

Health, Safety and Safeguarding Policy

For Pendle Ladies' Choir

Ensuring Safety and Well-being

1. Policy Statement

Pendle Ladies' Choir ("the Choir") is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for all members, leaders, trustees, supporters, audience members and visitors.

We recognise our duties under:

- The **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**
- The **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**
- The **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**
- The **Care Act 2014**
- The **Equality Act 2010**
- The **Charities Act 2011**
- Relevant UK GDPR and Data Protection legislation

Pendle Ladies' Choir does not promote itself as an activity suitable for children and the current requirement is that members are at least 18. There may however be at-risk adults who join the choir. We are committed to creating a safe and respectful environment where health and safety risks are properly managed and every participant feels valued and secure.

This policy applies to all choir rehearsals, performances, social events, tours, committee meetings, and any other activity organised under the choir's name.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Chair / Committee

The committee has overall responsibility for:

- Ensuring compliance with relevant legislation
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)
- Ensuring appropriate insurance cover is in place
- Ensuring appropriate risk assessments are completed
- Implementing day-to-day health & safety arrangements

- Ensuring venues are safe and suitable
- Maintaining incident records
- Approving and reviewing this policy annually

2.2 Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) will:

- Implement and monitor the safeguarding policy.
- Ensure all members are aware of the policy and procedures.
- Act as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure complaints and concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.
- Liaise with external agencies if necessary.

Name of DSO: [Insert Name]Contact: [Insert Email/Phone]

2.3 Musical Director and choir members

All members must:

- Promote a safe, respectful rehearsal environment
 - Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others
 - Follow reasonable instructions
 - Treat others with dignity and respect
 - Report hazards, accidents, or safeguarding concerns
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3. Health & Safety

3.1 Risk Assessment

The Choir will:

- Conduct written risk assessments for rehearsals and performances
- Assess risks relating to venue access, fire safety, manual handling, staging, electrical equipment, and travel
- Review assessments annually or when circumstances change

3.2 Venue Safety

Before rehearsals or performances, we will ensure:

- Fire exits are clearly marked and unobstructed
- Emergency procedures are known
- First aid arrangements are identified

- Adequate lighting and ventilation are available
- Electrical equipment being used is safe and appropriately tested

3.3 Fire Safety

- Members will be informed of fire evacuation routes
- A register will be taken at rehearsals where practical
- A nominated person will coordinate evacuation

3.4 First Aid and Medical Needs

- A basic first aid kit will be available
- Emergency contact details will be held securely
- Members are encouraged to inform the committee of relevant medical conditions (voluntarily)
- In emergencies, 999 will be called

3.5 Slips, Trips and Manual Handling

- Bags and personal belongings must not obstruct walkways
- Staging and risers must be stable and appropriately installed
- Heavy items (e.g., keyboard, music stands) should be lifted safely

3.6 Travel and Tours

For organised travel:

- Risk assessments will consider transport safety and accommodation
- Clear conduct expectations will be communicated
- Emergency contact details will be held

Members arranging their own transport do so at their own risk.

3.7 COVID-19 or Other Infectious Illness

The choir will follow current UK public health guidance where applicable. Members should not attend rehearsals if unwell with contagious illness.

3.8 Reporting Accidents and Incidents

- All accidents and near misses must be recorded in an incident log
 - Serious incidents may need to be reported to the Charity Commission
 - RIDDOR reporting will be undertaken where legally required
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4. Safeguarding

4.1 Scope

Most Choir members are independent adults. It happens only rarely that a young person or a vulnerable adult joins, rehearses and performs with us.

Choir rehearsals and performances are group activities, and there is no requirement for a member of the choir to be alone with another member of any age. The Choir is aware that young or vulnerable people may work with, or attend social functions hosted by the Choir, when it is the responsibility of the parent, guardian or carer to ensure adequate supervision. Nonetheless, the officers of the choir recognise the need to safeguard the welfare of its members and any young and vulnerable people with whom we may work or come into contact.

4.2 Safeguarding principles

- Respect: Every member should be treated with respect and dignity.
- Equality: All practices should promote inclusivity and equality, ensuring no discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, or any other characteristic.
- Safety: Procedures should be in place to protect members from harm, abuse, or exploitation.
- Confidentiality: Members' personal information should be handled in the strictest confidence. Personal information will be handled in accordance with the choir's Data Protection Policy

4.3 Code of Conduct

All members are expected to adhere to the following code of conduct:

- Treat all choir members and leaders with respect.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries and avoid any behaviour that could be perceived as abusive or discriminatory.
- Report any safeguarding concerns to the designated safeguarding officer.

4.4 Joint concerts with children

The Choir will make appropriate joint working arrangements to ensure that school/youth groups will always be in the care of their teachers, assistants and/or parents/carers who will bear responsibility for their welfare at all times. This does not detract from the Choir's general responsibility to provide a safe environment and to follow the principles of this policy.

Separate dressing areas and toilet facilities will be provided wherever possible for children who take part in a concert.

5. Reporting Procedures

5.1 Recognising Concerns

Where the Choir becomes aware that a member is vulnerable eg showing signs of physical frailty, mental health problems, social isolation, abuse or dementia, it will take reasonable steps to ensure that anyone associated with the choir who deals with the relevant member is aware of their vulnerability and that interactions with that person are appropriate in light of their status as a vulnerable adult.

All vulnerable adults with whom the choir works or has within its membership will be treated with respect at all times, regardless of age, sex or ethnicity

5.2 Reporting Concerns

- Contact the designated safeguarding officer with any concerns or allegations.
- Provide a detailed account of the concern, including any evidence or witnesses.
- Maintain confidentiality and only share information with those who need to know.

5.3 Dealing with Concerns

The designated safeguarding officer will:

- Assess the concern and determine the appropriate course of action.
 - Document all actions taken and maintain a confidential record of the concern.
 - Liaise with external agencies if necessary, such as social services or the police.
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11. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
- A serious incident occurs
- The Committee deem it necessary

Signed: _____ Chair of Committee

Date: _____

Pendle Ladies' Choir Adopted on: [Date] Review date: [Date – annually recommended] Approved by: Board of Trustees