

# Safeguarding Policy – Cherwell Choral Society



## **Commitment to safeguarding**

Cherwell Choral Society believes that a child, young person or adult at risk should never experience abuse of any kind. We recognise that we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people, and adults at risk. We are committed to safeguarding the well-being of all children, young people, and adults at risk we meet and to protecting them from harm.

## **About this policy**

This policy applies to:

- All members, staff (whether employees or freelancers), volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Cherwell Choral Society or taking part in 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 all 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 as defined 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 policy also recognises risk is determined by the activity an adult is taking part in and not solely on the personal characteristics or circumstances of the adult, as such any adult can be at risk, and the risk can be temporary.

This policy aims to:

- Protect children, young people and adults at risk who are; members of, receive services from, or volunteer for Cherwell Choral Society
- Ensure members, staff and volunteers working with children, young people and adults at risk are carefully recruited and understand and accept responsibility for the safeguarding of those vulnerable individuals they are interacting with.
- Ensure that safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk is a primary consideration when Cherwell Choral Society undertakes any activity, event or project.

## **How Cherwell Choral Society might work with vulnerable people**

Membership is open to those over 16 years of age. Any under 18s must have parental permission and a parent/guardian is required to complete the necessary consent form. A couple of DBS checked members of the choir will be asked to be aware of individual young people and to provide discreet support and supervision as required. Members under the age of 18 are not required to pay Subs.

We run regular rehearsals for members and put on concerts for the public. As such our involvement with vulnerable people might include, but is not limited to:

- Members of the group who attend rehearsals and concerts
- Relatives and friends of members who attend rehearsals and concerts in a volunteering capacity
- Audience members at public concerts

**Named safeguarding person:** Jane Maharry has responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to her in the first instance. The Music Director, Dr Paul Hedley, holds an enhanced DBS certificate, as do several members of the choir.

Any projects, events or other activities that will involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of Jane Maharry and in line with established procedures and ground rules (see below).

**Procedures and ground rules:** A further document – ‘Ground rules, ways of working and procedures’ is available below and forms part of this policy.

**Policy review:** This policy will be reviewed and amended (if necessary) on an annual basis by the management committee and will be ratified at the AGM. It will also be reviewed in response to changes in relevant legislation, good practice, or in response to an identified failing in its effectiveness.

## **Safeguarding policy – Cherwell Choral Society - Ground rules, ways of working and procedures**

This document forms part of the Cherwell Choral Society Safeguarding policy

- The policy applies to all members, staff (whether employees or freelances), volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Cherwell Choral Society or taking part in 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 of working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people
- 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 known vulnerable adults as part of the Cherwell Choral Society 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.

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

When Cherwell Choral Society 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 event is attended by an appropriate number of DBS checked adults – this will be a minimum of one but more when practically possible.
- There is a main contact for safeguarding on the day - this will be an individual who has been DBS checked.
- 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 be left alone with an adult, unless that adult is DBS checked and carrying out regulated activity.
- Two adults (one DBS checked) should be the last to leave a venue once the activity has finished and will be responsible for ensuring vulnerable people are collected safely.

- Working with parents/guardians: If a vulnerable person wishes to take part in choir 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 and any relevant pick-up arrangements – including permission for another adult to pick up the vulnerable person after the activity has finished.

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

- If any member, staff or volunteer in Cherwell Choral Society witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they should immediately report it to the named safeguarding officer
- If the named person is not available, or is involved in or connected to, the abuse, it should be reported to a member of the committee.
- If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves, they should report it to the named safeguarding officer or an individual they trust.

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

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

- If the vulnerable person is in immediate danger or needs emergency medical attention – call the police and/or ambulance service.
- 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. If a committee member is named as part of the concern, then they will not be involved in this process.
- For less serious incidents, a decision may be taken for the named person to undertake relevant conversations or mediation between those concerned.
- If appropriate, escalate the report by either:  
Raising concerns with the police – for serious or possible criminal offences, or requesting an assessment by the local authority social care department about whether a vulnerable person needs protection

Where cases are escalated the committee will cooperate with the police or local authority in dealing with the reported incident.

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