

## **St Peter's Singers of Leeds Safeguarding policy – Ground rules, ways of working and procedures**

This document forms part of the St Peter's Singers of Leeds (hereafter "St Peter's Singers") Safeguarding policy

- The policy applies to all members, staff (whether employees or freelancers), volunteers and anyone working on behalf of St Peter's Singers or taking part in St Peter's Singers activities.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide members staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to the protection of vulnerable people.
- This policy recognises vulnerable people as:
  - Children up to the age of 16 or young people aged 16-18.
  - Adults aged over 18 at risk including those defined as vulnerable by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006; this might include adults with a learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs, or reduced physical or mental capacity.

This document includes:

- Recruitment practices around safeguarding
- Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children
- Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse
- Procedures for dealing with concerns and incident of abuse

### **Recruitment practices around safeguarding**

If an existing or potential new member, staff member or volunteer will be working with vulnerable people as part of the St Peter's Singers activities the appropriate level of DBS will be requested before that work is undertaken.

The level of DBS check required will be decided by the committee and in line with DBS rules regarding regulated activity. The results of any check to inform a decision will be used confidentially and in line with the St Peter's Singers Statement on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

### **Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people**

#### **Membership**

Should any child or close relative (under 18) of a member of St Peter's Singers participate in choral works with St Peter's Singers the member must act as a responsible adult. Should any other child/young person participate in any St Peter's Singers activities they must be accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult who remains responsible for them throughout rehearsals and performances. Where considered suitable and acceptable to both the child and the parent or responsible adult, this person may be a member of the choir who agrees to act in loco parentis, subject to the approval of the choir's appointed Safeguarding Officer.

If a vulnerable person wishes to take part in St Peter's Singers activities written permission (email is fine) should be obtained from parents/guardians where appropriate, and before the activity takes place. Written permission should include: emergency contact details of any

relevant pick-up arrangements – including permission for another adult to pick up the vulnerable person after the activity has finished

### **Joint concerts with schools**

St Peter's Singers will make appropriate joint working arrangements to ensure that school groups will always be in the care of their teachers and helpers and/or parents who will bear responsibility for their welfare at all times. This does not detract from the choir's general responsibility to provide a safe environment for joint activities and the principles of this safeguarding policy still apply.

### **Audiences and Social Events**

St Peter's Singers is aware that children and vulnerable adults may attend their concerts as members of the audience, or attend social functions hosted by St Peter's Singers. It is the responsibility of the parent, guardian or carer to ensure adequate supervision. If a parent/guardian/carer is not personally attending an event this policy requires them to be satisfied that the child or vulnerable adult will be accompanied and adequately supervised by a responsible adult acting on their behalf at all times.

### **Privacy**

Parents and guardians should be aware that photography, audio and video recording are undertaken from time to time at concerts and rehearsals. The images and recordings are used both on- and off- line including on the web. They provide valuable tools to promote the work of the choir to a wider audience and form part of the historical record of our work.

### **Abuse**

St Peter's Singers endeavours by the implementation of this safeguarding policy to protect and minimise the risks of abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The term child abuse is used to describe a range of ways that people harm children. Abuse of adults and children can happen anywhere. It can happen at home, in a residential or nursing home, in a hospital, at work or in the street. There are four main categories of abuse namely physical, sexual, emotional and neglect. St Peter's Singers notes the importance of being alert to signals of abuse and to the difficulty children or vulnerable adults may have in reporting it.

**When** St Peter's Singers organises an activity or event where they will be responsible for vulnerable people they will ensure:

- Planning is carried out in line with this policy and procedures.
- The main contact has access to emergency contact details and other relevant details (e.g. information about picking up arrangements for vulnerable people).
- That if vulnerable people of different gender will be taking part in activities adults of different gender will be in attendance too.
- A vulnerable person is not to be left alone with an adult, unless that adult is DBS checked and carrying out regulated activity.



### **Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse**

- If any member, staff or volunteer in St Peter's Singers witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they should immediately report it to the named safeguarding officer, Heather Pennwood (07708 127727)
- If the named person is not available, or is involved in or connected to, the abuse, it should be reported to the Chair or Secretary, who will be DBS checked.
- If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the named safeguarding officer Heather Pennwood (07708 127727) or an individual they trust.

### **Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse**

The Named person (or person reported in their absence) will first make a decision based on the immediacy of the concern and the following two factors:

1. If the vulnerable person is in immediate danger or needs emergency medical attention – call the police and/or ambulance service.
2. If the person at the centre of the allegation is working with vulnerable persons at the current time – remove them, in a sensitive manner, from direct contact with vulnerable people and follow the procedures below.

If none of the above applies the named person will:

- Make a note of the concerns reported to them.
- Speak with committee members to decide how to handle the reported abuse, excluding any committee members who of involved in the incident.
- Escalate the report by either:
  - Raising concerns with the police – for serious or possible criminal offences.
  - Requesting an assessment by the local authority social care department about whether a vulnerable person is in need of protection.
  - Conducting an internal investigation – for less serious incidents where they feel internal mediation will be successful.
- Where cases are escalated the committee will cooperate with the police or local authority in dealing with the reported incident.
- Where an internal investigation takes place the committee will:
  - Inform all parties involved of the reported abuse as soon as possible.
  - Inform the family/guardians of the person reported as having been abused of the incident.
  - Arrange separate meetings with both parties within 10 days of the reported incident. A joint meeting may be arranged if appropriate.
    - Both parties should be given the chance to bring a friend or representative to the meeting.
    - Meetings will be attended by the named safeguarding officer and at least one other committee member.

- All parties will also be invited to submit a written statement in advance of the meeting.
- Once meetings have taken place the committee will decide on next steps and communicate them to all parties in writing within 5 days. They will either:
  - Escalate the incident to the relevant authority.
  - Further investigation – with established procedures and timelines to work towards a resolution.
  - A decision or resolution.

### **Resolution and disciplinary action**

- If abuse is found to have taken place any final resolution or decision will be taken in the best interest of the person who has suffered the abuse and the best interests the St Peter's Singers.
- Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with the St Peter's Singers constitution.