

Leighton Buzzard Festival Singers Safeguarding Policy

Leighton Buzzard Festival Singers (LBFS) Safeguarding Policy

This policy applies to all members, volunteers and all others invited to perform or work with LBFS. LBFS does not promote itself as an activity specifically for children or vulnerable adults. Most choir members are independent adults. It happens only rarely that a young person or vulnerable adult joins, rehearses, or performs with us, however they may form part of the audience at public performances.

Background Information

Legal Context

The law requires any organisation involving young people and/or vulnerable adults to take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to their welfare is minimised, and where there are concerns, to share them with other local agencies.

The relevant legal requirements arise from:

The Children Act 1989;

The Human Rights Act 1998;

The Protection of Children Act 1999;

The Sexual Offences (Amendments) Act 2006;

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;

The relevant government guidance including: *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015*; *Statement of Government Policy on Adult Safeguarding 2011*

Leighton Buzzard Festival Singers (the Choir) recognises that it is not the role of our organisation to decide whether or not a child or vulnerable adult has been abused. This is the role of the local authority Children's or Adult Services department who have legal responsibility, or of the NSPCC who have powers to investigate child protection concerns under the Children Act. We are, however, committed to act responsibly within our remit.

Good Practice

In formulating this Policy the Trustees of the Choir have followed the guidance of *Making Music* (the national organisation advising and championing amateur musicians and music groups across the UK), and *Safe Network*, the safeguarding advice resource of the NSPCC.

Definition of 'Children' or 'Vulnerable Adults'

In this context:

- Anyone up to the age of 18, i.e. under 18 is classified as a child.
- Anyone over 18 years of age is classified as a vulnerable adult, who is or who may be unable to take care of themselves, or be unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

How Leighton Buzzard Festival Singers (LBFS) operates

The Choir is a Registered Charity, composed of adult choir members. Trustees are elected to serve on the Management Committee, and others may volunteer or be co-opted onto the Management Committee.

We engage on a self-employed basis:

- A Musical Director (or a substitute on occasion)
- An Accompanist

From time to time LBFS organises other events such as Come and Sing days, social events and outings. LBFS is an adult choir. Occasionally we perform in collaboration with other choirs including those with children. There are no employed staff or volunteers who are charged with the care of others.

Choir rehearsals and performances are group activities, and there is no requirement for any member of the choir to be alone with another individual member. Nonetheless the Trustees of the Choir recognise the need to safeguard the welfare of any young and vulnerable people with whom we may work or come into contact.

1. General principles and guidelines

- LBFS welcomes the participation of children and young people in designated concerts.

- LBFS is committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and ensuring their wellbeing.
- LBFS holds that the safeguarding of all children and vulnerable adults who participate in choir activities is the responsibility of every choir member

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect from abuse children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom the choir has any involvement;
- to provide an outline of the principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.

2. Contact with children and young people:

2.1 Children may take part in a concert, as part of a youth, school or church choir

- In these circumstances, LBFS will expect that children/young people will be accompanied by an adult member or members of their choir, and that arrangements for safeguarding will be followed according to the policy of that choir. LBFS will collaborate with the other choir to ensure that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place for the event(s).
- Except for emergency first aid, members of the choir will not conduct any form of health intervention and will not administer medication. In the case of a church or other choir, the responsible adults from that organisation will be required to take charge in accordance with their safeguarding policy.
- The Choir will make appropriate joint working arrangements to ensure that school/youth groups will always be in the care of their teachers, assistants and/or parents/carers 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 and to follow the principles of this policy.

2.2 Children or young people may occasionally take part in concerts as soloists, or as part of the choir as an individual (i.e. not as part of another choir). In these instances they should be accompanied by a parent/carer or other responsible adult nominated by the parent/carer.

- The child's parent/carer must provide written permission for their child to take part in choir activities. A consent form for this purpose will be provided by the Choir Secretary. An emergency contact number should be provided on the consent form, as well as any relevant medical information (e.g. allergies), and notice of the use of photography/video recordings. When completed, the form shall be retained by the Choir Secretary until after the concert.
- The choir will expect that the adults accompanying the child(ren) will be responsible for the safety of the child(ren). The choir will also exercise its duty of care towards the child(ren).
- The parent/carer retains full responsibility for the child's transport arrangements to and from rehearsals and the venues for performances or activities.
- Rehearsals and other activities will be conducted in an open environment to avoid private or unobserved situations. Choir members should ensure that they are not alone with a young person.
- Except for emergency first aid members of the choir will not conduct any form of health intervention and will not administer medication.

The above guidance also applies to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults.

2.3 Children and vulnerable adults who form part of the audience at public performances given by the Choir.

The choir does not make special arrangements for children or vulnerable adults as part of the audience other than exercising a reasonable duty of care. It is the responsibility of the parent, or carer to ensure that their child/vulnerable adult is supervised at all times. If a parent/carer is not personally attending an event with their child/vulnerable adult, this policy requires them to be satisfied that their child/vulnerable adult will be accompanied and adequately supervised by a responsible adult acting on their behalf at all times. Choir members will not make contact with, nor ask for the contact details of children and young people, or vulnerable adults not known to them.

3. Tours or trips (day and/or residential)

- Any child who wishes to go on a tour/residential trip or day trip with the choir must be accompanied by a parent/carer or a responsible adult of their parent/ carer's choice to act *in loco parentis*. Written evidence to this effect should be provided by the parent/carer.
- On residential tours/trips, only the adult acting *in loco parentis* may share a room with the child. Other adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
- Parents/carers will be informed of arrangements for the tour and be asked to confirm their approval in writing.
- In the case of vulnerable adults, prior approval must be sought from the person's carer who, where possible, should accompany the person.

4. Privacy arrangements

- In most instances, the choir should plan to arrive at a venue in concert dress. All members of the choir will be informed in advance of the available changing and/or toilet arrangements at the venue.
- In common with its policy for adult members, the Choir will not disclose contact details for any vulnerable adult without first obtaining permission from their carers. In the case of a minor, the parents/carers should be consulted. The purpose of any request for contact details, and the identity of any person making such a request will be provided.
- Parents/carers should be aware that photography, audio and video recording may be undertaken from time to time at concerts and rehearsals. The images and recordings may be stored digitally and used both on-and off- line including on the Internet. These provide valuable tools to promote the work of the choir to a wider audience and form part of the historical record of our work. Prior approval to do so must be obtained in writing from the parent/carer as noted on the parent/carer consent form.

6. Measures for implementation of this policy

A copy of this policy is available on the choir's website and is sent by email or a hard copy given to each choir member. A copy will be sent to each parent / carer upon request.

The policy and procedures will be brought to the attention of members at each choir AGM and be reviewed annually at the first Committee meeting following the AGM. Choir members will be informed of any changes as soon as the committee has approved them.

The Choir has nominated a *Designated Person*, who will undertake appropriate training as required and will be identified to children/vulnerable adults as the principal person they should turn to, if they have any concerns or queries. Contact details for the named person are also given in the parent/carer consent form.

Choir members or anyone with concerns should report to the *Designated Person* (or in their absence the Chairman of the choir Committee), who will take action as described in the 'Approach to be taken in event' section below and:

- Obtain and record information from the person expressing the concern;
- Assess the information quickly and carefully and ask for further clarification as appropriate;
- Seek advice from Children's or Adult Services at the relevant Local Authority;
- 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

A permanent confidential record will be kept of the report by the Choir Secretary.

7. Approach to be taken in event of a complaint

The Choir notes the importance of being alert to signs 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 from or concerning a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

- Ensure the child or vulnerable adult understands that information given about abuse cannot be kept confidential.
- 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*).

8. General guidance to choir members participating in events alongside children, young people and /or vulnerable adults

In implementing our safeguarding policy, we should ensure that if and when we participate in choir activities that also involve children, young people or vulnerable adults, we should:

- Value and respect them as individuals;
- Ensure that there is always more than one adult present during activities with them;
- Watch out for each other and ensure that we are not drawn into situations that could be misinterpreted;
- Avoid physical contact;
- Avoid inappropriate remarks to or about them; even in fun this could be misinterpreted;
- Not take them to our homes, offer them transport, gifts or money.

Signed by the Chairman on behalf of the Committee.

Paul Dickens

Date:

List of contacts:

1. The *Designated Person* role is shared between Kathryn Emerson and Leanne Morgan (Choir members)
2. The Chairman is Paul Dickens
3. The Choir Secretary is Kathryn Emerson

Reports of suspicions or allegations of abuse or a serious incident are to be sent to the appropriate contact as soon as possible. If there is an emergency or the child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, the police or ambulance services should be called immediately.

The local Safeguarding Children's Board and Safeguarding Adults Board websites include contact details and information about how to make referrals. Any incidents should be reported to the Safeguarding Board covering the area in which the child or vulnerable adult lives.

Contact details are summarised below.

Children's social care team at Central Bedfordshire Council

030 0300 8585

(out of hours) 030 0300 8123

Adult protection team at Central Bedfordshire Council

0300 300 8122

(Out of hours) 030 300 8123

Adult.protection@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Or fill in a form:

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/18/health_and_social_care/335/protecting_vulnerable_adults_from_harm

For further information, the NSPCC also offers advice on safeguarding issues with both children and vulnerable adults:

NSPCC
0808 800 5000
help@NSPCC@org.uk

This information was compiled on 29.08.2023

This is to be sent to parents of individual children soloists. It would be customized and personalized to the individual by the addition of names. It would also be adapted for vulnerable adults.
Each time it is used it will be accompanied by a sheet of details about the rehearsals and performance.

Address for Parent/Carer to be added here

Dear (*name of*) Parent /Carer

We are writing to you in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy August 2023 because (*name of child /young person/adult*) may be about to participate in our forthcoming concert. The policy can be found on our website, or obtained from the LBFS secretary.

Details of the concert and a schedule of the preparatory rehearsals are indicated on the attached sheet.

We are committed to safeguarding the wellbeing and interests of children and young people whenever they participate in shared rehearsals and performance with Leighton Buzzard Festival Singers.
In order to be able to do this, we need to ask for your agreement to (*name of child's/young person's/adult's*) participation, and to request some information from you as noted on the attached Consent Form.

We look forward to receiving your completed Consent Form.

Yours sincerely

Paul Dickens
Chairman of Leighton Buzzard Festival Singers
<https://www.lbfs.org.uk/>

Please send completed Consent Form to:
secretary@lbfs.org.uk

ACCOMPANYING DETAILS OF CONCERT AND SCHEDULE OF REHEARSALS

CONSENT FORM – Leighton Buzzard Festival Singers

1. Are you willing for (*name of child/young person/adult*) to participate in the event and any preparatory rehearsals given on the accompanying schedule?

Yes / No (please circle as appropriate)

2. Does (*name of child/young person/adult*) have any special dietary requirements of which we should be aware? (e.g. food allergies)

Yes / No (please circle as appropriate)

If Yes, please supply relevant information.

3. Does (*name of child/young person/adult*) have any special health or other needs of which we should be aware? (e.g. other allergies)

Yes / No (please circle as appropriate)

If Yes, please supply relevant information.

4. We expect that parents of participating children will accompany their children to events, or nominate another trusted adult to act in loco parentis.

Do you plan to attend the above rehearsals and concert?

Yes/No (please circle as appropriate)

If you answered No, please nominate another adult to act in loco parentis

5. For your information, photography, audio and video recording may be undertaken from time to time at concerts and rehearsals. The images and recordings may be stored digitally and used both on the internet and offline. These provide valuable tools to promote the work of the choir to a wider audience and form part of the historical record of our work.

Are you willing to permit (*name of child/young person/adult*) to participate in such recordings?

Yes / No (please circle as appropriate)

6. Please provide telephone contact details in case of emergency:

Signed

Date

Relationship to (*name of child/young person/adult*)