



Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

The Kemsing Singers is a Registered Charity, composed of volunteer choir members. Officers are elected and others co-opted to serve on the committee. Rehearsals are run by our self-employed Musical Director or a substitute on occasion, with a self-employed accompanist. From time to time Kemsing Singers organises other events such as concerts, choral workshops, social outings and choir tours.

The Kemsing Singers does not promote itself as an activity suitable for children or vulnerable adults. Most choir members are independent adults. It happens only rarely that a young person or vulnerable adult joins, rehearses and performs with us.

Choir rehearsals and performances are group activities, and there is no requirement for a member of the choir to be alone with another member of any age. Nonetheless The Kemsing Singers recognises the need to safeguard any young and vulnerable members and the Committee has therefore agreed the following Safeguarding Policy.

Kemsing Singers recognises that it is not the role of our organisation to decide whether a child, young person or vulnerable adult has been abused or not. This is the role of other qualified agencies who have powers to investigate child protection concerns under the Children Act or the Police.

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

Scope

Who are Children or Vulnerable Adults? In this context anyone up to the age of 18 is a child. An adult is defined in the Care Act 2014 as someone over 18 years old who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect as a result of their care and support needs or is unable to protect himself or herself against abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Responsibilities

Expectations of Committee

The committee is expected to review this policy annually and to appoint a nominated Safeguarding Officer who shall be the main point of contact for any safeguarding concerns. This officer will have three yearly background checks through the Disclosure and Barring

Service. They are also expected to keep a permanent confidential record of all concerns raised.

They shall ensure that the safeguarding policy is published on the choir website and that it is drawn to the attention of members at the beginning of each season.

Expectations of Choir Members

Choir members are expected to speak to the nominated officer should they see or hear anything that they feel could be putting another member at risk.

The Choir notes the importance of being alert to signals of abuse and to the difficulty individuals may have in reporting it. To assist in responding appropriately to a complaint, we offer the following strategy for anyone who is made aware of an issue:

- Listen carefully.
- Reassure the child or person involved that this matter will be disclosed only to those who need to know about it and that they are doing the right thing in telling you.
- Avoid leading questions or closed questions.
- Write down what has been said, with date and time and any names mentioned.
- Tell the child/person what you are going to do next (in the first instance, report the matter to the Designated Person for safeguarding)

Privacy Arrangements

In the rare event of it not being possible to arrive at a venue in concert dress, the Choir will endeavour to ensure an individual's privacy is respected if required to change at a venue.

On overnight trips away the Choir will ensure that an individual's needs are considered when allocating rooms and will make adjustments depending on circumstances should an individual be uncomfortable with the arrangements.

Audiences and Social Events

Kemsing Singers is aware that children and vulnerable adults may attend their concerts as members of the audience, or attend social functions hosted by Kemsing Singers. It is the responsibility of the parent, guardian or carer to ensure adequate supervision. If a parent/guardian/carers 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.

Actions if a Concern is Raised

Choir members or anyone with concerns should report to the Safeguarding Officer (or in their absence the Chairman), who will take action as described in the section below:

- Obtain and record information from the person expressing the concern;

- Assess the information quickly and carefully and ask for further clarification as appropriate;
- Seek medical attention if necessary and or make a referral to a statutory child protection agency or the police without delay depending on the particular circumstances;
- If in any doubt as to what to do, seek advice from Social Services or the NSPCC Helpline by calling 0808 800 5000 or emailing help@nspcc.org.uk;
- Maintain confidentiality as far as possible subject to the principle of the welfare of the child/vulnerable adult being paramount which means that information may have to be shared (but only with people who need to know about it).

A permanent confidential record will be kept of the report by the Safeguarding Officer.

Monitoring and Review

The policy and procedures will be brought to the attention of members at each Choir AGM and reviewed annually at the first Committee meeting following the AGM.

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