



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Statement of intent

Bracknell Choral Society (BCS) believes that a child, young person or adult at risk should never experience abuse of any kind. BCS recognises that we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk. We are committed to safeguarding the well-being of all children, young people and adults at risk we come into contact with and to protecting them from harm.

2. Responsibilities

The Trustees / Committee have overall responsibility for ensuring that this Policy is communicated and understood by all BCS members, volunteers or people working on behalf of BCS. The Trustees / Committee are responsible for ensuring that BCS safeguards the welfare of all people at risk present during BCS rehearsals and events. However, ALL members of the Society are responsible for ensuring that this Policy is followed and being vigilant to any possible safeguarding concerns and reporting these immediately to the Safeguarding person (Concert Manager) or any Trustee / Committee member.

3. About this policy

- This policy applies to all members, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Bracknell Choral Society or taking part in Bracknell Choral Society activities.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide members and any volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to the protection of all 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 at risk as defined 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 also recognises risk is determined by the activity an adult is taking part in and not solely on the personal characteristics or circumstances of the adult, as such any adult can be at risk, and the risk can be temporary.
- This policy aims to:
 - Protect children, young people and adults at risk who are members of, receive services from, or volunteer for, Bracknell Choral Society.
 - Ensure members and volunteers working with children, young people and adults at risk 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 adults at risk is a primary consideration when Bracknell Choral Society undertakes any activity, event or project.

4. **How Bracknell Choral Society 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
- Professional musicians and singers who participate in our concerts

5. **Named safeguarding person:** The Concert Manager has responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to the Concert Manager in the first instance.

Any projects, events or other activities that will involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of the Concert Manager and in line with established procedures and ground rules (see below).

Safeguarding person contact information:

Name: Concert Manager

Email: concerts@bracknellchoral.org.uk

6. **Procedures and ground rules:** A further document – ‘Bracknell Choral Society Safeguarding Policy Procedure’ is available (below) and forms part of this policy.

7. **Review**

This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the BCS Trustees / Committee. It will be reviewed and updated immediately in response to changes in relevant legislation, good practice, or in response to an identified failing in its effectiveness.

Appendix

Bracknell Choral Society – Safeguarding Policy Procedure - Overview¹

This document forms part of the Bracknell Choral Society (BCS) Safeguarding policy.

- The policy applies to all members, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Bracknell Choral Society or taking part in BCS activities.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide members 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 at risk including those 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 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

a) Recruitment practices around safeguarding

If an existing or potential new member, or volunteer will be working with vulnerable people as part of the BCS activities the appropriate level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be requested before that work is undertaken.

The level of DBS check required will be decided by the Trustees / 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 BCS Equality and Diversity Policy.

b) Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people

When BCS organises an activity or event where they will be responsible for vulnerable people 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.
- 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 to 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.
- Those BCS members involved with selling physical tickets will as far as possible inform the Safeguarding person if someone in that category will be attending an event.

¹ Based on the template procedure on the Making Music website, August 2023 and information from the NSPCC website, dated February 2022

- Photographs and videos that may show vulnerable persons should not be published or shared online without their consent.

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 |

c) Working with parents/guardians: If a vulnerable person wishes to take part in BCS activities written permission (email is acceptable) 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

d) Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse

- If any member or volunteer in BCS witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they should immediately report it to the named Safeguarding person (Concert Manager).
- If the named person is not available, or is involved in or connected to, the abuse, it should be reported to the BCS Chair, another Trustee or a DBS checked adult. The Safeguarding person will keep a list of DBS-checked adults.
- If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the named Safeguarding person or an individual they trust.

e) Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse

The Safeguarding person (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 Trustees / Committee members to decide how to handle the reported abuse (excluding anyone who might be involved in the incident).
- Escalate the report by either:
 - Raising concerns with the police – for serious or possible criminal offences.
 - Requesting an assessment by the local authority social care department about whether a vulnerable person is in need of protection.
 - An internal investigation – for less serious incidents where they feel internal mediation will be successful.
- Where cases are escalated the Trustees / Committee will cooperate with the police or local authority in dealing with the reported incident.

- Where an internal investigation takes place the Trustees / Committee will:
 - Inform all parties involved of the reported abuse as soon as possible.
 - Inform the family/guardians of the person reported as having been abused 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 person and at least one other Trustee / Committee member.
 - All parties will also be invited to submit a written statement in advance of the meeting.
 - Once meetings have taken place the Trustees / Committee 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.

f) Resolution and disciplinary action

- If abuse is found to have taken place any final resolution or decision will be taken in the best interest of the person who has suffered the abuse and the best interests of the BCS.
- Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with the BCS constitution.

g) Designated Safeguarding Person - Duties and responsibilities

1. Take a lead role in developing and reviewing BCS's safeguarding Policy and procedure.
2. Take a lead role in implementing BCS's Safeguarding Policy and procedure, ensuring all safeguarding and child protection issues concerning children and young people who take part in BCS's activities are responded to appropriately.
3. Make sure that everyone working or volunteering with or for children and young people at BCS, including the Board of Trustees / Committee members, understands the Safeguarding Policy and procedure and knows what to do if they have concerns about a person's welfare.
4. Make sure children and vulnerable people who are involved in activities involving BCS events and their parents know who they can talk to if they have a welfare concern and understand what action the Society will take in response.
5. Receive and record information from anyone who has concerns about a child or vulnerable person who takes part in BCS's activities.
6. Take the lead on responding to information that may constitute a child protection concern, including a concern that an adult involved with BCS may present a risk to children or young people. This includes:
 - assessing and clarifying the information
 - making referrals to statutory organisations as appropriate
 - consulting with and informing the relevant members of the BCS Trustees / Committee
 - following the Society's Safeguarding Policy and procedure.
7. Liaise with, pass on information to and receive information from statutory child protection agencies such as:
 - the local authority child protection services
 - the police.
8. Store and retain child protection records according to legal requirements and the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.

9. Work closely with the Trustees / Committee to ensure they are kept up to date with safeguarding issues and are fully informed of any concerns about organisational safeguarding and child protection practice.
10. Report regularly to the Trustees / Committee on issues relating to safeguarding and vulnerable person protection, to ensure that child protection is seen as an ongoing priority issue and that safeguarding, and child protection requirements are being followed at all levels of the organisation.
11. Be familiar with issues relating to child and vulnerable person protection and abuse and keep up to date with new developments in this area.
12. Attend regular training in issues relevant to child and vulnerable person protection and share knowledge from that training with everyone who works or volunteers with or for children and persons at BCS.
13. The Safeguarding person must have received relevant safeguarding training that is specific to their role. This training should be refreshed regularly and they should keep up to date with any changes in safeguarding and child protection legislation and guidance.