



# Safeguarding Policy

Status and review cycle:	Statutory and annual
Responsible group:	MSCS Committee, pending appointment of a Board of Trustees
Next Review Date:	November 2026

## **Safeguarding Policy –Malmesbury Singers – overview**

### **Commitment to safeguarding**

Malmesbury Singers Choral Society (MSCS) believes that children and vulnerable adults should be entirely free from the possibility of abuse of any kind, and we are committed to safeguarding their well-being and protecting them from harm when they are involved with MSCS rehearsals, workshops, and performances.

### **Policy Overview**

The purpose of this policy is to provide members with the overarching principles that guide our approach to the protection of vulnerable groups, and it applies to all members and anyone working on behalf of MSCS or taking part in MSCS activities.

This MSCS policy recognises vulnerable people as:

All young people under the age of 18

Adults (aged 18 and over) defined as 'at risk' 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 also recognises that risk is determined by the activity an adult is taking part in, and not solely on the personal characteristics or circumstances of the adult, as such any adult can be at risk, and that risk can be temporary.

This policy aims to:

- Protect vulnerable adults who are members of MSCS or assist in its activities.
- Contribute to the safeguarding of young people, even although their direct welfare is the responsibility of their parent, guardian, or teacher.
- Ensure members, and anyone working on behalf of MSCS, whilst working with children, young people and adults at risk are carefully recruited and understand and accept responsibility for the safeguarding of those vulnerable individuals they are interacting with.

### **How MSCS might work with vulnerable people**

Membership is open to those 18 years of age and over. 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

### **Safeguarding Lead**

**Elizabeth Durning** has responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to her in the first instance.

Any projects, events or other activities that will involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of **Elizabeth Durning** and in line with established procedures and ground rules (see below).

## **Ground rules, ways of working and procedures**

### Recruitment practices around safeguarding

If anyone working on behalf of MSCS will be working with vulnerable people as part of the MSCS 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 or trustees in line with DBS rules regarding regulated activity. The results of any check to inform a decision will be used confidentially.

### **Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people**

When MSCS organises an activity or event where they will be responsible for vulnerable people we will ensure:

- Planning is carried out in line with this policy and procedures.
- The event is attended by at least one DBS checked adult.
- There is a contact for safeguarding on the day - this will be an individual who has been DBS checked.
- The safeguarding contact has access to emergency contact details and other relevant details (e.g. information about picking up arrangements for vulnerable people).
- A vulnerable person is not left alone with an adult, unless that adult is DBS checked and carrying out regulated activity.
- At least one DBS checked adult will remain at the venue until all known vulnerable people have left

### **Working with parents/guardians**

If a child or vulnerable adult wishes to take part in MSCS activities written permission (email is fine) should be obtained from parents/carers before the activity takes place. This should include emergency contact details and arrangements for who is picking up the child or vulnerable adult or how they are getting home.

### **Working with external youth organisations, schools and colleges**

***When MSCS organises an activity in conjunction with a youth organisation, school or college, it is the responsibility of the youth organisation, school or college to ensure proper safeguarding arrangements.***

### **Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse**

If any member, or anyone working on behalf of MSCS or taking part in MSCS activities, witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they should immediately report it to the named safeguarding officer. If the named person is not available, or is involved in or connected to the abuse, it should be reported to the Chair of MSCS. If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the named safeguarding officer or an individual they trust.

### **Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse**

The named safeguarding lead will first assess the concern based on the following 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 safeguarding lead will:

- Make a note of the concerns reported to them.

- Speak with trustees to decide how to handle the reported abuse, excluding any trustees who of 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 needs protection.
  - An internal investigation – for less serious incidents where they feel internal mediation will be successful.

Where cases are escalated the trustees will cooperate with the police or local authority in dealing with the reported incident.

Where an internal investigation takes place, the trustees will:

- Inform all parties involved of the reported abuse as soon as possible.
- Inform the family/guardians of the person reported as being abused of the incident.
- 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 trustee.
- All parties will also be invited to submit a written statement in advance of the meeting.
- Once meetings have taken place the trustees 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 and the best interests of the MSCS. Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with the MSCS constitution.

Malmesbury Singers Choral Society

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