

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Pendle Ladies' Choir

1. Statement of Intent

Pendle Ladies' Choir is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful singing environment for all members, officers, leaders, and guests.

We will not tolerate bullying, harassment, victimisation, or discrimination of any kind.

This policy is guided by the principles of the Equality Act 2010 and reflects our values of respect, dignity, and community.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All choir members
- Musical directors and accompanists
- Officers and committee members
- Leaders
- Guest performers and workshop leaders

It covers behaviour:

- At rehearsals and performances
 - At social events connected to the choir
 - On tours and trips
 - In online spaces (including email, WhatsApp groups, and social media)
-

3. Definitions

3.1 Bullying

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving misuse of power that undermines, humiliates or injures the recipient.

Examples of bullying include (but are not limited to):

- Persistent criticism or belittling
 - Personal insults or name-calling
 - Excluding individuals deliberately
 - Spreading rumours
 - Abusive messages, including online
-

3.2 Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Conduct or comments become harassment when they are unwelcome to others or make others feel uncomfortable or threatened, even if intended as a joke.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 include:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Examples of harassment include (but are not limited to):

- Offensive jokes or comments
 - Derogatory remarks about someone's background
 - Unwanted physical contact
 - Sexual comments or advances
 - Displaying offensive materials
-

4. Standards of Conduct

All members and leaders are expected to:

- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Communicate constructively
- Accept musical direction professionally
- Raise concerns appropriately
- Uphold the Choir's charitable objectives and reputation

Constructive musical feedback delivered professionally and respectfully, does not constitute bullying.

5. Reporting Concerns

Anyone who experiences or witnesses bullying or harassment is encouraged to report it.

You can:

- Speak to the Chair or a committee member
- Speak to the designated safeguarding officer

Reports will be:

- Taken seriously
- Treated confidentially where possible
- Handled promptly and fairly

No one will be victimised for making a complaint in good faith.
false allegations may result in disciplinary action.

Malicious or knowingly

6. Reporting Procedure

6.1 Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, concerns may be resolved informally by:

- Speaking directly to the individual (if safe to do so)
 - Mediation between members
 - Agreed behavioral expectations
-

6.2 Formal Complaint

If informal resolution is inappropriate or unsuccessful:

- A written complaint should be submitted to the Chair
- An impartial Trustee (or small panel) will investigate
- All parties will have the opportunity to be heard
- A decision will be made and communicated in writing

Possible outcomes may include:

- A formal warning
 - Conditions placed on continued membership
 - Temporary suspension
 - Removal from membership in line with the choir's constitution
-

7. Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled sensitively. Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to investigate and resolve the issue.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
 - A serious incident occurs
 - The Trustees consider revision necessary
-