

Safeguarding Policy – Manchester Chorale – overview

Commitment to safeguarding: The Manchester Chorale 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 come into contact with and to protecting them from harm.

About this policy

- This policy applies to; all members, contractors, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of the Manchester Chorale or taking part in Manchester Chorale activities.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide members, contractors and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to the protection of all vulnerable people, followed by our ways of working and procedures.
- 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, the Manchester Chorale.
 - Ensure members, contractors 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 the Manchester Chorale undertakes any activity, event or project.

How the Manchester Chorale might work with vulnerable people: membership is open to those over 18 years of age, some of whom may be vulnerable. We run regular rehearsals for members and put on concerts for the general 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
- Joint concerts with schools and/or youth organisations
- Placement opportunities

Appointed safeguarding lead: the Manchester Chorale will appoint a safeguarding lead and a deputy safeguarding lead, with responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to the safeguarding lead in the first instance. If they are not available, queries and concerns should be referred to the deputy safeguarding lead.

Any projects, events or other activities that will involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of the appointed safeguarding lead and/or their deputy and in line with established procedures (see below).

Procedures: The ways of working and procedures form part of this policy document and are below.

Policy review: This policy will be reviewed and amended (if necessary) on an annual basis by the Committee of the Manchester Chorale (the **Committee**). 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 – Manchester Chorale - Ways of working and procedures

This forms part of the Manchester Chorale Safeguarding policy

- The policy applies to; all members, contractors, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of the Manchester Chorale or taking part in Manchester Chorale activities.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide members, contractors 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
- Ways of working regarding 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, contractor, member or volunteer will be working with vulnerable people as part of the Manchester Chorale activities the appropriate level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be requested before that work is undertaken. If such a person says that they have a current clear DBS check at an appropriate level or are registered with the DBS update service, then those details will be checked.

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 DBS check to inform a decision will (i) be used confidentially and in line with good equal opportunities practice, and (ii) recorded for the Committee of the Manchester Chorale in line with the Manchester Chorale Data Protection Policy. The DBS check must have been undertaken within the last 3 years.

Ways of working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people

When the Manchester Chorale 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.
- When working with children and/or young people, 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 as per Ofsted recommendations.
- There is a main contact for safeguarding on the day - this will be an individual who has been DBS checked.
- Appropriate liaison with the safeguarding officer of another organisation (for example a school) is conducted.

- The main contact has access to emergency contact details for those requiring safeguarding and other relevant details (e.g. information about the arrangements for the collection of 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 left alone with an adult, unless that adult is DBS checked and carrying out regulated activity.
- One DBS checked adult will remain on site until any vulnerable people have departed safely.

Care arrangements for vulnerable people: working with parents/guardians: If a vulnerable person wishes to take part in Manchester Chorale activities written permission (email is fine) should be obtained where appropriate, from parents/guardians, and before the activity takes place. Written permission should include emergency contact details for 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, contractor or volunteer in the Manchester Chorale witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they should immediately report it to the appointed safeguarding lead or their deputy;
- If the appointed safeguarding lead and their deputy are not available, or they are involved in or connected to, the abuse, it should be reported to the Chair of the Manchester Chorale (**Chair**) or a DBS checked adult recognised by the Manchester Chorale;
- If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the appointed safeguarding lead or their deputy.

Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse

The appointed safeguarding lead, or deputy (or person reported to 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 appointed safeguarding lead, or deputy, or person reported to in their absence, 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 were involved in the incident.
- Escalate the report through:
 - 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.
 - An internal investigation – for less serious incidents where they believe 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 being 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 appointed safeguarding lead or their deputy 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 be 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 of the Manchester Chorale.
- Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with the Manchester Chorale constitution.

Date of Safeguarding Policy: July 2025

Safeguarding Lead: Pat Jones

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Flora Bourne, Caroline Vince, Jennifer Thom