



Nottingham Boys Choir

Child Protection Policy

Aims

The aims of this child protection policy are:

- To protect children first and foremost
- To work to high standards of good practice
- To instigate effective interventions if a child's welfare is at risk
- To protect employees and members equally

Objectives

To give all NBC employees and members a clear structure within which to operate and ensure that they are protected in their work with children.

Definitions

For the purpose of these procedures a child is a person aged between 0-18 years of age.

Employee means both paid employees and those assisting the Choir in a voluntary capacity.

The term 'Parents' should be interpreted to include guardians and carers in the context of NBC Child Protection and related policies.

Child Abuse is defined in Appendix 1 of this policy.

Policy Statement

NBC seeks to safeguard and protect children and young people from all forms of abuse and neglect. We will also ensure that proper and prompt action is taken should we discover any form of abuse or neglect. Additionally we have a duty to our members, employees and ourselves to ensure that we do not place each other or ourselves in vulnerable situations.

We believe that every child regardless of age has at all times and in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being physically or psychologically damaged.

We recognise that child protection should not be treated in isolation and we will take on board guidance given by the Charities Commission and the National Federation of Music Societies (Making Music). Parents are informed of the Choir's duties and responsibilities under the Child Protection Policy via the incorporation of a statement of intent in the Choir Handbook. This policy is intended to use in conjunction with NBC's Constitution, Handbook, 'Guidance to Parents on Safe Practice for Nottingham Boys Choir Rehearsals, Workshops, Concerts & Events' and the following Choir Policies:

Policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders

Policy on the use of photography and video recording

Policy on health and safety

We accept that it is our responsibility as a group to check that all adults with substantial and/or unsupervised access to children have been appropriately vetted.

Child Protection Officers

The NBC Committee will include two officers with identified responsibility for child protection, a Child Protection Officer and a Deputy Child Protection Officer.

Child Protection Procedures

In our group, if we have suspicions about a child's physical, sexual or emotional well-being we will take action. All members and staff are encouraged to share concerns with the group's committee member who has agreed to monitor child protection issues.

If the situation is clearly an urgent case, the child is too frightened to go home or we have very serious doubts about the child's safety, we will contact Social Services or the Police immediately. If our concerns are more general about a child's welfare, then we will discuss these with our group's Child Protection Officer (or deputy), who would then make a referral to Social Services who will make the necessary arrangements.

It is important that all members and staff communicate concerns accurately.

To this end, members and staff will follow the procedures below:

1. Upon the receipt of any information from a child or suspicions, it is necessary to record what they have seen, heard or know accurately, in writing, at the time the event occurs.
2. Share their concerns with the Child Protection Officers for the group and agree action to take.
3. Always REFER **never** INVESTIGATE any suspicions or allegations about abuse.

If we have concerns we must act – it may be the final piece of the jigsaw that is needed to protect that child – so we may prevent further children from being hurt.

For ease of reference relevant telephone numbers are noted below:

- Area Social Work Office **0115 8546000 (Gedling Children & Young People's Department)**
- Nottinghamshire Police **999 if an emergency**
101 If non-urgent

Our Child Protection Officers are:

Joanne Battershall 0115 9557845

Paul Battershall (Deputy) 0115 9557845

Nottingham Boys Choir will:

- Hold a register of every child involved with the group including relevant medical details and have a contact name and number close to hand in case of emergencies.
- Treat everyone with respect.
- Remember that some issues are confidential.
- Provide an example we would wish others to follow.
- Where possible consider activities which involve more than one adult being present or at least within sight and hearing of others.
- We shall ensure that there are always at least two responsible adults 'on site' at all times¹, one of whom has been subject to an enhanced CRB check. The Director of Music will have the right to cancel any NBC event or rehearsal where this is not the case².
- Ensure that any teaching sessions are always attended by at least one other responsible adult.
- Be aware that someone else might misinterpret our actions even if they are well intentioned.
- Respect a child's right to personal privacy.
- Provide time for children to talk to us.
- Encourage children to respect and care for others.
- Take action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- Have a group policy for the collection of children after rehearsals/concerts have finished.
- Remember to REFER not INVESTIGATE any suspicions or allegations about abuse.
- Only share concerns and seek support from those identified in the group's child protection policy.
- Ensure the correct vetting of members and employees.
- Amend our Child Protection Policy and Procedures immediate when so advised by relevant bodies and conduct a formal review of the policy every three years.

Revised by the Trustees: September 2013

1 Except for events that are specifically designated 'family events' (social events for the benefit of members' families) where parents remain responsible for their children

2 The Director of Music will use discretion over exercising this right, bearing in mind that to terminate an ongoing activity might place young people at greater risk than continuing, particularly if the circumstances are likely to be temporary i.e. responsible adult(s) will be arriving shortly.

Appendix 1: DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or, more rarely, by a stranger.

The recognised categories are:

- **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse 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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen by proxy.

- **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though may occur alone.

- **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

- **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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include the neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.²

² All definitions included in this section are taken from "Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children" Department of Health 12/99

Appendix 2: Guidance for Employees (waged and unwaged)

What should I do if a child tells me he is being abused?

- Listen carefully to what the child says without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child to talk freely.
- Reassure the child but do not make promises which it may not be possible to keep.
- Do not promise confidentiality – it may well be necessary to inform Social Services.
- Reassure the child that it is not his or her own fault.
- Stress that it is right to tell.
- Listen, do not ask direct or leading questions.
- Do not criticise the perpetrator – the child may well still love him or her.
- Explain what you have to do next.
- Thank him or her for confiding in you.

Always

- Stay calm – ensure the child is safe and feels safe.
- Show and tell the child that you are taking what s/he says seriously.
- Make a note of what the child has said as soon as possible after the event. Be factual in your account of what the child has said.
- Maintain confidentiality – do not tell anyone who does not need to know.
- Inform the Designated Person of the disclosure immediately, if s/he is not available inform the Director of Music.

Never

- Rush into actions which may be inappropriate.
- Make promises you cannot keep.
- Interrogate the child.
- Show shock or disbelief.

Record Keeping

When abuse is disclosed or suspected you should:

- Make brief notes as soon as possible giving quotes if they can be recalled.
- Dates and times should be recorded.
- Notes should be factual and precise.
- These notes must not be destroyed, even if a more detailed report is later written. They may be needed in court.
- Draw a diagram to indicate any marks or injuries observed.
- All Child Protection files are marked 'Strictly Confidential' and are kept separate from other Choir records. Parents do not have access to Child Protection files.
- The Choir will keep Child Protection files for seven years.