

SONGBIRDS CHOIR SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE PEOPLE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Songbirds Ladies Choir is run by a volunteer Management Committee. It has no employees. Rehearsals are run by our self-employed Music Director, together with an accompanist.

All members of Songbird's Management Committee recognise that they have a duty to safeguard each other, as well as any vulnerable members who are part of the choir, or any visitors to the choir.

Any concerns regarding the physical, sexual, emotional or the psychological safety of a child, young person or vulnerable adult or any concerns relating to discriminatory or financial violation or exploitation of a vulnerable person must be addressed by the Management Committee and where necessary, reported to the relevant agencies.

This policy is in place to protect all vulnerable persons regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, religion, or faith.

Vulnerable users could include:

- children
- young people
- adults with learning needs or physical disability
- frail, elderly people
- carers

Principles

The welfare and safety of any child or vulnerable adult is paramount and is the responsibility of everyone. All children and vulnerable adults, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse. This will not be tolerated.

Should any child or close relative of a member of the choir participate in choir activities the member must act as a responsible adult. Should any other child/vulnerable person participate in any activities with the choir, they must be accompanied by a parent or other adult who remains responsible for them throughout.

Policy Statement

1. No member of the Management Committee, member of the choir or other volunteer involved with the Choir will have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adult.
2. All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child or vulnerable adult will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately.
3. All members will be made aware of this policy and how to manage any safeguarding issues that may arise.

4. A Management Committee member will be nominated to be responsible for vulnerable persons matters and become the point of contact to whom any suspicions or concerns should be reported. Our 2022 Songbirds nominee will be committee member **Eileen Maloney**.
5. From time-to-time photography, audio and video recording are undertaken at concerts and rehearsals. The images and recordings are used both on- and off-line, including the choir website. They provide valuable tools to promote the work of the choir to a wider audience.

These policies and procedures will be reviewed annually and updated as appropriate in the interim period.

Procedures

1. All Management Committee members and volunteers will be made aware of the need to safeguard children and vulnerable adults
2. An Annual Review will take place following the AGM to allow for any up-date of policies and/or procedures. New Management Committee members and volunteers must be introduced this policy and understand their responsibilities.
3. If the premises might be used by more than one hirer, attention will be drawn to the need to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are supervised at all times.

Adopted on September 15th 2022 at Songbirds Choir AGM

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LEGAL CONTEXT

The law requires any organisation involving children, young people, and vulnerable adults to take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to their welfare and the welfare of all others involved in their activities, is minimised. Where there are concerns, these must be shared with other agencies who are trained to help.

Songbirds Choir recognises that it is not its role to decide whether a child, young person or vulnerable adult has been abused or not. This is the role of the Social Services department and the Police, who have legal responsibility and make the decision to investigate.

In this context anyone who has not reached their eighteenth birthday is a child and anyone over 18 years who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation is a vulnerable adult.

BACKGROUND

Songbirds Choir is composed of its choir members. Officers are elected and others co-opted to serve on the Committee. Rehearsals are run by our self-employed Music Director, together with an accompanist. There are no employed staff or volunteers, in the conventional sense. Songbirds Choir does not advertise itself as an activity suitable for children or vulnerable adults.

POLICY

1. Songbirds Choir (which includes all members and those self-employed) acknowledge that they have a duty to take reasonable steps to protect and safeguard those involved in choir activities, who are deemed vulnerable, particularly children or vulnerable adults.
2. Songbirds Choir will publicise its safeguarding policy on its website and regularly bring it to the attention of members.
3. Children who might participate or attend sessions provided by Songbirds Choir are welcome to do so as long as they are accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult who remains in charge of them throughout rehearsals and performances.
6. Choir members are asked to report any concerns in relation to a safeguarding matter to a Named Person.

7. A permanent confidential record will be kept of the complaint and its outcome.

8. The policy and procedures will be reviewed annually at Committee meeting.

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