



## **SWANSEA BACH CHOIR**

### **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

##### **Legal Context**

The law requires any organisation involving children, young people and/or vulnerable adults to take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to their welfare is minimised, and where there are concerns, to share them with other local agencies.

##### **Who are Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults?**

This policy recognises vulnerable people as:

- Children up to the age of 16 or young people aged 16-18.
- Adults aged over 18 at risk, defined by the Care Act 2014 as those over 18 years old who have care and support needs, are experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect because of their care and support needs or are unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

##### **How the Swansea Bach Choir operates**

The Swansea Bach Choir is a registered charity and is composed of both male and female auditioned choir members. Officers are elected and a committee of trustees is in place. The choir engages on a self-employed basis:

- A Musical Director whose weekly, professional musical work embraces working with both adults and children alike. He holds a current Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Certificate.
- A professional accompanist currently involved in music education who also holds an enhanced DBS certificate. Many members of the choir also hold DBS certificates through their professional employment.
- Occasional guest practitioners to rehearse for a specific event.

Although the Swansea Bach Choir does not promote itself as an activity suitable for children, young people or vulnerable adults, there may be occasions such as concerts or workshops when they are invited to participate. The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) in the choir (see below) will then carry out the correct procedure to allow this to take place.

This safeguarding policy applies to the Swansea Bach Choir including all choir members (some of whom are nominated trustees), volunteers and all others invited to perform or work with the choir.



## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES**

The Swansea Bach Choir 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. The Swansea Bach Choir is fully committed to anti-discriminatory practice as required by the law working under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act Wales 2014.

The Swansea Bach Choir will publicise its safeguarding policy on its website and draw it to the attention of members at the beginning of each season.

### **Contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults falls into the following categories:**

1. Children, young people and vulnerable adults may be invited to Swansea Bach Choir rehearsals and activities. Children may be invited if they are required to participate in choral works or educational workshops that require children voices, or if the choir offers educational repertoire training sessions that may/may not be linked to a current musical curriculum. Children must be accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult who remains responsible for them throughout rehearsals and performances. The Swansea Bach Choir will collaborate with partner agencies to ensure that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place for the event. Parental consent forms, to include an emergency contact number and any health concerns would be a requirement to be provided by parents, for those under 18. The forms will be retained by the designated safeguarding officer. Except for emergency first aid, members of the choir will not conduct any health intervention or administer medication. The appropriate adult would be required to take charge in accordance with their safeguarding policy. Appropriate transport arrangements to and from the rehearsal are the responsibility of the parent/guardian. The DSO and at least one other adult will ensure that all children/young people/vulnerable adults are supervised until their transport has arrived at the conclusion of an event.
2. Young singers aged 16+ are able to join the choir and appropriate parental consent forms will be issued by the choir for them to take part as an unaccompanied minor at rehearsals. The DSO will have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that all procedures have been followed and that expectations whilst taking part in any choir activity have been fully understood by the young person. Consent forms will clearly set out those expectations, plus the procedures for the need to administer emergency first aid but no further health intervention. Emergency contact numbers will be a requirement for all young singers under 18 years of age.

### **The policy has been devised to provide:**

- protection for children/young people/vulnerable adults with whom the Swansea Bach Choir has contact
- guidance to ensure risks of harm to children, young people and vulnerable adults' welfare are minimised
- guidance for responding to a child, young person or vulnerable adult making an allegation of abuse.



- guidance on procedures that should be adopted if an adult suspects a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of experiencing harm

**The Swansea Bach Choir recognises that it is not the role of any choir member or trustee to decide whether a child, young person or vulnerable adult has been or is suffering from abuse. This responsibility is the role of the Social Services department which has the legal responsibility, the NSPCC who have powers to investigate child protection concerns under the Children Act or the Police. Notification that a person may be classified as ‘vulnerable’ is the responsibility of an appropriate parent/guardian/organisation prior to beginning any rehearsal or activity involving choir members.**

### **Swansea Bach Choir Designated Safety Officer**

The Swansea Bach Choir has a Designated Safeguarding Officer who has undertaken appropriate training as required and would be identified publicly when working with both children and adults as the person they should turn to if they have any concerns or queries. This officer also holds an Enhanced DBS Certificate. The DSO works under the guidance of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act Wales 2014 policies to ensure that effective safeguarding is in place for the Swansea Bach Choir which requires:

- Each member in the choir to play their part and contribute to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of the child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Him/her to be familiar with and follow the Swansea Bach Choir’s procedures and protocols for safeguarding
- Choir members to know who to contact in the choir to discuss concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult at risk of abuse, neglect and their duty to report it. A choir member or DSO has a duty to report if an individual, family member or member of the public expresses a concern about a child or adult’s safety to them whilst attending a choir activity.
- The Choir DSO to comply with Wales Safeguarding Procedures which includes
  - Receiving and recording information from the person expressing concern
  - Consulting with the Chair of the Trustees
  - Making referrals to statutory organisations (e.g. local child protection services / the police etc.) as appropriate
  - Storing and retaining records as a legal requirement.
  - Maintaining confidentiality, subject to the principle of the welfare of the child being paramount, which means that information would need to be shared with the appropriate people.

If more advice is required, the DSO shall seek advice from the NSPCC HELPLINE by calling 0808 800 5000 or emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

The Choir and DSO recognises that all suspicions or allegations of abuse must be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately, working in partnership with appropriate agencies.



### **Expectations of Swansea Bach Choir members in following procedure, and what to do in the event of a complaint/concern (Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults)**

- No choir member should ever be alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult at **ANY** time. Ensure there is always more than 1 adult present during activities with them.
- Be alert that members are not drawn into situations that could be misinterpreted.
- Avoid physical contact
- Avoid inappropriate remarks to or about them; even in fun this could be misinterpreted.
- Do not take them to your home or offer them transport, gifts or money.

### **Procedures**

- Choir members are expected to speak to the DSO should they see or hear anything that they feel could be putting another member at risk, or they have received a report of abuse from a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- The Choir notes the importance of being alert to signals of abuse and to the difficulty individuals may have reporting it. To assist in responding appropriately to a complaint, the choir DSO offers the following strategy for anyone who is aware of an issue
- Listen carefully without interruptions, remain calm, accessible and receptive.
- Reassure the child/young person/vulnerable adult involved that this matter will be disclosed to only those who need to know about it and they are doing the right thing by telling you. Acknowledge their courage
- Avoid leading questions or closed questions.
- Write down what has been said, using the exact words, with the date and time and any names mentioned.
- Tell the child/young person/vulnerable adult what you are going to do next (in the first instance, report the matter to the DSO) and do not promise to keep what they are telling you a secret.
- Make sure that appropriate emergency medical treatment is organised if required
- If the person at the centre of the allegation is working with vulnerable people at the current time, the DSO should remove them, in a sensitive manner, from direct contact with vulnerable people pending immediate policy procedures.
- The Local Authority should be contacted if there is a suspicion of child abuse by an adult member or volunteer working with children.

### **Expectations of the Committee**

The committee are expected to review this policy annually and the Chair will keep a confidential record of all concerns raised. They shall ensure that the safeguarding policy is published on the choir website and that it is drawn to the attention of choir members at the beginning of each season and a copy sent by email to each choir member.



### **Audiences and Social Events**

The Swansea Bach Choir and the DSO are aware that children, young people and vulnerable adults may attend their concerts or social functions as members of the audience. It is the responsibility of the parent, guardian or carer or nominated adult to ensure adequate supervision. If a parent/guardian is not personally attending an event, this policy requires them to be satisfied that the child, young person or vulnerable adult will be accompanied and adequately supervised by a responsible adult acting on their behalf at all times.

### **Privacy**

In the event that the Choir needs to change into its concert dress prior to a performance, the Choir will endeavour to ensure that an individual's privacy is respected by ensuring the venue provides appropriate facilities for this and that children, young people and any vulnerable adults are directed accordingly to those facilities.

Swansea Bach Choir events may be photographed/recorded, and photos/recordings may be used in the following ways:

- In publicity materials, including printed publications, promotional videos, and digital media including our website and social media channels
- In news releases sent to the media or local press
- For use by third parties with whom Swansea Bach Choir has been collaborating with express permission of the Choir

If photographs or video recordings are being made during a Choir event that include children, young people or vulnerable adults, the Choir will ask for their consent and record this on a written consent form.

### **Monitoring and review**

The policy and procedures will be brought to the attention of choir members at each AGM and reviewed annually.

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<b>Date agreed:</b>	<b>04/02/2025</b>	<b>Due for review:</b>	<b>31/01/2026</b>
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