

**Arkenstall Village Centre**  
Registered Charity 300394

**3. Contact with young people - Volunteers and employees coming into through their work should:**

- Report through the appropriate channels any concerns about individuals or practices in the Arkenstall Village Centre (or any of the activities run by the sub-committees), regarding child abuse if necessary.
- Keep up to date with child protection issues and adhere to best practice at all times. (useful contact is NSPCC website: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk))
- 
- Plan their work in such a way as to minimise possible claims of abuse (for example by avoiding high risk situations).
- Be watchful of one another. Children's activity leaders should be Enhanced DBS checked.

No member of staff or volunteer should ever be left alone with a child.

- Volunteers should always have a DBS checked member of staff with them and should complete a voluntary disclosure form where possible.
- Make sure that if parents and/or carers are not present, parental permission slips are provided.
- Formal permission from parent/carers should be obtained before taking photographs, videos, etc.

**4. Contact with young people - Volunteers and employees coming into through their work should never:**

- Engage in rough physical activities, even when playing.
- Engage in sexually proactive activities.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child.
- Let a child's allegation go either unchallenged and/or unrecorded.
- Do things of a personal nature for a child. If you do have to do things of a personal nature for a child e.g. take to the toilet, support, lift, etc. particularly if they are very young or a child with additional needs, then you should obtain the full consent of their parents and permission from your line manager or person in charge. In an emergency situation, which requires this type of help, parents and your line manager, should be fully informed as soon, as is practicable.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Undertake any tasks involving children for which they feel inadequately trained or have concerns about.

---

**a. Types of Abuse: Child abuse is generally divided into four categories**

**b. Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse	may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
Physical harm	may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child whom they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child.
Physical abuse,	as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

**c. Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

**d. Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse	involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling.
Sexual abuse	may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
Boys and girls	can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

**e. Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

- 5. Signs of Abuse** The signs summarised below do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused. Similarly there may not be any signs; you may just feel something is wrong. If you are worried report it to the designated person. It is not your responsibility to decide if it is abuse but it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and do something about it by reporting.

**a. Signs of Physical Abuse:**

- Unexplained injuries or burns
-

- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Bald patches
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Running away

**b. Signs of Neglect:**

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciated
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Destructive tendencies
- Low self esteem
- Neurotic behaviour
- No social relationships
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging

**c. Signs of Emotional abuse:**

- Physical, mental and/or emotional development slows down
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour e.g. thumb sucking, hair twisting, etc.
- Self-mutilation
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Substance misuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing, scavenging

**d. Signs of Sexual Abuse:**

- Lack of trust in adults and/or fear of a particular individual[s]
- Over familiarity with adults or provocative behaviour
- Withdrawal and introversion/problems with peer relationships

- Running away from home/sudden behaviour changes e.g. falling standards, truancy, Stealing etc.
- Low self esteem
- Substance misuse
- Displaying sexual knowledge beyond age group
- Involvement in prostitution
- Over-sexed behaviour
- Sleeplessness, nightmares, fear of the dark
- Bruises, scratches, bite marks
- Depression, suicide attempts
- Anorexia nervosa/eating disorder or a change in eating habits
- Pregnancy, particularly when reluctant to name the father
- Recurring urinary tract problems/vaginal infections

- 6. Responding to disclosures of abuse** it is not the responsibility of employees/volunteers to deal with suspected abuse but it is their responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate person. It is important that all employees/volunteers should be aware of their responsibilities if child abuse is suspected.

If you notice any social changes in the behaviour of a child, worrying marks or bruises or hear a child/children talking about things which give cause for concern, then your first responsibility is to the child. It is not safe to assume that someone else will take action. As an adult you have a duty to take appropriate action. Recognising and coping with child abuse is very stressful and the person reporting the concern will not have to cope alone.

- 7. What to do if a child spontaneously talks of experiences which give cause for concern staff and volunteers at the AVC should:**

- Explain to the child that if he/she discloses information which leads you to believe they are being abused, you will be unable to keep it confidential.
- Listen to the child without questioning him/her. Be aware of your own reactions as showing disapproval may stop the child from continuing with their disclosure.
- Do not try to stop the child from recalling events. Make a note of what is said, in what context, the setting, the timing and which people were present.
- Reassure the child, tell them that they are right to tell you [do not promise to keep it a secret as it is your responsibility to inform others].
- Stay calm – ensure the child is safe and feels safe.
- Accept what you have been told. [This should not be seen as believing or disbelieving what you have been told]
- Reassure the child and stress that they are not to blame.
- Tell the child that you will offer support but you will have to pass the information on.

- Do not question the child and/or rush into details that may be inappropriate.
- Monitor the individuals concerned; encourage them to continue to take part in the Organisation's activities.
- Do not make promises you cannot keep.
- Do not approach or contact the alleged abuser[s].

## 8. Reporting Procedures

- Record the concern or incident on the Incident Record Form, including, date and time of what has occurred and the time the disclosure was made. Record the names of the people involved and what was said and done by whom and any action taken.
- Inform the appropriate designated AVC trustee, the Safeguarding officer, immediately. Remember that confidentiality is of the utmost importance.
- If this is not possible, contact the chair or any member of the management committee.
- If the matter is urgent and none of the above can be contacted, then contact social services or the police.
- The designated trustee or Safeguarding Officer, will contact the appropriate authorities including the Duty Social Worker in the area where the child lives as soon as possible but within 24 hours.
- Concerns would normally be shared with parents/carers as soon as possible. However, there could be circumstances when this could put the child at greater risk or there may be concerns that parents/carers will not respond appropriately.
- Every effort will be made by Social Services to respect the anonymity, if requested, of the person reporting the abuse, however, if allegations result in Court proceedings this may not be possible.
- If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or volunteer, Social Services will follow the same procedure as they do to investigate allegations of abuse for a family.

- 9. Review** The AVC will ensure that issues of child protection receive continuous attention and will regularly review the way that we operate to support this principle. The child protection policy will be reviewed annually and when there are any changes in legislation.

- 10. Licensing rules and chaperones** Any performance where admission is charged, whether for charity or an amateur company, means a licence will be required for performances involving children up to the last Friday in June in the school year in which they have their 16th birthday. It is a legal requirement to seek a licence when one is required and any person who causes or procures any child to do anything in contravention of the

licensing requirement commits an offence and may be subject to a fine, imprisonment or both.

- If any child performing in an AVC pantomime or event has performed for more than four days in the preceding six months the AVC will apply to the local authority for an individual licence.
- If children performing in an AVC pantomime or event have not performed for more than four days in the preceding six months the AVC will apply to the local authority for a Body of Persons approval (BOPA) at least twenty one days before a performance period.
- Where a performance is taking place under the auspices of a BOPA, the legislation does not require that the child be supervised by a chaperone approved by the local authority. However the AVC believes that good practice should be followed and will pay for the training, including a successful DBS check, of a minimum of one local authority approved chaperone to every twelve children in its productions.
- No child will be left unsupervised and arrangements will be made for segregated changing areas and toilet facilities.
- Supervision getting to and from the stage area will be ensured.
- No chaperone will undertake any other duties whilst children are on site.
- The AVC will maintain detailed and complete records of children involved in any performances including emergency contact details. Parents will be asked to sign a statement of fitness for each child. All records will be kept in confidence for a minimum of six months and a maximum of three years.
- The AVC will ensure suitable arrangements are made for first aid.
- The AVC will allow any authorised officer of the local authority unrestricted access to any rehearsal, technical rehearsal or performance.

#### **11. Creating a Safe and Caring Environment:**

- Risk Assessments should be undertaken prior to any offsite visits or new types of activities.
- Volunteers/Employees/ working with children should be appropriately trained and qualified to ensure the safe provision of services, use of equipment, activities undertaken, etc.
- Volunteers/Employees/ working with children should carefully plan activity sessions with the care and safety of children as their main concern including the use of activities at an appropriate age/ability level.
- Wherever possible we will encourage an 'open environment' e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and discouraging the keeping of secrets. This especially includes volunteers/employees/ being alone with a child at any time. When this is unavoidable, it should be done with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the event and/or the children's parents/carers.
- Volunteers/Employees/ must treat all children/young people with respect.
- Employees/volunteers must not make racist, sexist or any other remarks which upset or humiliate
- Volunteers/Employees/ must take care to avoid showing any favouritism.

- 
- Arrangements for parents/carers dropping off and collecting children from activities/trips need to be clearly stated and agreed by parents/carers, children and volunteers/employees/.

## 12. Bullying

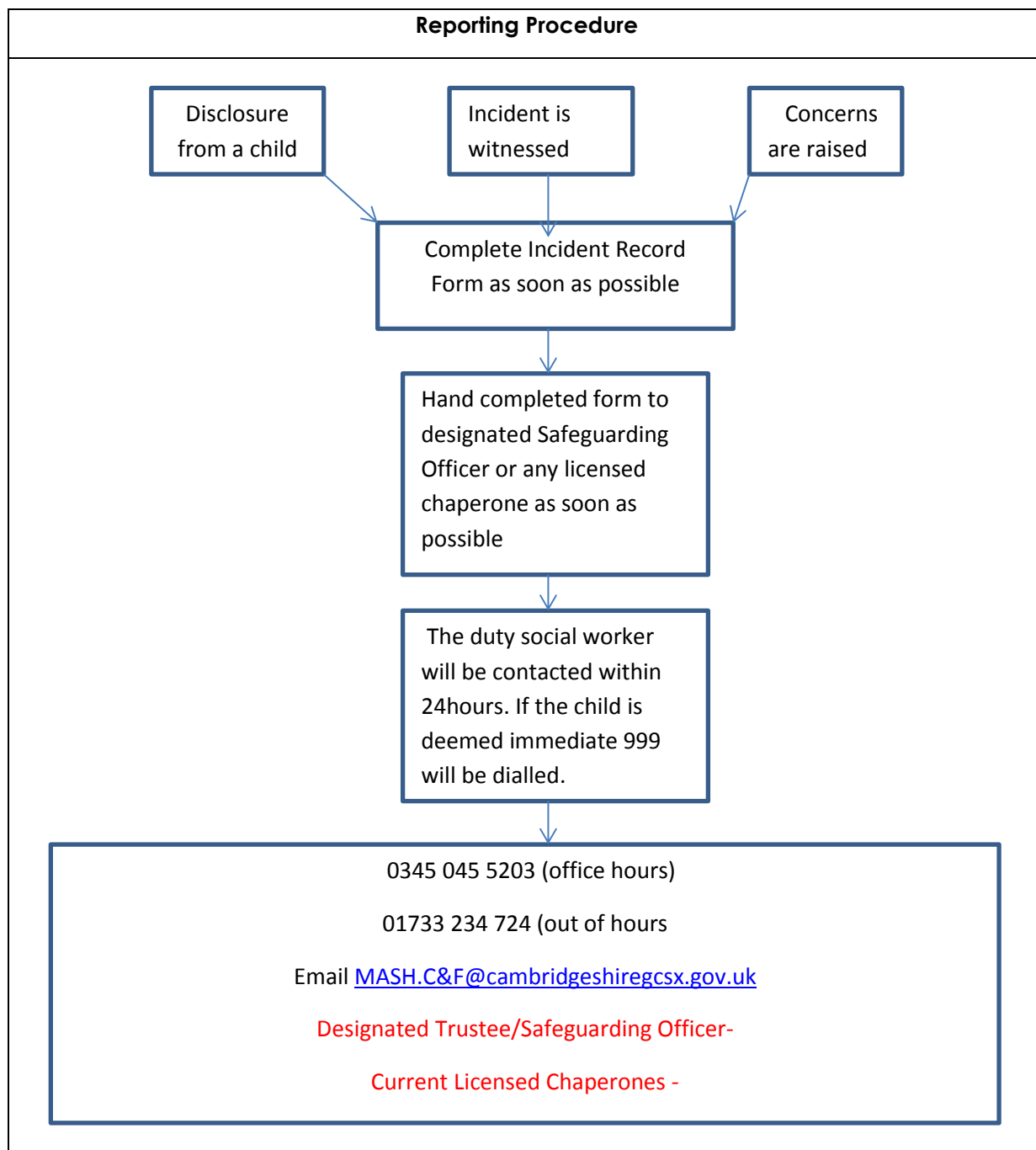
- It is the responsibility of volunteers/employees/ to prevent the abuse of younger or weaker children by older or stronger children through bullying, cruelty or any other forms of humiliation.
- Children should report bullying to one of their chaperones, the Pantomime Director/s, or a member of the Pantomime Committee.
- Children must not bully others or join in with bullying behaviour.
- Parents, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child might be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact the Director/s.
- Parents too have a responsibility to support the anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the cast.
- Where bullying has happened, the parents of victims and perpetrators will be informed and if possible, the children will be reconciled but in very serious cases, exclusion from the Pantomime will be considered.
- After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

## 13. Behaviour guidelines for employees/volunteers

- Safety of participants and employees/volunteers is of prime consideration at all times. All accidents involving anyone should be recorded in the organisation's accident book immediately or as soon as practicably possible.
- Volunteers/Employees/ are responsible for familiarising themselves with building/facility safety issues, such as, fire procedures, location of emergency exits, location of emergency telephones and first aid equipment.
- Volunteers/Employees/ are responsible for reporting suspected cases of child abuse to the appropriate individuals and/or agencies.
- Appropriate employees/volunteers should have access to any parent consent/emergency consent forms for all children taking part in any activities [this information should be confidential].
- Volunteers/Employees/ should ensure that their activities start and end on time.
- Volunteers/Employees/ are expected to promote, demonstrate and incorporate the values of fair play, trust and ethics throughout their activities.



- Volunteers/Employees/ will be expected to keep an attendance register for all organised sessions.
- Volunteers/Employees/ should ensure that they are adequately insured, to protect against claims of negligence, through their organisation or their own personal insurance if acting as a self-employed agent.



---

<b>AVC Incident Record Form</b>	
Your name:	
Your position:	
Event/Organisation:	
Child's name:	
Child's address:	
Parents/carer names and address: (if different from above)	
Incident date:	
Incident time:	
Incident description:	
Report concerns immediately to: 1 Designated Trustee - Alison Wilkerson 2 Social Services 0345 045 5203 (office hours) 01733 234 724 (out of hours) 3 Police 999 4 Social services <a href="mailto:MASH.C&amp;F@cambridgeshiregcsx.gov.uk">MASH.C&amp;F@cambridgeshiregcsx.gov.uk</a>	

---

Document: Child Protection Policy and Procedures  
Status: Adopted  
Date: 15 May 2018

**Arkenstall Village Centre**  
Registered Charity 300394

**Arkenstall Village Centre Child Protection Policy**

I have read and understood the Arkenstall Village Centre Child Protection Policy and I understand how to register my concerns if I suspect a child or young person is being abused.

Name:..... Date:.....

---

Document: Child Protection Policy and  
Procedures  
Status: Adopted  
Date: 15 May 2018

**Arkenstall Village Centre**  
Registered Charity 300394