

Cottonmill and Sopwell Hub Safeguarding Policy

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1. The purpose of Cottonmill and Sopwell Hub’s Safeguarding Policy

This Safeguarding Policy document (also referred to as just “Policy”) aims to set out how we can keep children and vulnerable adults who are associated with Cottonmill and Sopwell Hub and its projects safe, secure and supported. We take safeguarding seriously and want to ensure that our Committee members, volunteers and partners are aware of and understand our safeguards and child protection arrangements.

2. Our Safeguarding Values

We believe that everyone, but in particular children and vulnerable adults, have a right to be safe, secure and supported when taking part in Cottonmill and Sopwell Hub’s activities and events.

3. The scope of Cottonmill and Sopwell Hub’s Safeguarding Policy

We recognise children to be people under the age of 18. Vulnerable adults include those who have¹:

- Have a learning or physical disability
- Have a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs
- Have a reduction in physical or mental capacity
- Are in the receipt of any form of healthcare
- Are detained in custody
- Are receiving community services because of age, health or disability

1 List from the National Children’s Bureau Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy June 2018
<https://www.ncb.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/June%202018%20NCB%20Safeguarding%20children%20and%20vulnerable%20adults%20policy.pdf>

- Are living in sheltered or residential care home
- Are unable, for any other reason, to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation.

The Policy has potential impacts for our:

- Committee members
- Partners
- Volunteers

4. How we promote Safeguarding in our Community Group

Cottonmill and Sopwell Hub seeks to keep children safe by promoting:

- A positive environment: valuing, listening to and respecting all members of Cottonmill and Sopwell Hub including children and vulnerable adults, and using positive behaviour management strategies where required that are non-violent and do not impose humiliation.
- Suitable supervision: promoting joint working with parents and carers to ensure the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and activities that take place within sight and hearing of others. Volunteers that undertake supervisory roles have been DBS checked.
- An open culture: ensuring parents, carers, volunteers, children and vulnerable adults know how and who to report any concerns they have.
- Appropriate responses: responding quickly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse including sharing concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately. While concerns are being addressed, no events or sessions will take place.
- Keeping data safe: recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.

5. What to do if you are concerned about a child or vulnerable adult

If a child or vulnerable adult is at immediate risk of significant harm, call 999 and request Police. If you are a child or young person being abused or mistreated², or an adult worried about a child or young person, call 033 123 4043 to report your concerns to the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.³

If you are concerned about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, or if there is a concern, complaint or allegation concerning the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult:

- Inform the Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- Write careful notes of what you witnessed, heard or were told.
- Include the time, date and full names of those involved.

2 Types of abuse: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>

3 <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Childrens-social-care/Child-protection/Hertfordshire-Safeguarding-Children-Partnership/hscp.aspx>

- Sign and pass your notes to the Safeguarding Lead, who will report to the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership on 033 123 4043.
- Make sure that the child or vulnerable adult is not put in a position that could pose further risk to their welfare.

Where a child or vulnerable adult approaches you directly:

- Allow them to speak without interruption, and accept what they say.
- Be understanding and reassuring without giving your opinion.
- Let them know you will try to help but must pass on the information.
- Inform the Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- Write careful notes of what was said using the actual words.
- Include the time, date and full names of those involved.
- Sign and pass your notes to the Safeguarding Lead, who will report to the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership on 033 123 4043.
- Make sure that the child or vulnerable adult is not put in a position that could pose further risk to their welfare.

Where you have a general concern:

- Inform the Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- The Safeguarding Lead will take advice from organisations that may include, but not limited to, St Albans District Council Community Engagement Team (switchboard 01727 866100, emergency out of hours 01727 811155), the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (033 123 4043) and the Police (101).

Do not attempt to investigate any incident or allegation yourself.

6. The Policy as a Living Document

It is the responsibility of the Committee members to adopt and implement this Policy.

Once adopted, the Policy should be reviewed at least every three years, and amended where necessary. The Policy should also be reviewed where significant changes are made to either the planning or running of the Community Group.

Electronic copies of the Policy should be available on request for the public, and in hard copy at all events and meetings.