



Safeguarding Policy

Updated: April 2024

To be reviewed: April 2025

Stamford Bridge Singers is a registered charity and a member of Making Music (NFMS). A committee of choir members assists the Musical Director in the running of the choir. All members of the choir are eligible, and very welcome, to join the committee which meets at least once a term.

Choir members are mostly adults and rehearsals and performances are group activities such that there is no need for any member of the choir, or visitors to be alone with another member of any age. Nevertheless, Stamford Bridge Singers recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of any children and vulnerable adults with whom it works or comes into contact with and believes that everyone has the right to enjoy the activities of the Choir in a safe environment.

Stamford Bridge Singers is committed to ensuring that all children, young people, and vulnerable adults have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all those who have direct or indirect contact with children and vulnerable adults, or who have access to information about them, have a responsibility to safeguard the health, welfare, and interests of those individuals.

The Stamford Bridge Singers is a community choir with a wide variety of members. We commit to making appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of any children and vulnerable adults who are members or with whom we come into contact.

For the Stamford Bridge Singers this means that....

The Disclosure and Barring Service sees that checks have been undertaken on the Director of Music and her Pianist and that any further checking and/or barring as required under developing legislation will also be implemented.

A named member of the choir (Kathryn Page) shall be responsible for ensuring that up-to-date legislation and relevant policy and procedures are adhered to by the choir. The same named member will review the safeguarding policy at least annually to ensure it remains in line with legislation and local/national safeguarding guidance and advise the committee.

Parents of young members are made aware of the policy which will be freely available on the choir website.

As a matter of good practice Stamford Bridge Singers has developed this policy to provide:

- protection for children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom it has contact (including the children/relatives of adults who use our services);
- guidance to ensure that the risks of harm to children's, young people's and vulnerable adults' welfare are minimised;
- guidance on procedures that should be adopted in the event that any adult suspects a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of experiencing harm;

- guidance for Responding to a Child or Vulnerable Adult making an Allegation of Abuse.

It is **not** the role of Stamford Bridge Singers members to decide whether a child, young person or vulnerable adult has been abused or not. This is the role of the Social Services Department which has legal responsibility, the NSPCC which has powers to investigate child protection concerns under the Children Act, or the Police.

Who are Children or Adults at Risk?

In this context anyone up to the age of 18 is a child. An adult at risk ('a vulnerable adult') is defined in the Care Act 2014 as someone over 18 years old who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect as a result of their care and support needs or is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Guidelines

Joining in rehearsals, performances or other events - Should any child or close relative (under 18) of a member of Stamford Bridge Singers wish to participate in any rehearsal, performance or other event organised by the Choir, that member must accompany the child or close relative and act as a responsible adult throughout. Should any other child/young person participate in any activity organised by Stamford Bridge Singers they must be accompanied throughout the activity or event by a parent or other responsible adult who remains responsible for them.

Audiences and Social Events – Children and vulnerable adults may attend concerts as members of the audience or attend any social event Stamford Bridge Singers may host. It is the responsibility of the parent, guardian or carer to ensure adequate supervision of such child or vulnerable adult. If a parent/guardian/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 on their behalf at all times.

Privacy - Photography, audio and video recording is undertaken from time to time at concerts and rehearsals. The resulting images and recordings are used to promote the activities of the Stamford Bridge Singers to a wider audience. This includes publishing images and recordings online, on the Stamford Bridge Singers website and on social media. Members may opt out of their images being published.

Joint concerts with other organisations – in the event that Stamford Bridge Singers organises a joint concert with another organisation involving children or vulnerable adults, Stamford Bridge Singers will make appropriate joint working arrangements to ensure that such children or vulnerable adults will always be in the care of their carers who will bear responsibility for their welfare at all times. Stamford Bridge Singers acknowledges that this does not detract from its general responsibility to provide a safe environment for joint activities and the principles of this safeguarding policy still apply.

Implementation of this policy

Abuse - The term child abuse is used to describe a range of ways that people harm children. Abuse of adults can happen anywhere - at home, in a residential or nursing home, in a hospital, at work or in the street. There are five main categories of abuse, namely physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse and neglect. Stamford Bridge Singers notes the importance of being alert to signals of abuse and to the difficulty children or vulnerable adults may have in reporting it.

Safeguarding Officer – Stamford Bridge Singers has named Kathryn Page as the Safeguarding Officer. The Safeguarding Officer

- has a duty to ensure that this safeguarding policy is followed by all members, staff and visitors and shall undertake appropriate training as required

- will be identified to children and vulnerable adults as the principal person they should turn to if they have any safeguarding concerns or queries

Any concerns regarding either a child or a choir member, a member of staff or other potentially vulnerable adult must immediately be reported to the Safeguarding Officer (or in his or her absence to the Chair of the Committee).

Publication of this Policy – This policy will be published in full on the Stamford Bridge Singers website.

Policy review – annual review to be undertaken by the Safeguarding officer and ratified by the Committee.

SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE

How to respond to safeguarding concerns or allegations:

What is a safeguarding concern?

- A person discloses alleged abuse.
- A person discloses concern for another person.
- You notice signs of abuse.
- There is an accident to a vulnerable person in your care.
- There is a disclosure regarding an offender against a person.
- Behaviour is observed which poses risk to others or to themselves.

Be aware of your feelings. It is very natural to feel the following emotions:

- Anxiety
- Panic
- Fear
- Disbelief
- Split loyalties
- Anger
- Denial – you want it to disappear

Recognising your emotions will help you be able to handle the situation appropriately.

What should you do?

- Listen carefully to the person disclosing.
- Take the person seriously.
- Be non-judgemental.
- Ask open questions.
- Do not promise to keep it secret.
- Tell them what you will do next (if possible).
- Check you have the necessary contact information.

Action:

Immediate danger – call the police immediately

Non-emergency – seek advice from the designated Safeguarding Officer

Make sure you:

- Write down what has happened or been disclosed and keep that record.
- Talk to the Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours.

Remember:

- Safeguarding concerns are the responsibility of statutory agencies.
- The priority is the person's safety.
- Do not delay.
- Avoid gossip.

Who may need support?

- Alleged victim.
- Family and friends of alleged victim.
- Alleged perpetrator.
- Family and friends of alleged perpetrator.
- Other members of the choir affected.
- Yourself.

Confidentiality

- You must tell the Safeguarding Officer
- Say as little as possible to others without being too secretive.
- Kill rumours.

Afterwards

- Remain non-judgemental.
- Avoid gossip – and try and prevent others from gossiping.
- The committee (via the safeguarding officer) will review how the choir operates to reduce/prevent future risks.