

## **Safeguarding Policy – East London Chorus**

East London Chorus (ELC) believes that no child, young person or adult at risk should ever experience abuse of any kind. We recognise that we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk. We are committed to safeguarding the well-being of all children, young people and adults at risk 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 ELC or taking part in choir 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 all 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 ELC.
  - Ensure members, staff and volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults 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 ELC undertakes any activity, event or project.

**Working with vulnerable people:** membership is open to those over 18 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

**Named safeguarding officer:** [Name] has responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to [Name] at [safeguarding@eastlondonchorus.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@eastlondonchorus.org.uk) in the first instance.

ELC does not normally organise activities or events which involve responsibility for vulnerable people but if this were to happen it will do so in accordance with the ground rules and procedures as set out in the current guidance issued by Making Music

**Policy review:** This policy will be reviewed and amended (if necessary) on an annual basis by the Trustees of ELC. 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 and procedures**

### **Recruitment practices**

If an existing or potential new member, staff member or volunteer will be working with vulnerable people as part of ELC's activities the appropriate level of DBS in line with DBS rules regarding regulated activity will be requested before that work is undertaken.. The results of any check to inform a decision will be used confidentially and in line with ELC's equal opportunities policy.

### **Ground rules and ways for working**

ELC does not normally organise activities or events which involve responsibility for vulnerable people but if this were to happen they will do so in accordance with the ground rules and procedures as set out in the current guidance issued by Making Music.

### **Raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse**

- If any member, staff or volunteer in ELC witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they should immediately report it to the named safeguarding officer, [Name] at [safeguarding@eastlondonchorus.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@eastlondonchorus.org.uk).
- If the safeguarding officer is not available, or is involved in or connected to, the abuse, it should be reported to a trustee.
- If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the named safeguarding officer or a trustee.

### **Dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse**

The person to whom the concern is reported 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 trustees to decide how to handle the reported abuse, excluding any trustees who may be involved in the alleged 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 believe 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.
  - 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 committee member.
    - All parties will also be invited to submit a written statement in advance of the meeting.
  - 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:
    - Escalation of 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 ELC.
- Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with ELC's constitution.