

Bromley Boy Singers

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

All boys have a right to feel safe and protected from harm and it is the duty of the committee of The Bromley Boy Singers to safeguard the wholeness and well being of every member of the organisation. It is the responsibility of each of our employees, officers and volunteers to guard against the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of every member. It is the duty of all those who work with children and young people to prevent harm and abuse of every kind, and to report any abuse or harm discovered or suspected.

2. DEFINING ABUSE

(a) Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

(b) Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and chronic adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, or having inappropriate expectations of the child.

(c) Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or inciting a child 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 or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or being part of the production of, pornographic material, or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

(d) Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs resulting 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 the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's emotional needs.

3. PROTECTION PROCEDURES

(a) If you suspect a child is being abused:

1. Inform the Child Protection Officer
2. Record the facts as you know them

(b) If a child discloses abuse to you:

1. Allow the child to speak without interruption, accepting what is said
2. Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, without passing judgement
3. Advise that you will try to offer support but you must pass on information
4. Follow the same steps as above 1-2 from (a)

(c) If you receive an allegation about an adult (including yourself):

1. Immediately inform the Child Protection Officer
2. Record/write down the facts as you know them
3. Try to ensure no-one is placed in a position that will cause further concern

You must refer; you must not investigate; you must not discuss

Reacting to a child telling you about abuse

- Accept what they say
- Keep calm and don't show own distress
- Don't promise confidentiality
- Assure them they are not to blame for the abuse
- Do not try to obtain more information than is necessary to establish concern
- Ask them if they have told anyone else
- Clarify what you will do with the information next

The following extract is taken from National Policy for responding to allegations. The guiding principles for any person in receipt of information about a concern or allegation should be:

LISTEN, RECORD, REFER

4. THE ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee of The Bromley Boy Singers will do the following:

- Plan the activities of the choir to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur.
- Apply appropriate procedures for protecting children to all staff and volunteers dealing with children in their activities.
- Give all staff and volunteers clear roles.
- Use supervision as a means of protecting children.
- When considering applicants for working with the choir, obtain at least one reference from a person who has experience of the applicant's work with children.
- Explore all applicants' experience of working or contact with children in an interview before appointment.
- Find out whether such an applicant has any conviction for criminal offences against children by reference to the national Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).
- Issue guidelines to all staff and volunteers on how to deal with the disclosure or discovery of abuse.
- Arrange for the training of all staff and volunteers in the prevention of child abuse.
- The committee shall appoint one of its members as Child Protection Officer to ensure this policy is maintained and to act as an independent person with whom children and young people in the choir may speak about any concerns. Where concerns are raised it is the duty of the Child Protection Officer to follow the correct procedures.
- The committee shall review this policy annually.

5. SAFE CONDUCT

(a) Onsite Events

This covers all rehearsals and choir courses held at known locations.

1. Minimum of 2 responsible adults on site at all times, one of whom have been approved by the committee and undertaken CRB enhanced disclosure, other adults may be present to assist with supervision. Review of responsible adults to be undertaken annually.
2. Responsible adult remains with the boys until collected. No child should be left alone with one adult at any time.

3. In the event of accidents or emergencies the boy's parents should be notified as soon as possible and any necessary first aid administered. In the event of further medical attention being required then the boy should be taken to hospital by ambulance in the company of a responsible adult.
4. A First Aid kit must be available at all rehearsals and choir courses. Any accidents should be recorded and actions noted.

(b) Offsite Activities

In addition to the above practices the following procedures should be implemented where the following activities are undertaken by the choir.

1. Private vehicle transport.

In the event of the choir needing to arrange transport in private cars then the driver should be any of the responsible adults who holds a full driving licence and has comprehensive car insurance.

2. Hired transport.

When hired transport is used the boys should be accompanied by 2 responsible adults in each vehicle. Vehicles should be fitted with seat belts and carry a first aid kit.

3. Public Transport

When using public transport boys should be accompanied by enough adult supervisors to ensure safety at all times, at least one of whom is a designated responsible adult.

4. The use of Public Toilets

The use of public should be avoided where possible. Boys must not use a public toilet unaccompanied or without the permission of a responsible adult. Responsible adults should check the available facilities and supervise where appropriate.

5. First Aid

When boys participate in offsite events a First Aid Kit must be available.

6. Parental Permission

The boys will be supervised at all times during rehearsals and breaks. However, if parental permission is given for boys to leave the premises then the boy(s) is no longer the responsibility of the choir during this time.

6. Collection

At the end of a concert boys should be collected from a designated point by a parent or guardian.

(c) At all Times

DO

- treat everyone with respect
- respect a young person's right to privacy
- provide access for young people to talk to others about concerns they may have
- encourage young people and helpers to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- remember that others may misinterpret your actions no matter how well intentioned
- recognise that caution is required in sensitive moments of counselling, such as dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse
- stay calm

DO NOT

- permit abusive peer activities
- have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- exaggerate or trivialise child-abuse issues
- show favouritism to any individual
- make suggestive remarks or gestures
- rely on just your good name to protect you
- believe 'it could never happen to me'
- permit yourself to be alone or share a room alone with a child

(This policy is based on the recommendations of the Home Office document *Safe From Harm* and the Child Protection Policy of Making Music)

This policy was agreed by the Committee on

Signed(Chair)