

## Who are we?

The "**Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations**" exists for the benefit of those Associations to which old (former) choristers of any of the following foundations can belong: Cathedrals, Chapels Royal, Collegiate Churches, College Chapels of Oxford and Cambridge, and such other Choral Foundations as may from time to time be recommended by the Executive Committee for affiliation to the Federation. The objects are primarily to promote friendship amongst people from like backgrounds, to assist in maintaining and improving the high standard of cathedral music that plays such a vital part in cathedral worship, to support and encourage the activities of each Association and to bring them together in closer contact with one another.

We have branded ourselves as "**Once a Chorister**" to highlight the fact that choristership will have a positive influence on you for the rest of your life.

## Statement of Safeguarding Principles

It is our intention to value every human being as part of God's creation and the whole people of God. At the heart of any Christian community is a deep sense of the place of welcome, hospitality and openness, which demonstrates the nature of God's grace and love for all.

## Principles

Safeguarding is about the action we take to promote a safer culture. This means we will:

- **promote** the welfare of children, young people and adults
- work to **prevent** abuse from occurring
- seek to **protect** and respond well to those that have been abused.

We are committed to:

- safeguarding and protecting all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable
- working in an appropriate manner with any organisation that we come into contact with
- adhering to the safeguarding policies already in place in places where we meet

We will respond without delay to every safeguarding concern, which suggests that a child, young person or adult may have been harmed, working in partnership with the police and social services in any investigation.

We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.

We will support risk assessments of those who present a safeguarding risk within an environment where we work or meet. We will ensure appropriate measures are taken to address identified risks including referral to statutory agencies, suspension and the use of safeguarding contracts.

In all these principles, we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

## **Safeguarding Policy for Once a Chorister**

This policy was agreed at the Once a Chorister Executive Committee meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023, and will be ratified at an Annual General Meeting to be held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023 in Warwick

Once a Chorister, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation in God's own image and likeness.

Once a Chorister is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults and affirms that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable and at risk are paramount.

Once a Chorister recognises that it has a particular care for all who are vulnerable whether as a result of disabilities or reduction in capacities or by their situation. It is recognised that this increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible, but that it does not diminish our humanity and our wish to affirm the gifts and graces of all God's people.

This policy addresses the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is intended to support our organisation in being a safe supportive and caring community for all including children, young people, vulnerable adults, for survivors of abuse, for communities and for those affected by abuse.

Once a Chorister recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children and vulnerable adults and recognises that this may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual, discriminatory, domestic or institutional abuse or neglect, abuse using social media, child sexual exploitation or human trafficking (slavery). It acknowledges the effects these may have on people and their development, including spiritual and religious development. It accepts its responsibility for ensuring that all people are safe in its care and that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained. It accepts its responsibility to support, listen to and work for healing with survivors, offenders, communities and those who care about them. It takes seriously the promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

Once a Chorister commits itself to:

1. **RESPOND** without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or vulnerable adult may have been harmed or may suffer harm. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.
2. **IMPLEMENT** any local Safeguarding Policy, guidance and safe practice in any place where we meet; and implement any relevant government legislation.
3. **PROVIDE** appropriate support, advice and training for committee members to ensure that people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.
4. **Acknowledge** the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults when attending our events or acting on Once a Chorister business.

**Safeguarding Policy for Once a Chorister  
(acting as Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations)**

## **Safeguarding Officer**

Responsibility for safeguarding rests with the members of the Executive Committee. The safeguarding officer should be a member of the Executive Committee or have the right to attend at least annually to report on implementation of the safeguarding policy.

Once a Chorister appoints Ayrton Westwood as Safeguarding Officer.

and supports them in their role, which is to:

- provide support and advice to the Executive Committee in fulfilling their roles with regard to safeguarding.
- ensure that a suitable safeguarding policy is available at all times, which should be renewed annually.
- record all safeguarding issues that are reported to the safeguarding officer.
- promote appropriate routes for reporting of concerns
- identify and inform those who are required to attend safeguarding training, and ensure they attend training and meetings relating to the role where appropriate
- check that safeguarding is included as an agenda item at all Annual General Meetings.

### **a) Purpose**

The purpose of the safeguarding policy is to check that appropriate procedures are in place and provide clarity about the roles and responsibilities.

### **b) Good practice**

We believe that good practice means:

- i) All people are treated with respect and dignity.
- ii) Those who act on behalf of Once a Chorister should not meet or work alone with a child or vulnerable adult where the activity cannot be seen.
- iii) Activity risk assessments will be undertaken before any activity takes place to minimise the risk of harm to those involved.
- iv) Promotion of safeguarding is recognised to include undertaking those tasks which enable all God's people to reach their full potential.

### **c) Guidelines for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults**

Information outlining good practice and systems should be given to everyone who works with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

### **d) Key concepts and definitions**

- i) A child is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday.
- ii) Vulnerable adults: any adult aged 18 or over who, owing to disability, mental function, age or illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves.

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- iii) Safeguarding: protecting children or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.
- iv) Adult/child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity, which is undertaken to protect children/specific adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.
- v) Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, a community or an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child or vulnerable adult or by strangers; by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

Signed: **Nick Hodges** (Once a Chorister Chair)

Dated: **1<sup>st</sup> March 2023**