



Safeguarding Policy

Note: The legal entity known as The Nottingham Harmonic Society is referred to throughout this document as Nottingham Harmonic Choir (or the Choir). The Officers and all the other General Committee Members are, and may be referred to as, the Trustees.

1. Introduction

Nottingham Harmonic Choir believes that anyone connected with the organisation should never experience abuse of any kind within the organisation. We recognise that we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all members, associated adults, young people and children and to have awareness for anyone who may be considered vulnerable. We are committed to safeguarding the well-being of all those with whom we come into contact and in so doing, to protect them from harm.

2. About this policy

This policy applies to all members, professionals, volunteers and supporters and anyone working on behalf of, or taking part, in Choir activities.

- The purpose of this policy is to provide members, volunteers and professionals with the overarching principles that guide our approach to the protection of potentially vulnerable people.
- This policy recognises vulnerable people as:
 - a. Children up to the age of 16 or young people aged 16-18.
 - b. Adults aged over 18 as defined by the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. This might include adults with a learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, addiction to alcohol or drugs or anything which results in reduced physical or mental capacity.

*amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

This policy aims to:

- a. Protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who are members of, receive services from, or volunteer for the Choir.
- b. Ensure that members, professionals and volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are carefully recruited and understand and accept responsibility for the safeguarding of those vulnerable individuals with whom they are interacting.
- c. Ensure that safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is a primary consideration when the Choir undertakes any activity, event or project which may affect them.

3. How the Choir might work with vulnerable people

Membership is open to those over 18 years of age (or over 16s if with a responsible adult, who is also a member). Regular rehearsals take place for members to prepare for

public performance. As such, our involvement with vulnerable people might include, but is not limited to:

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

4. Named safeguarding person

The Chair of the General Committee has overall responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to the Chair in the first instance. Any projects, events or other activities that will involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of the Chair and in line with established procedures and ground rules (see below).

It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that they have a good understanding of safeguarding principles by completing safeguarding training up to level 1. Alternatively, the Chair may wish to delegate the Lead Safeguarding Officer position to a General Committee member who has already received the appropriate level of safeguarding training.

Ground rules, ways of working and procedures.

This document includes:

- Safer recruitment practices
- Ground rules and ways of working regarding the safeguarding of vulnerable people.
- Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse.
- Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse.

Recruitment practices around safeguarding

If an existing or potential new member, professional or volunteer will be working with vulnerable people as part of the Choir activities, the appropriate level of Disclosure and Barring Service check will be requested before that work is undertaken.

The level of DBS check required will be decided by the Officers of the General 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 Nottingham Harmonic Choir Equal Opportunities policy.

Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people.

If the Choir organises an activity or event where they will be responsible for vulnerable adults, they will ensure that:

- Planning is carried out in line with this policy and procedures.
- Planning is also carried out in line with the venue's own safeguarding 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.
- Where practically possible the total number of adults in attendance (not necessarily DBS checked) compared with the total number of children will be in line with the ratio table below - as per Ofsted recommendations.
- There is a main contact for safeguarding on the day - this will usually be the Chair but may be a nominated 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 genders will be taking part in activities, responsible adults of different genders 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.
- Two adults (one DBS checked) should be the last to leave a venue or online event, once the activity has finished and will be responsible for ensuring arrangements are in place for vulnerable people to travel home safely.

Child to adult ratio table

Child's age	Number of Adults	Number of Children
0-2	1	3
2-3	1	4
4-8	1	6
9-12	1	8
12-18	1	10

Working with parents/carers

If a vulnerable person wishes to take part in the Choir activities, written permission (email is acceptable) should be obtained from parents/carer 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.

Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse.

- If any member, professional or volunteer in the Choir witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they must immediately report it to the named Safeguarding Officer, the Chair.
- If the named person is not available, or is involved in or connected to, the abuse, it should be reported to another Officer, or a DBS checked adult.
- If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves, they should report it to the Chair or an individual they trust.

Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse.

The Named Person (or other person 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, the police and/or emergency services will be called.
- If the person at the centre of the allegation is working with vulnerable persons at the current time they will be relieved of their duties and from direct contact with vulnerable people in a sensitive manner. The named person will then follow the procedures below.

The Named or other Person shall in any event make a note of the concerns reported.

- Speak with committee members to decide how to handle the reported abuse, excluding any committee member who is involved in the incident.
- Deal with the report by either:
 - a. Raising concerns with the police – for serious or possible criminal offences.
 - b. Requesting an assessment by the local authority social care department about whether a vulnerable person needs protection.
 - c. Instigating an internal investigation – for less serious incidents where it is judged that internal mediation will be successful and appropriate.
- 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:
 - a. Inform all parties involved of the reported abuse as soon as possible.
 - b. Inform the family/carers of the person reported as having been abused of the incident.
 - c. Arrange separate meetings with both parties within 10 days of the reported incident. A joint meeting may be arranged if appropriate.
 - d. Both parties should be given the chance to bring a friend or representative to the meeting.
 - e. Meetings will be attended by the named safeguarding officer and at least one other committee member.
 - f. 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:
 - a. Escalate the incident to the relevant authority.
 - b. Conduct further investigation, with established procedures and timelines to work towards a resolution.
 - c. Reach 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 interests of the person who has suffered the abuse and the Choir.
- Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with the Choir Rules.

Responding to disclosure of abuse

If an adult indicates that they are being abused the person receiving the information should:

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is said, allowing the adult to continue at their own pace, and take it seriously.
- Explain that it is likely the information will have to be shared with others- do not promise to keep secrets.

- Keep questions to a minimum, only ask questions if you need to identify/ clarify what the person is telling you. Take care to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation, and opinion. It is important that the information you have is accurate.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in revealing the information.
- Ask them what they would like to happen next.
- Explain what you would like to do next and ask if they are happy for you to share the information for you to help them. If it does not increase the risk to the individual, you should explain to them that it is your duty to share your concern with your Lead Safeguarding Officer.
- Record in writing what was said using the adult's own words as soon as possible.

DO NOT:

- Dismiss the concern.
- Panic or allow shock or distaste to show.
- Probe for more information than is offered.
- Make promises that cannot be kept.
- Investigate of the case.
- Make negative comments about the alleged perpetrator.