

BRADFORD AND AIREDALE YOUTH CHOIR:

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY



**Bradford and Airedale
Youth Choir**

Policy prepared by: Emma Bradnum

Next review date: : 12/09/2024

Overview

Commitment to safeguarding

Bradford and Airedale Youth Choir (BAYC) believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind (emotional, physical, financial, sexual, verbal, psychological, cultural, neglect, self-neglect, self-harm, bullying or peer-on-peer abuse, cyber-bullying, trafficking, criminal exploitation and gangs, female genital mutilation, grooming). We recognise that we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults. We are committed to safeguarding the well-being of all children, young people and vulnerable adults we come into contact with and to protecting them from harm.

About this policy

- This policy applies to; all members, staff (whether employees or freelancers), volunteers and anyone working on behalf of BAYC or taking part in BAYC activities.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide members, staff 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 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 policy aims to:
 - Protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who are; members of, receive services from, or volunteer for, BAYC
 - Ensure members, staff and volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults 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 vulnerable adults is a primary consideration when BAYC undertakes any activity, event or project.

How BAYC 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

Person in charge of safeguarding at BAYC

Emma Bradnum has responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to Emma Bradnum in the first instance.



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Any projects, events or other activities that will involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of Emma Bradnum and in line with established procedures, the Staff Code of Conduct, and the below Ground Rules, Ways of Working and Procedures.

Policy review: This policy will be reviewed and amended (if necessary) on an annual basis by the management committee. It will also be reviewed in response to changes in relevant legislation, good practice, or in response to an identified failing in its effectiveness.

Ground Rules, Ways of Working and Procedures

This document forms part of the Bradford and Airedale Youth Choir (BAYC) Safeguarding policy

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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

Recruitment practices around safeguarding

If an existing or potential new member, staff member or volunteer will be working with vulnerable people as part of the BAYC activities the appropriate level of DBS will be requested before that work is undertaken.

The level of DBS check required will be decided by the 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 BAYC equal opportunities policy.



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Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people

When BAYC 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 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.
- For performances in performance venues such as theatres, the required number of LA-approved licensed chaperones will be present with ratios as required. BAYC staff will ensure Performance Licences are acquired for each child performing, or exemption form and BOPA application completed.

Child to adult ratio table for supervision in weekly choir rehearsals

Child's 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

Working with parents/guardians: If a vulnerable person wishes to take part in BAYC 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.



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Transportation to rehearsals/events

Transport to and from rehearsals is the responsibility of parents/guardians. If informal arrangements are made between parents of choir members to share lifts this is at the discretion of the parents/carers involved and BAYC holds no responsibility for this. Choir members will be registered in and out of rehearsals and events. Once they have been registered with us they are then our responsibility until the end of the rehearsal/event when they will be registered back to parents/carers.

Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse

- If any member, staff or volunteer in BAYC witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they should immediately report it to the person in charge of safeguarding; Emma Bradnum
- If Emma Bradnum is not available, or is involved in or connected to, the abuse, it should be reported to a DBS checked member of staff or the Local Authority.
- If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the named safeguarding officer or another member of the BAYC staff team (who are all DBS checked, and would then report the incident to the safeguarding officer).

Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse

The Named 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 committee members to decide how to handle the reported abuse. Excluding any committee members who were 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 committee will cooperate with the police or local authority in dealing with the reported incident.
- Where an internal investigation takes place the committee will:
 - Inform all parties involved of the reported abuse as soon as possible.



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- o Inform the family/guardians of the person reportedly abused, of the incident.
- o 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 officer and at least one other committee member.

- All parties will also be invited to submit a written statement in advance of the meeting.
- o Once meetings have taken place the 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.

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.
- Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with the BAYC constitution.

Mobile technology

Increasingly, technology is making it easier for video pictures and images to be used inappropriately as printed material or on the web. Equally inappropriate images and texts can all too easily be shared on mobiles. It is important that we should take practical steps to ensure that pictures and images of choir members taken, not only by members of the BAYC team but also by parents and carers, are done so in a way that reflects the protective ethos of BAYC.

There should be a common sense approach to the use of cameras and other recording equipment. We are clear that there will be occasions where BAYC staff, parents and carers will wish to take photographs or make video recordings of their child/children taking part in a performance. In order to ensure that use of photography and video is safe, volunteers and directors should:

1. Inform parents whether or not they have permission to take photographs and videos of their child/children while involved in performances. This decision is made on a case-by-case basis depending on whether or not we have been made aware of children in our choirs of whom photos must not be shared, for their protection. Media Consent is covered in our annual registration form, and this makes it clear that the staff have the protection of children as a priority.
2. Ensure that photography /video recording only takes place in designated areas. For example, in the main school hall where the performance is taking place and not in 'backstage' areas.
3. If you intend photographing or videoing performances on behalf of BAYC, then have a designated camera or video recorder for staff to use. Give information to parents as to the use of any images, for example a DVD for parents to purchase if they wish, prior to the performances.



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4. Have in mind that there may be those who would want to misuse the opportunity to photographs and film pupils in your care. If all filming and photography is confined to t... performance then you minimise any risk.

5. Be clear with choir members that they should not be photographing or videoing, including the use of mobiles for this purpose, whilst engaging in BAYC activities.

A note about mobiles

Staff should not be using their mobile phones whilst they are at BAYC unless explicitly being used for BAYC-related activities (e.g. checking BAYC emails or using the BAYC google drive) and only when instructed to do so by a Director. If there is a need for parents to be able to contact their child then they should ring a nominated director or volunteer who will get the child. This also applies to choir members and helps us to ensure that no inappropriate material is passed on.

Social Media and Online Technologies

It is recognised that the internet provides unique opportunities to promote the choir including vacancies and performances using a wide variety of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and You Tube. It is also recognised that online platforms can provide the means to make teaching, webinars, rehearsals and events accessible when direct, face to face contact may be difficult for all or some participants. Nonetheless the use of social media and online technologies can also present safeguarding risks that need to be mitigated as far as possible. These guidelines aim to protect individuals within the choir and to encourage them to take responsibility for what they write, exercise good judgement and common sense. Inappropriate use of social media can pose risks to the choir's reputation, and can jeopardise compliance with legal obligations. The guidelines also aim to enable choirs to take advantage of the many opportunities offered by online technologies whilst at the same time remaining committed to the safeguarding of members and others.

A note on social media groups

There is a difference between, on the one hand, informal social media groups set up and used by groups of friends who happen to be part of the choir, and, on the other hand, official choir social media groups, coordinated by someone in an official role, and used as part of the choir's methods of promotion, networking and support. Informal social media friendship groups are not required to abide by this guidance, although their members should bear in mind the need to use the same personal standards of behaviour in their online communications as in their face to face contact. Informal groups should also avoid calling themselves by a name which could give the impression that they are official band groups. These official social media groups should:

- Be agreed in advance by the choir founders/directors, who should be made aware of the name and purpose of the group and outlining how it will be effectively risk managed.
- Have a nominated individual who will be responsible for monitoring it and moderating its content.



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Use of electronic communication with children, young people and adults at risk

Communication by electronic means or by texting will not be used with individual children under the age of 18. All communication in these forms will be via their parents/carers. The rest of the principles relate to group communication or to individual communication with adults at risk and young adults aged 18 and over. The key point is that communication should be in a context of transparency and accountability.

- Leaders, staff and volunteers should not share their personal phone numbers with anyone under 18; communication that needs to be made electronically should be via email and parents should be copied in
- Electronic communication should only be used for reasons relating to choir business and not for general socialising purposes
- Other members of the choir leadership team should be aware of the situations in which these means of communication are being used
- Leaders, staff and volunteers should not invite young people and adults at risk to their personal social networking page and should politely decline requests from any young person under the age of 18, explaining that this is choir policy
- Where possible, group pages should be used on social media for communicating
- Care should be exercised in posting to Facebook, Twitter etc as comments made on the spur of the moment may not always come out as intended and can be passed on extremely quickly around a large audience
- Communication by electronic means with young people should never take place during school hours and should be kept within the hours of 9am – 9pm
- Where possible, email and messaging should take place to and within groups rather than individuals
- Webcams will not be used where an online platform is used for one to one conversations
- Records of communications will be kept just as they would be for written communication. If a staff member's or volunteer's mobile phone does not allow text messages to be saved then a written record should be kept
- The principles for the use of social media will be communicated to children, young people and adults
- Any content which raises a safeguarding concern should be reported to Emma Bradnum - Safeguarding/Welfare Officer using the procedure outlined in the choir's safeguarding procedures



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Sessions and activities run on online platforms, e.g. Zoom

- Only use approved choir accounts for Zoom or other platforms, not personal accounts of staff or volunteers
- Ensure privacy settings are adjusted to protect both leaders and participants
- Ask participants to let you know in advance the names that they will be using to access the session. If someone enters the waiting room whose name you don't recognise, make sure that you check out who it is before admitting them; and report any unauthorised attempts to join a call to your choir's Safeguarding/Welfare Officer
- Ensure that the registration/consent form signed by participants and/or parents specifies that the sessions will be run online, and that those involved are aware of the risks involved and who to talk to if they need to do so
- Any activities that are live streamed need to be done with cameras off if they involve children or vulnerable adults
- Ground rules need to be agreed
- Deliver sessions from a neutral area; if it is from a person's home, use the blurred background function if possible. If not possible, ensure that there is nothing inappropriate in the background and no identifying information, and ask that participants do the same
- Remember that the child or adult at risk may not have any privacy during the session
- Avoid using the person's bedroom as a place from which they participate in the session, unless a parent is also present in the room
- Ensure that there are at least two adults present as session leaders – more if using break-out rooms
- Be aware of additional family pressures and pressures upon children and young people during the time of the pandemic and in its aftermath; take account of this when preparing and running the sessions

Records and Signatures

A record of all BAYC staff and their enhanced DBS certificate number is held securely by BAYC Directors. All staff and Volunteers are expected to read this Policy and in lieu of a signature they are to tick the relevant box on their registration form when commencing work with BAYC, to confirm that they have read and will adhere to this Policy.



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