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**Safeguarding Policy**

## Commitment to safeguarding

Windsor and Eton Choral Society believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind. We recognise that we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults. We are committed to safeguarding the well-being of all children, young people and vulnerable adults we come into contact with and to protecting them from harm.

## About this policy

This policy applies to all choir members and any other persons working on behalf of WECS or taking part in WECS activities.

The purpose of this policy is to provide members and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to the protection of vulnerable people.

This policy aims to ensure the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is a primary consideration in the rehearsal venue, in concerts and in other events.

This policy recognises vulnerable people as:

* Children up to the age of 16 or young people aged 16-18
* Adults aged over 18 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

## Legal context

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

Windsor and Eton Choral Society recognises that it is not the role of our organisation to decide whether a child or vulnerable adult has been abused or not. It is our responsibility to refer our concerns to the appropriate agencies.

## How Windsor and Eton Choral Society operates

Windsor and Eton Choral Society (WECS) is a registered charity composed of choir members. Officers are elected at the Annual General Meeting and act as trustees of the charity, and others are co-opted to serve on the committee. The choir rehearses once a week and rehearsals are run by our Musical Director or a substitute on occasion, with an accompanist. There are three concerts each year, and from time to time WECS organises other events such as choral workshops, social events and outings.

The choir does not advertise itself as an activity suitable for children or vulnerable adults. Most choir members are independent adults and generally the choir’s membership does not include children under 18.

## How Windsor and Eton Choral Society may work with vulnerable people

* Members of the choir who attend rehearsals and concerts
* Relatives and friends of members of the choir who attend rehearsals and concerts in a volunteering capacity
* Audience members at public concerts
* Children, young people or vulnerable adults who may be present in other areas of the rehearsal venue

## Guidelines for good practice

Windsor and Eton Choral Society will publicise its Safeguarding Policy on its website and draw it to the attention of choir members when meeting at the beginning of each season.

The choir has nominated a Designated Safeguarding Officer, who will undertake appropriate training as required and will be identified to the choir as the principal person they should turn to if they have any safeguarding concerns or queries. Any events that involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of the Designated Safeguarding Officer and in line with the established procedures and ground rules.

## Membership

Should any child or close relative (under 18) of a member of the choir participate in choral works with WECS, the member of the choir must act as a responsible adult. Should any other child/young person participate in WECS activities, they must be accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult who remains responsible for them throughout the rehearsal and performances.

Should any member of the choir be considered vulnerable, (see above for the definition of a vulnerable adult), then a risk assessment will be undertaken in their best interests and appropriate action taken to safeguard them.

## Audience Events

WECS is aware that children and vulnerable adults may attend their concerts as members of the audience. It is the responsibility of the parent, guardian or carer to ensure adequate supervision. If a parent or guardian or carer 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 of their behalf at all times.

## Privacy

Parents and guardians should be aware that photography, audio and video recordings are officially undertaken from time to time at concerts and rehearsals. The images and recordings are used by the choir to promote the work of the choir to a wider audience and form part of the historical record of our work. It is not permitted for members of the audience to take photographs or use video equipment during a performance.

## Ground rules at rehearsals

All members are required to wear a choir lanyard displaying a photo ID membership card at all times. Visitors of choir members will be given a temporary visitors pass to wear. Choir members and visitors have restricted access within the rehearsal venue, and this needs to be strictly adhered to at all times.

A document called “Visitor safeguarding protocol” provides further guidance to the policy document.

## Designated Safeguarding Officer

Sue Hardy is the Designated Safeguarding Officer and has the responsibility for safeguarding issues.

## Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse

Any concern regarding a child, young person or vulnerable adult associated with the choir must immediately be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

If any member of the choir or volunteer witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse, they should immediately report it to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Examples of abuse include: physical abuse, domestic violence or abuse, sexual abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, self-neglect.

If the Designated Safeguarding Officer is not available, or is involved in or connected to the abuse, it should be reported to the Committee Chair or the Treasurer.

If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or an individual they trust.

## Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse

The Designated Safeguarding Officer (or person reported to in their absence) will take the lead on responding to the information. This might include:

* Assessing if the vulnerable person is in immediate danger or needs emergency medical attention
* Making a note of the concerns reported to them
* Assessing and clarifying the information
* Consulting with and informing the Chair of the Committee
* Referring the issue further, if appropriate, to the relevant organisation

## Policy review

This policy will be reviewed and amended (as necessary) every year by the committee. It will also be reviewed in response to changes in relevant legislation and good practice.

## Responsibility of implementing this safeguarding policy

All members of the choir have the responsibility to follow the guidelines laid out in this policy.

The committee has the responsibility to ensure that this safeguarding policy is implemented, to review it every year and to display it on the WECS website.

This policy was agreed at committee meeting on 4th June 2025

Date of next review: June 2026