

Policy	Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
Effective Date	31 August 2016
Date Last Reviewed	November 2023
Authorised by	Trustees by e-mail
Scheduled Review Date	November 2024
Supersedes	All previous Policies and/or Statements

PURPOSE

To ensure The Harrogate Choral Society (HCS) – including Beati is able to keep children and young people with whom it works safe; and to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

SCOPE

The policy applies to all staff (whether employees or freelance) and volunteers who act on behalf of the organisation or taking part in Harrogate Choral Society activities, and who come directly into contact with children. This includes the main choir, including any young singers under the age of 18, and Beati. Every individual has a responsibility to inform the Safeguarding Lead or their deputy of concerns relating to safeguarding children. The Safeguarding Lead or their designated deputy must decide if the concerns should be communicated to Children's Social Care or the police.

POLICY STATEMENTS

HCS recognises that all children have a right to protection from abuse.

HCS takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people.

We will:

- Respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, and provide parents and children with the opportunity to voice their concerns.
- Have a system for dealing with concerns about possible abuse
- Maintain good links with statutory childcare authorities.

THE POLICY

HCS recognises that some children and young people today are the victims of neglect, and physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Accordingly HCS has adopted the policy contained in this document (hereafter "the policy"). The policy sets out agreed guidelines relating to responding to allegations of abuse, including those made against staff and volunteers. HCS recognises the need to build constructive links with the statutory services. These guidelines have been prepared in accordance with the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures. They will be kept under review and be supported by appropriate training.

“Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility”¹. Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. This policy applies to all staff (employees and freelance) and volunteers who act on behalf of **HCS** and who come directly into contact with children and young people.

Every individual has a responsibility to inform the Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy of concerns relating to safeguarding children. The Safeguarding Lead must decide if the concerns should be communicated to Children and Families Service or the Police.

POLICY DEFINITIONS

Child/Young Person

A child is defined in law as a person up to the age of 18 years. Therefore the term ‘child’ is used throughout this policy and procedure, and this includes young people. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change his/her status or entitlements to services or protection.

Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical Abuse

Is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

This is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

¹ [Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018](#)

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities which may not necessarily involve a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Extremism

Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or

young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Controlling or Coercive Behaviour

Also known as coercive control, the use of control and coercion in relationships is a form of domestic abuse and, since December 2015, a criminal offence.

Controlling and coercive behaviour is outlined in Government guidance issued under section 77 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 as part of the Government's non-statutory definition of domestic violence and abuse. It is described as:

- Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour; and
- Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim

Coercive control is a form of abuse that involves multiple behaviours and tactics which reinforce each other and are used to isolate, manipulate and regulate the victim. This pattern of abuse creates high levels of anxiety and fear. This has a significant impact on children and young people, both directly, as victims in their own right, and indirectly due to the impact the abuse has on the non-abusive parent. Children may also be forced to participate in controlling or coercive behaviour towards the parent who is being abused.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse. Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and adolescent to parent violence. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Domestic abuse continues to be a prevalent risk factor identified through children social care assessments for children in need. Domestic abuse has a significant impact on children and young people. Children may experience domestic abuse directly, as victims in their own right, or indirectly due to the impact the abuse has on others such as the non-abusive parent.

TRAINING AND AWARENESS

HCS will provide all staff with adequate safeguarding training in order to carry out their role and responsibilities under this policy. Individuals within the organisation need to be alert to the potential abuse of children both within their families and also from other sources, including abuse by members of that staff and volunteers.

Responding to a Safeguarding Concern

All members of **HCS** should respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures.

It is good practice to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns; however, you must not discuss your concerns with parents/carers in where:

- a) this would delay the sharing relevant information with an appropriate person or authority which would increase the risk of harm to the child or young person

asking for consent may increase the risk of harm to the child, young person, you or anyone else.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE IF AN ISSUE ARISES

What to do if children talk to you about abuse or neglect

It is recognised that a child may share information about abuse or neglect with staff or volunteers or talk spontaneously to individuals or in groups. In these situations you must:

- Listen carefully to the child.
- Give the child time and attention.
- Allow the child to give a spontaneous account; do not stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the child's presentation as well as what was said. Recordings must be kept secure and in accordance with organisation policies and procedures.
- Use the child's own words where possible.
- Explain that you cannot promise to keep information secret and you may need to speak to others about the information they have shared.

Reassure the child that:

- You are glad they have told you.
- They have not done anything wrong.
- What you are going to do next.
- Where appropriate explain that you will need to get help to keep the child safe.

- Treat all children and young people with respect
- Ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy
- Make children or young people comfortable and caring enough to point out any safeguarding concerns
- Recognise that caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- Operate within the HCS principles and guidance and any specific procedures
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse.

You must not:

- DO NOT directly question the child
- Children should not be required to provide multiple accounts of events within the HCS
- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or young people

- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour/ make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people
- Reach conclusions about others without checking facts
- Either exaggerate or trivialise safeguarding issues
- Show favouritism to any individual

What you should do if you suspect abuse

You may become concerned about a child for a number of reasons, this may include but is not limited to the child or young person:

- Speaking to you about something which is concerning them
- Telling you about a concern for a friend or other child(ren)
- Avoiding speaking to you
- They are clearly upset
- Displaying a change in behaviour
- Being disengaged or are having trouble concentrating
- Changing their friendship groups and associates
- Having new marks, bruises or scars, or are trying to conceal them

You may also identify concerns:

- Because of your observations, or
- Changes in performance of the child or young person (*relevant for schools, clubs, etc*)
- A concern has been raised to you by a colleague, parent or third party

It is good practice to ask a child why they are upset or how a cut or bruise was caused, or respond to a child wanting to talk to you. This practice can help clarify concerns and result in appropriate action.

If you are concerned about a child you must share your concerns. Initially you should talk to the Safeguarding Lead or their deputy. You should make a note of your concerns and any actions agreed following your discussion with the Safeguarding Lead or their deputy.

GOVERNANCE

HCS Trustees have ultimate responsibility for child protection and the day-to-day management of safeguarding. Other members may assist with particular responsibilities for child safeguarding, including offering legal advice. There will normally be a Lead Person for Child Safeguarding and several chaperones.

The Lead Person for Child Safeguarding and other members with particular responsibilities will have received safeguarding training. This will include contracted staff / officials, volunteers and official chaperones.

The Lead Trustee for Safeguarding (Co-Chair) liaises with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against a member of staff or volunteer other than themselves (in the event of an allegation being made against themselves, this role sits with the other Co-Chair

TRAINING

At a minimum, this will be completion of the Making Music approved Safeguarding for Music Groups online basic safeguarding awareness training (Child Protection Company). This will be regularly updated. The Lead Person for Child Safeguarding will undertake NYCC Early Help and Child Protection Referrals online training. Official Chaperones will undertake additional training as advised by NYCC or their licence issuing authority.

The Trustees will, with the Lead Person for Child Safeguarding, be responsible for ensuring that there is access to appropriate training and records of training received are maintained.

The Trustees together with the Lead Person for Child Safeguarding will ensure any licensing requirements specified by North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) are carried out and appropriate records kept. In particular any performances involving children of compulsory school age are held under Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) from NYCC or the relevant local authority for the concert location if not in North Yorkshire and follow the required guidelines issued by the relevant local authority.

HCS PROCEDURES FOR CHILD SAFEGUARDING: Main Choir and Beati

The HCS Business Manager is responsible for making arrangements for all potential new members to join the main choir, including young people. All potential new members under the age of 18 will be classed as young singers. They will not be members of the Main Choir, or Beati until the start of the season after they reach 18 years of age, although as young singers they may be present singing at rehearsals and performances with the adult choir.

PROCEDURES FOR CHILD SAFEGUARDING: young singers

The Business manager will inform the Lead Person for Child Safeguarding when a potential new member under 18 starts to attend rehearsals. Young singers under 18 will be seated near or with a DBS cleared choir member unless they have a parent also singing or staying on the premises for the rehearsal.

The Lead person for Child Safeguarding will ensure that at each event (rehearsal, singing practice, performance, etc) arrangements to ensure safeguarding of children have been made so that there will be a sufficient number of licenced chaperones, DBS cleared officials or-volunteers in attendance as appropriate, with a specific person being "in charge" on each occasion. i.e. nominated, licensed chaperone(s) for performance day and DBS cleared adults when a chaperone is not required.

The Lead Person for Child Safeguarding, supported by the HCS Committee Secretary, will maintain a register of current DBS cleared members who are willing to take child safeguarding responsibilities within HCS. Current is defined as a certificate obtained in the last 3 years. All members potentially taking this role will be provided with a copy of this policy.

Current DBS status is defined as a certificate obtained in the last 3 years, or maintained using the DBS Update service, or one of continuous renewal (as for an official chaperone).

It should be noted that a chaperone licence is awarded by the Council area in which chaperone resides, a BOPA licence is awarded in area where the performance takes place. Licensed chaperones are required for an actual performance plus any rehearsal on that day, otherwise a DBS cleared adult is acceptable.

The following procedures apply to all of singing practices (rehearsals), joint rehearsals with

others and concerts (events).

- Responsibility for safe arrival at venue is the responsibility of the parent/guardian, and the registration form will be signed by a parent to this effect.
- If a singer has NOT sent apologies and is not at Singing Practice/Event within 10 minutes of the arranged time, parent/guardian will be called to ensure they are aware of non-attendance.
- Departing Singing Practice/Event: Parents are responsible for collecting their child from Singing Practice/Event or for making arrangements for them to go home with another parent, or even (if old enough) to allow them to make their own way home. Parents will sign a registration form to this effect and will let the HCS Lead Person for Child Safeguarding know how their child will leave.
- For performances a register will be kept for all young singers or performers of compulsory school age unless they are part of an official school group.

All people with child safeguarding responsibilities will be aware of the guidance and procedures in the following section with regard to what to do in case there is a child safeguarding issue.

In all cases, The Lead Person for Child Safeguarding will be informed and will advise on the appropriate next steps (who might need informing, record keeping, etc). The Chairman will subsequently be informed of the event and action taken. In appropriate circumstances, the Charity Commission will need to be notified of any incident.

PROCEDURES FOR CHILD SAFEGUARDING: Event involving a School or Schools (such as the Harrogate Christmas Concert)

The groups of children will be under the supervision of the relevant school which will be responsible for the safeguarding arrangements for their children.

If young singers from the main HCS choir or individual children, are participating the procedure relating to the main HCS choir above will apply (unless the child is being chaperoned by their parent).

In either instance the necessary BOPA licence will be applied for, and arrangements will be made for those under 17 to have their own dressing room area.

Informing parents

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 sets out the requirements for how organisations obtained, use and share information.

HCS will be transparent and accountable in relation to their use of data for collecting, storing, and sharing information.

Information to be shared with another agency will usually require explicit consent except where there are concerns for the welfare or safety of the child. In these circumstances the need for consent changes where it is believed that a child has or is likely to suffer:

- Significant harm and/or;
- Has developmental and welfare needs which are likely only to be met through provision of family support services (with agreement of the child's parent).

For cases not reaching this threshold, it is good practice to be open and honest at the outset with the parents/carers about concerns, and the need for a referral.

All reasonable efforts should be made to inform parents/carers prior to discussing concerns with Children and Families Service however, this should not be delayed if concerns cannot be discussed with the parents.

Where the child expresses a wish for his or her parents not to be informed, their views should be taken seriously and a judgement made based on the child's age and understanding, as to whether the child's wishes should be followed (see <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/legal-definitionchild-rights-law/gillick-competency-fraser-guidelines/>).

There may be some circumstances where it is not appropriate to seek consent, either because the individual cannot give consent, it is not reasonable to obtain consent, or where seeking consent would put a child or young person's safety or well-being at risk.

Where a decision to share information without consent is made, a record of what has been shared should be kept along with the reason why consent was not obtained.

Action by the DSL

The following actions will be taken where there are concerns about significant harm to any child, including where there is already an open case to Children's Social Care, (e.g. Looked after Child).

Following any information raising concern, the DSL will consider:

- If they believe there is immediate risk of significant harm to a child and therefore should contact North Yorkshire Police on 999;
- If they should report a crime that does not need an emergency response by calling 101;
- If there is an urgent safeguarding concern and they should call the Customer Resolution Centre on 0300 131 2 131.
- Any urgent medical needs of the child;

Consultation with the Children and Families Service

The North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership [Framework for decision-making: Right help, at the right time by the right person](#) should be used to help identify if a concern should be referred to the Children and Families Service.

Where concerns have been highlighted to the Safeguarding Lead, they will contact the Customer Resolution Centre to discuss the concerns with the Children and Families Service. Please see [Making a Referral to the Children and Families Service](#).

You may also wish to consult with the Children and Families Service before making a referral. Consultation is not the same as making a referral You should contact the [Professionals' Consultation Line](#) where:

- You have been unable to contact the Safeguarding Lead or their deputy and you believe the child is at risk of harm
- You remain unsure after internal consultation as to whether safeguarding concerns exist
- When there is disagreement as to whether safeguarding concerns exist, or when the concerns relate to any member of the organising committee

The Professionals' Consultation Line can be contacted on 01609 535070.

Making a Referral to the Children and Families Service

In order to make a referral to **the Children and Families Service**, the Customer Resolution Centre should be contacted in the first instance. This will usually be by the Safeguarding Lead or their deputy but should not be delayed if they are not available.

The Customer Contact Centre can be contacted by the following methods:

During Office Hours - By Phone: 0300 131 2 131

Outside Office Hours Emergency Duty Team (evenings, weekends + bank holidays): 0300 131 2 131 All referrals to Children and Families Service will be made by submitting a [universal referral form](#). [For more information see the NYSCP website “Worried about a child”](#).

For more information visit:

<https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/about-us/worried-about-a-child/>

Designated Officers for Managing Allegations (LADOs)

Duty LADO contact details (consultations, new referrals and urgent matters) - 01609 533080
lado@northyorks.gov.uk

Contacting North Yorkshire County Council

When contacting the Customer Contact Centre the staff should:

- Clearly identify themselves, their agency/relationship with the child (ren) and family,
- Give details of where they can be contacted.
- Provide as much relevant family information as possible and, clearly stating the name of the child, the parents/carers and any other children known to be in the household, the dates of birth and addresses and any previous addresses known
- Provide details of any special needs or communication needs of either the child or any family member
- State why they feel the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.
- Share their knowledge and involvement of the child(ren) and family
- Share their knowledge of any other agency involved
- Indicate the child's, parent's/carer's knowledge of the referral and their expectations
- Ensure they record within their agency files the concerns and action taken

Confirmation of Referral

Where a referral has been made to the Children and Families Service, a written confirmation of the referral must be completed and submitted **within 24 hours**. This will normally be completed by the Safeguarding Lead.

Where a safeguarding concern has been raised, the referral will be passed to the North Yorkshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Team (MAST). Where possible, the MAST request that you use the “[Universal Referral Form](#)”, and that you include all relevant information to ensure that the referral can be progressed as effectively as possible.

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 HCS 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 HCS equal opportunities policy.

Informing the Charity Commission

If there is a safeguarding incident it must also be reported to the Charity Commission.

CONTACT DETAILS

Trustees - Main responsibility rests with the Executive (Amy Moseley, Trustee Lead for Safeguarding, and Paul Jackson Co-Chairs; Gill Walsh, Treasurer; Ruth Pridmore, Secretary)

HCS Designated Lead Person for Child Safeguarding: Gill Walsh 07891 460553, E-mail walsh.gill@gmail.com

HCS Lead Person for Safeguarding generally: Kate Rogata 07711 302818, E-mail kate.rogata@gmail.com

Helplines

Help for adults concerned about a child Call NSPCC on 0808 800 5000

Help for children and young people Call ChildLine on 0800 1111
Making Music on 020 7939 6030

Change Control History

Date of Change	Summary of Revisions Made
August 2017 (changes to be noted at Trustees meeting on 25 th September)	Removal of reference to the post "Trustee with responsibility for legal matters" as it is unlikely such a post will ever exist Addition of BOPA detail Various other amends linked to Committee decision that all singers under 18 would be classed as Halcyon singers.
September 2018 (for approval at meeting on 24 th Sept)	Contact details updated
September 2019 (initially for approval at Committee on 30 th Sept, but final approval	Removal of references to Halcyon Children's choir and associated staff/volunteers.

complete by email 10 Nov 2019)	
November 2020	No updates needed, agreed by email
May 2022	No updates made
Nov 2022	Changes to align with the updated North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NYSCP) policy guidance and procedures. Some changes aligned to changing roles and responsibilities within HCS Management Committee
Nov 2023	<p>Updated telephone contact numbers to make a referral to North Yorkshire Local Authority</p> <p>Additional guidance if there is concern of immediate risk of significant harm to a child North Yorkshire Police should be contacted on 999;</p> <p>Additional section added on Recruitment practices around safeguarding (drawn from Making Music Safeguarding guidance)</p> <p>Additional governance procedure to liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the event of an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer. LADO contact details listed. Remaining references to Halcyon and the Polyphonic choir removed.</p>