

Safeguarding Policy – Thame Chamber Choir– overview

Commitment to safeguarding: Thame Chamber Choir 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 freelances), volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Thame Chamber Choir or taking part in Thame Chamber Choir activities. Thame Chamber Choir includes TCC2, also known as Thame Children's Choir.
- 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, Thame Chamber Choir.
 - 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 Thame Chamber Choir undertakes any activity, event or project.

How Thame Chamber Choir might work with vulnerable people: membership is open to those over 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

How Thame Chamber Choir works with children and young people: membership of TCC2 is open to children aged 7 years and older. Our interaction with children and young people includes, but is not limited to:

- Children who are members of TCC2 (Senior Choir and Training Choir) and who attend rehearsals and concerts
- Siblings and friends of TCC2 members who attend concerts
- Members of TCC2 who attend events such as recordings or engagements for other musical groups or charities
- Young people or older children who attend rehearsals of Thame Chamber Choir (the adult choir) as members of TCC2, for whom this is appropriate because of their musical experience or because their voice has changed.

Named safeguarding person – the Safeguarding Lead: Ann Millar has responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to Ann Millar in the first instance.

Safeguarding Committee Member [Trustee] – where the Safeguarding Lead is not a Committee member, the Chair or another Committee member shall be designated as the Committee Member with special responsibility for safeguarding. At present this is Ruth James/Patrick Lord.

Any projects, events or other activities that will involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of Ann Millar 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 – Thame Chamber Choir - Ground rules, ways of working and procedures

This document forms part of the Thame Chamber Choir 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 incident 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 Thame Chamber Choir activities the appropriate level of DBS 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 Thame Chamber Choir equal opportunities policy.

Recruitment of paid or volunteer leaders (Musical Director; those leading TCC2 rehearsals) shall be via a formal recruitment process.

Recruitment - when there are temporary TCC2 staff (eg when the Musical Director is away) they are not DBS checked, but the choir will ensure that a DBS checked member of the normal staff / volunteer team is in attendance at all times.

Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults

When Thame Chamber Choir organises an activity or event where they will be responsible for children or 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. We will keep a list of DBS checked adults.
- 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 below - as per Ofsted recommendations.
- 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.
- For TCC2 rehearsals, when there are parents helping on occasion they are not DBS checked, but they are never taking sole charge for children, and always have someone DBS checked in charge.

Child to adult ratio table

Childs age	Number of adults	Number of children
0-2	1	3
2-3	1	4
4-8	1	6
9-12	1	8
12-18	1	10

Working with parents/guardians: If a vulnerable person wishes to take part in Thame Chamber Choir 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 Thame Chamber Choir witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they should immediately report it to the named Safeguarding Lead: Ann Millar
- If the Safeguarding Lead is not available, or is involved in or connected to the concern, it should be reported to the TCC chair (currently Emma Critchley), or the Committee Member designated for Safeguarding.
- If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the named Safeguarding Lead or an individual they trust.

Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse

The Safeguarding Lead (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 the Chair to decide how to handle the reported abuse.
 - Raising concerns with the police – for serious or possible criminal offences.
 - Reporting a concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):
 - For adults: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/social-and-health-care/adult-social-care/reporting-concern>
 - For children: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/contactus/contact-local-authority-designated-officer>
 - An internal investigation – for less serious incidents where they feel internal mediation will be successful.
- Where cases are reported, the Safeguarding Lead, Chair and Committee Member designated for Safeguarding will cooperate with the police or local authority in dealing with the reported incident.
- Where an internal investigation takes place the Safeguarding Lead will:
 - Inform all parties involved of the reported concern as soon as possible.
 - Inform the family/guardians of a child concerned 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 Lead 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 Safeguarding Lead 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

- Any internal resolution shall be with the agreement of the parties concerned.
- Any disciplinary action against choir members will be taken in line with Thame Chamber Choir's constitution.
- Any disciplinary action against the Musical Director or other person paid to provide musical services to the choir shall be in line with current employment practice.