



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

08 June 2018

Twickenham Choral Society - OVERVIEW

Legal Context

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

The Children's 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 includes Safe from Harm 1993
Working Together to Safeguard Children 1999
Caring for the Young and Vulnerable 2000

Twickenham 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. This is the role of the Social Services department who have legal responsibility or the NSPCC who have powers to investigate child protection concerns under the Children's Act.

Twickenham Choral Society (TCS) is a registered charity managed by a committee of volunteers elected at the annual general meeting. To carry out its charitable object it presents a number of concerts a year sometimes performing with orchestral groups, professional soloist and other choirs. TCS employs a musical director and an accompanist who are not members of the choir. They attend weekly rehearsals with members in term time in order to prepare for the concerts. From time to time TCS organises other events such as choral workshops, social events and outings, and foreign tours ("TCS activities").

TCS does not advertise itself as an activity suitable for children or vulnerable adults. Most choir members are independent adults and generally there are only one or two young people (under 18) out of a hundred members who rehearse and perform with the choir. Nevertheless TCS recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of young people and children with whom it works and comes into contact, and believes all participating young people have the right to enjoy the activities of the choir in a happy, safe and secure environment.

Commitment to safeguarding: TCS 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 members, staff (whether employees or freelancers), volunteers and anyone working on behalf of TCS or taking part in TCS activities.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide members, staff 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 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 policy aims to:
 - Protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who are; members of, receive services from, or volunteer for, TCS.
 - Ensure members, staff 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 they are interacting with.
 - Ensure that safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is a primary consideration when TCS undertakes any activity, event or project.

How Twickenham Choral Society might work with vulnerable people: membership is open to those over 16 years of age, and in limited circumstances, to those under 16 years of age. 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

Named safeguarding person: The TCS committee will designate a committee member to be the 'named person' who has responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to the 'named person' in the first instance.

Any projects, events or other activities that will involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of the 'named person' and in line with established procedures and ground rules (see below).

Procedures and ground rules: A further document – 'Ground rules, ways of working and procedures' is available and forms part of this policy.

Policy review: This policy will be reviewed and amended (if necessary) on an annual basis by 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 – Twickenham Choral Society - Ground rules, ways of working and procedures

This document forms part of the TCS Safeguarding policy

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This document includes:

- Recruitment practices around safeguarding
- Ground rules and ways for 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, staff member or volunteer will be working with vulnerable people as part of the TCS activities, the appropriate level of DBS check will be requested before that work is undertaken.

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 check to inform a decision will be used confidentially and in line with the TCS equal opportunities policy.

Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people

When TCS organises an activity or event where they will be responsible for vulnerable adults 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.
- There is a main contact for safeguarding on the day - this will be an 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 gender will be taking part in activities adults of different gender will be in attendance too.
- A vulnerable person is not 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 once the activity has finished and will be responsible for ensuring vulnerable people get home safely.

Working with parents/guardians: If a vulnerable person wishes to take part in TCS activities written permission (email is fine) should be obtained from parents/guardians 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, staff or volunteer in TCS witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they should immediately report it to the named safeguarding officer; the 'named person'.
- If the named person is not available, or is involved in or connected to, the abuse, it should be reported to the committee chair.
- If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the named safeguarding officer or an individual they trust.

Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse

The 'named person' (or person reported 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 named person 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.
- Consult with a local Safeguarding organisation – *Richmond Single Point of Access* (020 8547 5008 – out of hours 020 8770 5000), or *Richmond Local Safeguarding Children Board* (020 8831 6323).
- Escalate the report by either:
 - 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 feel 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 named safeguarding officer 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 interests of the person who has suffered the abuse and the best interests of TCS.
- Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with the TCS constitution.