

Leatherhead Choral Society

Safeguarding Policy (updated September 2016)

Context

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers, including trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, students or anyone working on behalf of Leatherhead Choral Society. The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect children and vulnerable adults who receive Leatherhead Choral Society's services (this includes the children of adults who use our services)
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding

Leatherhead Choral Society believes that a child or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Voluntary groups have a responsibility in law to contribute to the safeguarding of the children and vulnerable adults with whom they work, to act on any concerns that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of abuse and to make sure that the way they work does not place children or vulnerable adults at unacceptable risk of harm. Safeguarding is the process of protecting children or vulnerable adults from harm - whether the harm is caused by accidents, deliberate abuse (physical, emotional, sexual), neglect, bullying, discrimination or prejudice or failure to help children or vulnerable adults take part in activities that are open to most of their peers.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults, namely: Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004, Human Rights Act 1998, Protection of Children Act 1999, Sexual Offences (Amendments) Act 2006, United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991 and relevant government guidance.

Leatherhead Choral Society recognises that it is not the role of our organisation to decide whether a child or vulnerable adult has been abused or not. This is the role of the Social Services department who have legal responsibility or the NSPCC who have powers to investigate child protection concerns under the Children Act.

Good practice

In developing this policy, Leatherhead Choral Society has taken input from Making Music, the national amateur music performance association and the NSPCC.

Who are Children or Vulnerable Adults?

In this context, anyone up to the age of 18 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.

How Leatherhead Choral Society (LCS) operates

LCS is a registered charity (no. 1116555) and has 4 trustees, who are the officers of the charity and one other. Management of the society on a day-to-day basis is undertaken by the elected committee (currently 6 members) plus our Musical Director. Rehearsals are run by our self-employed Musical Director (or a substitute on occasion) with an accompanist.

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Leatherhead Choral Society's Safeguarding Policy

We will seek to keep children and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately

In addition:

- LCS will publish this Safeguarding Policy and appendices on our website and draw it to the attention of members at the beginning of each season
- Children or vulnerable adults will be welcome to join LCS as long as there is an adult who remains responsible for them throughout rehearsals and performances (except for Leatherhead Youth Choir)
- Children attending Leatherhead Youth Choir rehearsals will be supervised by staff and volunteers who have all had a DBS check and appropriate training
- LCS will nominate a Safeguarding Officer who will be DBS checked regularly and who will attend appropriate training as required
- Choir members will report any concerns to the Safeguarding Officer based on the detailed guidance in Appendices 1-7. A permanent confidential record will be kept of the report.
 - Appendix 1 Forms of abuse (page 3)
 - Appendix 2 Ways to recognise child abuse and neglect (page 4)
 - Appendix 3 Guidelines for responding to a child or vulnerable adult making an allegation of abuse (page 6)
 - Appendix 4 What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred (page 7)
 - Appendix 5 What the Safeguarding Officer will do (page 8)
 - Appendix 6 Confidential record of suspected abuse (page 9)
 - Appendix 7 Relevant contact details (page 9)
- If LCS should need to recruit staff or volunteers, then we will apply safeguarding principles to ensure that appointees are suitable to work with young or vulnerable people (see Appendix 8 – page 10)
- The policy and procedures will be reviewed annually by the committee

Approved at a committee meeting on 06.09.2016

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Appendix 1 Forms of abuse

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm or impairment. It can include misuse of medication, undue restraint or inappropriate sanctions. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child or vulnerable adult 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 can be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on emotional development. It may involve making the child or vulnerable person feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve threats of harm or being abandoned, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, isolation, bullying, shouting or swearing. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed. It may also involve causing the child or vulnerable adult to feel frequently frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child or vulnerable adult. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the person is aware of, or consents to what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape or oral sex, or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children or vulnerable adults 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 abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

Neglect

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

Financial or material abuse

This can include theft, fraud, misuse of property, inheritance, state benefits, possessions or pressure in relation to wills.

Discriminatory abuse

This can include harassment or slurs based on race, gender, disability or age.

Note

There are other sources of stress for families, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, the mental illness of a parent or carer, or drug and alcohol misuse. These may have a negative impact on a child or vulnerable adult's health and development and may be noticed by a carer organisation. If it is felt that the person's well-being is adversely affected by any of these areas, the same procedures should be followed.

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Appendix 2 Ways to recognise abuse and neglect of a child or vulnerable adult

What constitutes abuse?

Definitions are provided below of the different forms of abuse. This list is not exhaustive and should be considered as guidelines and examples only.

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

"Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it". 'No Secrets', Department of Health 2000

Abuse can broadly be defined in the following categories:

Physical abuse

The non-accidental infliction of physical force that results (or could result) in bodily injury, pain or impairment.

Examples of behaviour: hitting, slapping, pushing, burning, physical restraint, harassment, enforced sedation, inappropriate use of medication, and catheterisation for management ease.

Sexual abuse

Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without consent.

Examples of behaviour: Non-contact: looking, photography, indecent exposure, harassment, serious teasing or innuendo, pornography. Contact: coercion to touch, e.g. of breast, genitals, anus, mouth, masturbation of either self or others, penetration or attempted penetration of vagina, anus, mouth, with or by penis, fingers, other objects.

Neglect

Ignoring or withholding physical or medical care needs.

Examples of behaviour: failure to provide: appropriate food, shelter, heating, clothing, medical care, hygiene, personal care; inappropriate use of medication or over-medication.

Psychological / emotional abuse

Psychological abuse is that which impinges on the emotional health and development of individuals. Psychological / emotional abuse might also occur as a result of the other forms of abuse.

Examples of behaviour: shouting, swearing, insulting, ignoring, threats, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, depriving an individual of the right to choice and privacy.

Financial / material abuse

The unauthorised, fraudulent obtaining and improper use of funds, property or any resources of a vulnerable person.

Examples of behaviour: misappropriating money, valuables or property, forcing changes to a will, denying the vulnerable adult the right to access personal funds.

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Abuse of individual rights / discriminatory abuse

Abuse of individual rights is a violation of human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

Discriminatory abuse consists of abusive or derisive attitudes or behaviour based a person's sex, sexuality, ethnic origin, age or disability.

Professional abuse

Professional abuse is the misuse of therapeutic power and abuse of trust by professionals, the failure of professionals to act on suspected abuse/crimes, poor care practice or neglect in services, resource shortfalls or service pressures that lead to service failure and culpability as a result of poor management systems/structures.

Examples of behaviour: entering into a sexual relationship with a person who uses the service, failure to refer disclosure of abuse, poor, ill-informed or out-moded care practice, failure to support vulnerable adult to access health care/treatment, denying vulnerable adults access to professional support and services such as advocacy, service design where groups of people living together are incompatible, punitive responses to challenging behaviours, failure to whistle-blow on issues when internal procedures to highlight issues are exhausted.

Where may abuse occur and by whom

Abuse of children or vulnerable adults can occur in any setting or situation. Abuse may occur in:

- Domestic Settings - including the person's home or another person's home
- Institutional Settings - including day care, residential homes, nursing homes, hospitals and schools
- Public Settings - including the street, any public area, or social or work environment

Abuse of children and vulnerable adults occurs in all cultures, all religions and all levels of society. The abuser may be anyone including family, friend, neighbour, partner, carer, stranger, care worker/service provider, manager, volunteer, another person who uses the service or any person who comes into contact with the victim.

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Appendix 3 Guidelines for responding to a child or vulnerable adult making an allegation of abuse

If a child or vulnerable adult should talk to you of abuse:

- Stay calm and listen carefully to what is being said
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others - do not promise to keep secrets
- Allow the child or vulnerable adult to continue at his/her own pace
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all time avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer
- Reassure the child or vulnerable adult that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared (see Appendix 4)

Helpful statements to make

- "I believe you" (or showing acceptance of what the child or vulnerable adult says)
- "Thank you for telling me"
- "It's not your fault"
- "I will help you"

Do not say

- "Why didn't you tell anyone before?"
- "I can't believe it!"
- "Are you sure that this is true?"
- "Why? Who? When? Where?"
- Never make false promises

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Appendix 4 What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred

- You must report your concerns immediately to the Safeguarding Officer who will obtain information, assess what to do next and take the appropriate action
- LCS's Safeguarding Officer is **Alison Hunt**
- The Safeguarding Officer has been nominated by Leatherhead Choral Society to refer allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. In the absence of the Safeguarding Officer the matter should be brought to the attention of the Chair, **Lynne Gillespie**
- You should under no circumstances discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those nominated above
- Make notes as soon as possible (ideally within 1 hour of being told). You should write down exactly what the child or vulnerable adult has said and what you said in reply and what was happening immediately before being told (i.e. the activity being delivered) You should record the dates, times and when you made the record and ensure that the record is signed and dated
- You should report your concerns to the Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible. If this person is implicated you need to report to the Chair of the Leatherhead Choral Society. If both are implicated report the matter to Surrey Council Social Services – see Appendix 7 for contact details.

Note: Child abuse

It is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies. If for any reason you believe that the nominated persons have not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is up to you to contact the child protection agencies directly.

Note: Abuse of vulnerable adults

To determine the appropriate action it is important to consider:

- Does the vulnerable adult understand and accept the risk?
- Is the vulnerable adult able to make their own decisions and choice, and do they wish to do so?
- How serious is the abuse – with the starting point being the perception of the vulnerable adult
- If the vulnerable adult expresses a wish for the concerns not to be pursued, this should be
- respected wherever possible, subject to considerations of safety and competence

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Appendix 5 What the Safeguarding Officer will do

The role of the Safeguarding Officer is to:

- Coordinate the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and associated staff training/briefings
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are alert to the signs and understand what is meant by safeguarding and are aware of the different ways in which children and vulnerable adults can be harmed
- Ensure that all staff are familiar with safeguarding issues and procedures
- Monitor compliance with the policy
- Ensure that procedures, advice and guidance work effectively and are revised as needed
- Give highest priority to the welfare of children and vulnerable adults
- Recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and vulnerable adults
- Respond appropriately to allegations against staff, other adults and themselves
- Be alert to the risks which abusers, or potential abusers, may pose
- Regularly review and update this policy

In the event of a report of abuse, the Safeguarding Officer will:

- Obtain information from staff, volunteers, children or parents and carers who have child protection concerns or concerns about the welfare of a vulnerable adult, and to record this information
- Assess the information quickly and carefully and ask for further clarification as appropriate
- Take a referral to a statutory child protection agency or appropriate agency for vulnerable adults, or the police without delay
- if they are in any doubt about what to do, to seek advice from Social Services (see Appendix 7 for contact details)

It is NOT the Safeguarding Officer's role to investigate.

If a child or vulnerable adult has a symptom of physical injury or neglect, and the abuse may have been deliberate the Safeguarding Officer will:

- contact Social Services for advice
- seek emergency medical attention if it is necessary and inform the doctor of any suspicions of abuse. The doctor will then initiate further action if necessary
- inform the parents or carers only if advised by Social Services to do so

If a child or vulnerable adult has a symptom of physical injury or neglect, but there is no sign that the abuse was deliberate, the Safeguarding Officer will:

- seek emergency medical attention if it is necessary and inform the doctor of any suspicions of abuse. The doctor will then initiate further action if necessary
- otherwise, speak with the parent/carer/guardian and suggest that medical help/attention is sought for the child
- if appropriate, encourage the parent/carer to seek help from Social Services

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse the Safeguarding Officer will:

- contact Social Services and speak to no one else about the matter

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Appendix 6 Confidential record of suspected abuse

This record should contain:

- Name of person recording
- Name of child or vulnerable adult
- Age and date of birth
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- First language
- Disability
- Parent's/Carer's name(s)
- Home address/Tel. no.
- Are you reporting your concerns or reporting someone else's? Please give details.
- Brief description of what has prompted the concerns: include date, time, specific incidents
- Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?
- Have you spoken to the child or vulnerable adult? If so, what was said?
- Have you spoken to the parent(s) or carers? If so, what was said?
- Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, please give details
- Have you consulted anybody else? Please give details
- Person reported to and date of reporting
- Signature of person reporting
- Today's date

Appendix 7 Reporting

In the event of suspected or disclosed abuse:

- In an emergency dial 999
- Surrey Police: 0845 125 2222
- Surrey County Council Children's Services Contact Centre: 03456 009009
- Surrey County Council Children's Services Emergency Duty Team: 01483 517898
- Surrey County Council Adult Social Care Emergency Duty Team: 01483 517898
- Care Quality Commission: 03000 616161
- NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000

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Appendix 8 Recruitment process for staff and volunteers

The provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) will apply only in the exceptional circumstance that an employee, volunteer or self-employed musician will have “substantial, unsupervised access on a sustained or regular basis” to children under the age of 18 or vulnerable adults. The Act requires a police check prior to making a job offer.

In order to embed the principles of safeguarding into the recruitment process we will undertake the following:

- Role definition - we will think about the tasks and responsibilities involved and the type of person most suitable for the job
- Selection criteria - we will put together selection criteria based on a list of essential and desirable qualifications, skills and experience
- Application pack - we will send a copy of our Safeguarding Policy with our application pack
- Application form - we will ask all applicants to apply in writing and their application should cover their personal details, previous and current work/volunteering experience
- Short listing - we will assess the application against the selection criteria described above
- Declaration - we will ask all applicants to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they should be considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults
- Identification - we will ask for photographic evidence to confirm the identity of the applicant
 - e.g. passport or driving license
- Qualifications - we will request to see documentation of any qualifications detailed by the applicant
- Selection tools - we will always interview candidates and ask for two references
- Interview - we will have at least two people from our organisation on the interview panel
- Briefing candidates - candidates will be briefed about our Safeguarding Policy, and attitudes to working with children and vulnerable adults will be discussed at the interview
- References - we will request two written references who are not family members or friends and who have knowledge of the applicant’s experience of working with children or vulnerable adults. We will ask the referee to comment on the candidate’s suitability for working with children or vulnerable adults
- DBS checks – where the role requires it, a criminal record check will be carried out through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Where a DBS check is necessary, this will be made clear to candidates in the application procedure
- LCS has a policy for the recruitment of ex-offenders which will be made available to all applicants when a DBS check is required