ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

Health and Safety Policy

Adopted by the Management Committee _____(Date)

Next review due _____(Date + 2 years)

1. Purpose

The Management Committee ('the Committee') of Rotherfield Village Hall ('the Hall') is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for everyone who uses or works in it, including trustees, cleaners, contractors, hirers and members of the public attending hired events.

This policy sets out how that commitment is put into practice. It replaces all previous Health and Safety policies issued by the Hall and should be read alongside the Hall's separate Lone Working Policy and Fire Risk.

2. Who This Policy Applies To

- Trustees / Management Committee members, who hold overall responsibility for the Hall.
- The Cleaner(s), who carry out day-to-day maintenance and cleaning.
- Hirers, and anyone attending an event they have booked, who must follow the Hall's rules while on the premises.
- Contractors and visiting tradespeople carrying out work at the Hall.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 The Committee

- Has overall legal responsibility for health and safety at the Hall.
- Appoints a Health and Safety Lead (normally a trustee) to oversee this policy day to day.
- Ensures risk assessments are carried out and reviewed at least annually, or after any incident or significant change to the building or its use.

- Arranges annual servicing/testing of fire equipment, gas and electrical installations (see Section 5).
- Maintains adequate insurance cover, including public liability.
- Reviews this policy at least every two years, or sooner if the law or the Hall's activities change.

3.2 Cleaner(s)

- Report any hazards, defects, or damage to the Committee as soon as they are noticed.
- Follow safe working practices when cleaning, including correct use and storage of cleaning chemicals (see Section 8).
- Check that fire exits, extinguishers and emergency lighting are not obstructed.
- Follow the Hall's separate Lone Working Policy when working alone in the building.
- Complete and sign off any cleaning or maintenance checklist provided by the Committee.

3.3 Hirers

- Read and sign the Hall's hire agreement, which includes acceptance of this policy, before their booking.
- Familiarise themselves with fire exits, the location of the first aid kit and fire extinguishers, and the assembly point before their event begins.
- Ensure any equipment they bring is safe and, where required, has a current PAT test.
- Do not exceed the maximum occupancy figure displayed in the Hall.
- Supervise their own guests, including children, and ensure fire exits and escape routes are kept clear throughout the event.
- Report any accident, near-miss, or defect to the key-holder or Committee as soon as possible, using the accident report book kept in the kitchen.
- Leave the premises in a safe and clean condition, including switching off appliances and locking up as instructed.

3.4 Contractors

- Familiarise themselves with fire exits, the location of the first aid kit and fire extinguishers, and the assembly point before work begins.

- Hold their own current public liability insurance (and employer's liability insurance, if they employ staff), evidence of which may be requested by the Committee before work begins.
- Operate under their own Health and Safety policy and risk assessments/method statements appropriate to the work being carried out, and provide copies to the Committee on request for higher-risk work.
- Follow their own Lone Working procedures where they are working alone in or around the Hall, particularly outside normal hours.
- Hold appropriate qualifications, certification or registration for their trade (for example, Gas Safe registration for gas work, NICEIC/NAPIT registration for electrical work).
- Report any hazards, defects, or incidents arising from their work to the point of contact with the Committee.
- Keep tools, equipment and materials safely stored and out of reach of the public while on site, and leave the site in a safe condition at the end of each working day.
- Do not access the Hall unsupervised outside agreed working arrangements.

4. Risk Assessment

The Committee maintains a general risk assessment for the Hall. This is reviewed annually and after any incident.

Hirers running higher-risk activities (for example, those involving bouncy castles or exercise classes) are responsible for carrying out and providing their own risk assessment for that activity.

5. Fire Safety

- The fire alarm Call Points are tested and recorded weekly
- A Fire Risk Assessment is kept for the Hall and reviewed at least annually.
- Fire extinguishers and emergency lighting are serviced annually by a competent contractor.
- Fire exits must be kept unlocked and unobstructed whenever the Hall is in use, and clearly signed.
- The Hall's maximum occupancy limits must never be exceeded.
- Hirers must familiarise themselves with fire exits, the location of the first aid kit and fire extinguishers, and the assembly point before their event begins.

6. Electrical and Gas Safety

- A fixed wiring inspection (EICR) is carried out at least every five years, and portable appliances are PAT tested annually.
- The gas boiler (situated in cellar) is serviced annually by a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- Hirers may only use their own electrical equipment if it is in good condition and, where required, PAT tested; damaged leads or equipment must not be used.
- Any faulty sockets, switches, or appliances must be reported immediately and taken out of use.

7. First Aid and Accident Reporting

- A first aid kit is kept in the Bar Room and checked/restocked regularly.
- An accident/incident report book is kept with the first aid kit. All accidents, injuries and near-misses must be recorded, including date, what happened, and any action taken.
- Hirers are responsible for arranging their own first aid provision appropriate to their event where a higher level of cover may be needed (for example, larger public events).
- A spills kit, for when bodily fluids are involved, is provided and must be used for cleaning.
- Serious incidents (notifiable under RIDDOR) will be reported by the Committee to the Health and Safety Executive.

8. Cleaning Chemicals (COSHH)

- With the exception of dishwasher chemicals eg. detergent and rinse aid, cleaning products are stored in their original containers, in the locked cleaning cupboard, away from food storage areas.
- Cleaners must follow the instructions and safety guidance on product labels, and use gloves where indicated.
- Cleaning products must never be mixed together.

9. Manual Handling

- Tables, chairs and other heavy items should be moved using correct lifting technique, or with trolleys/equipment provided, and with help from another person for heavy or awkward loads.
- Storage of heavy items is kept to a sensible height to avoid excessive lifting or stretching.

10. Working at Height

- Only the step-stool/stepladder provided should be used for tasks such as changing light bulbs or accessing high storage; users should not stand on chairs, tables or other furniture.
- Any work at height beyond routine tasks (for example, high-level cleaning, decorating, or maintenance) should be carried out by a competent contractor.

11. Lone Working

Trustees, cleaners and any hirers who may find themselves working alone in the Hall must follow the Hall's separate Lone Working Policy, which sets out check-in arrangements and what to do in an emergency.

12. Kitchen and Food Hygiene

- The kitchen and its equipment should be left clean and tidy after use.
- Hirers providing food to the public are responsible for their own food hygiene compliance and, where required, registration with the local authority.
- Both fridges are checked regularly and thermometers are kept in both. However, it is the responsibility of hirers to check that the fridges are at the correct temperature at the time of hire. (3C – 5C)
- The freezer is provided for use of hirers and has a freezer thermometer. It is the responsibility of hirers to check it is at the correct temperature at the time of hire. (maximum -18C)
- Any spillages in the kitchen should be cleared up promptly to avoid slips.
- All sharp knives must be kept in the designated Sharps Box which is kept in the RSM Lunch Club cupboard which is locked when not in use by a Lunch Club team. No other sharp knives are to be kept on site.

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13. Emergency Procedures

In the event of fire, the person discovering it should raise the alarm, evacuate the building by the nearest available exit, and proceed to the assembly point in the car park. The Fire Brigade should be called on 999. No one should re-enter the building until the Fire Brigade confirms it is safe to do so.

Emergency contact numbers for key-holders and Committee are displayed on the notice board in the main hall.

14. Insurance

The Hall holds public liability and buildings insurance. Hirers running activities that fall outside the Hall's standard insurance cover (for example, certain sporting or entertainment activities) are responsible for arranging their own additional insurance, as set out in the hire agreement.

15. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Committee at least every two years, and sooner following any incident, change in legislation, or significant change to the Hall or its activities.

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Position: _____