

OXFORD YOUTH CHOIRS

SAFEGUARDING POLICY



Oxford Youth Choirs ("OYC") recognises its responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

This policy applies to all staff, including volunteers and focuses on the following elements: –

- Staff recruitment and selection – ensuring that all staff and volunteers, (who have unsupervised access to children) have been safely recruited and appropriately checked through the DBS process.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Implementing procedures for identifying and reporting suspected cases of abuse.
- Establishing a safe and nurturing environment where children feel safe and happy.

We recognise that staff who work regularly with children are best placed to notice changes in behaviour and/or physical injuries. Staff in OYC will therefore –

- Report any unusual / inappropriate behaviour to their designated staff member for child protection.
- Ensure that children and young people know they can approach any of the adults in our establishment if they are worried about something and that they will receive a consistent, supportive response.

Staff in our establishment will follow the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board procedures in all cases of suspected abuse. These can be found at www.oscb.org.uk

We will therefore:

- Ensure we have a designated lead staff member for child protection. In our establishment that person is Rachel Cave. We will also have a lead trustee for child protection. In our establishment that person is Joanna Price.
- Ensure that our lead staff member and trustee receive Specialist Safeguarding training, refreshed every two years.
- Ensure that our whole staff receives Safeguarding training every three years.
- Ensure that our whole staff has read this safeguarding policy and know who the designated staff member is, in case they need to pass on concerns.

- Keep accurate written records of concerns on children where a referral is not appropriate immediately.
- Ensure that all staff, (including volunteers) are recruited safely and have had the appropriate checks, (e.g. CRB). Online safer recruitment training is available at: www.cwdcouncil.org.uk
- Ensure that all staff are aware that they must refer any allegations against a member of staff to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01865 815232.
- Ensure that this policy is reviewed annually and is line with county procedures.

We recognise that children who have been abused, or witness violence, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They can feel helplessness, humiliation and a sense of blame. Our organisation may provide the only stability in the lives of some children and we will endeavour to support them by:

- Liaising with other agencies that support children, (e.g. Social Care and Health) where appropriate.
- Promoting a positive ethos within our organisation, giving children the sense of being safe, supported and valued.

ALL STAFF have a responsibility for action in cases of suspected child abuse. The following procedure should be followed if you have concerns about the safety of a child or if a disclosure is made.

- If a child asks to speak to you about a problem, DO NOT promise confidentiality, but explain that it may be necessary to consult a senior colleague.
- **RECEIVE** – Stop and listen to if someone wants to tell you about suspicions of abuse. Listen quietly and actively, giving your undivided attention. Allow silences when needed. Do not show shock or disbelief and take what is said seriously.
- **REASSURE** – Stay calm and give reassurance that only those people who need to know will be told about this. Explain to the child that they have done the right thing by telling you and that what has happened is not their fault.
- **REACT** – Establish the facts of what has happened but do not ask leading questions. Keep questioning open, e.g. ‘Is there anything else you want to say?’ or ‘Can you tell me more about that?’ Do not criticise the perpetrator. Explain to the child what you will do next, e.g. you will need to pass this information to your lead person for child protection.
- **RECORD** – If possible, make brief notes about what the child is telling you as they are speaking. If this is not appropriate, write down what was said, as soon as the child has left. Record the date, time, place, your name and role and what was said, (rather than your interpretation of it). Use the child’s language wherever possible.
- **REPORT** – Report the incident to the lead person (staff lead or trustee lead) for child protection as soon as possible and do not tell any other adults or children about it. Ensure that this person has your notes of what was said so that they can keep them in a safe place.

If you cannot find your lead person for child protection please call the Assessment Team, (for the area in which the child lives) as soon as possible. Ask to speak to the duty social worker.

North team 01865 816670

City team 01865 323048

South team 01865 897983

Out of hours number 0800 833408