



The Cosy Cafe is a friendly, volunteer-run community hub, funded by Swillington Village Council. It is open twice a week to welcome people of all ages and backgrounds, including those who may be elderly, isolated, or vulnerable.

The Cafe is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and respectful environment for everyone who attends, volunteers, or helps at the Cosy Cafe.

The Council and its volunteers recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults and ensure that all volunteers understand and act upon this responsibility.

Scope

This policy applies to:

1. All **volunteers** and **co-ordinators** of the Cosy Cafe.
2. All **visitors and participants** attending sessions.
3. Any **partner organisations**, groups or individuals working with the cafe.

Safeguarding Principles

- Everyone has the right to be safe and treated with dignity and respect.
- Abuse and neglect are never acceptable.
- Everyone has a role to play in safeguarding others.
- Concerns should always be shared, not ignored.

Recognising Abuse or Neglect

Volunteers should be aware that abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- **Physical abuse** *e.g. hitting, pushing, rough handling*
- **Emotional/psychological abuse** *e.g. intimidation, humiliation, isolation*
- **Financial abuse** *e.g. theft, misuse of money or property*
- **Neglect** *e.g. failing to meet basic care or support needs*

- **Discriminatory abuse** *e.g. unfair treatment based on age, gender, race, religion, disability, or sexuality*
- **Domestic abuse or institutional abuse**

Volunteers should be alert to disclosures of harm or signs of distress, including changes in behaviour, sudden changes in mood, unexplained injuries, or confusion about finances.

What to Do if You're Worried About Someone

If you are ever worried that someone at the Cosy Cafe might be at risk of harm:

1. **Listen carefully** and **stay calm**.
 - Take what the person says seriously.
 - Reassure them that you will help.
2. **Do not promise to keep secrets**. Explain that you may need to share the concern with someone who can help.
3. **Make a note** of what was said, using the person's own words if possible (include date, time, who was present).
4. **Share your concern** with one of the following, as appropriate:
 - Another trusted volunteer and/or the Village Council Clerk.
 - The Leeds City Council **Adult Safeguarding Team** (0113 222 4401).
 - The Police (101 or 999) if you believe someone is in immediate danger.

Volunteer Responsibilities

All volunteers agree to:

- Treat everyone with respect and kindness
- Avoid being alone with a vulnerable person wherever possible
- Never offer personal care (e.g. washing, dressing, lifting) unless it's an emergency
- Report any concerns or incidents promptly
- Respect confidentiality – information about people will only be shared if necessary to protect someone's safety

Safer Volunteering Practice

To help everyone stay safe, the Cosy Cafe will:

- Ask all volunteers to sign a copy of this Safeguarding Policy to confirm it has been read and understood
- Ensure that at least two volunteers are present during cafe sessions
- Keep clear, written records of any concerns or incidents

- Encourage a friendly, open culture where volunteers feel comfortable raising worries

Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Notes about safeguarding concerns will be kept secure and confidential.

They will only be shared with those who need to know, such as the Clerk, local authority, or emergency services, if someone is at risk.

Responding to Allegations About a Volunteer

If anyone raises a concern or complaint about a volunteer's behaviour:

- The volunteer will be treated fairly, but the concern will be taken seriously.
- Swillington Village Council will manage the complaint process in line with its Complaints Policies.
- The volunteer may be asked not to attend until advice has been received.

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Approving committee: Full Council

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