

COTSWOLD YOUTH CHOIR POLICY ON BULLYING

1. SCOPE

- 1.1 This policy has been drawn up by the CNCS Committee ("Committee") and the Musical Director to ensure the safety and enjoyment of all participants in Cotswold Youth Choir ("YOUTH CHOIR") activities and events.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all participants of YOUTH CHOIR activities and events. All parents or guardians of participants under 18 years are required to read this policy and accept that it applies when enrolling their children.
- 1.3 All volunteers working for YOUTH CHOIR must familiarise themselves with this policy and apply it consistently.
- 1.4 The term "supervisor" means the Musical Director, Committee or Sub-Committee member, Pastoral Group volunteer or other nominated adult.
- 1.5 YOUTH CHOIR recognizes that bullying may occur from many sources, including but not limited to participants, supervisors, volunteers and parents.

2. BULLYING

- 2.1 YOUTH CHOIR defines bullying as behaviour that is: repeated, intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally and often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. It takes many forms and can include physical assault, teasing, making threats, name calling, cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks, and instant messenger).
- 2.2 Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages and hate crimes.
- 2.3 Bullying itself is not against the law, but harassment is. This is when the unwanted behaviour is related to one of the following: age, sex, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation.
- 2.4 YOUTH CHOIR recognises that:
 - Every person has the right to be free from bullying.
 - All bullying is unacceptable, regardless of how it is delivered or what excuses are given to justify it. This includes online/cyber bullying/harassment.
 - All acts of bullying have a harmful effect on the victim's development, both socially and educationally.
 - The needs of both the 'bullied' and the 'bullies' should be identified and addressed in a supportive manner.
 - Dealing positively with bullying encourages an ethos that promotes respect, co-operation and understanding of others.

3. STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 3.1 The aim of this section of the policy is to prevent bullying. To achieve this YOUTH CHOIR has set itself the following objectives: (a) to create an environment of tolerance, openness, and trust in which teasing, harassment and bullying would find great difficulty developing, and (b) provide a safe environment where participants feel able to turn to any supervisor for advice, comfort, and support.
- 3.2 YOUTH CHOIR operates a 'no blame' policy on bullying, believing it to be the best way to deal with the situation for the victim. Very often the perpetrator does not realise the hurt they have caused, and indeed, their actions may well be the symptoms of problems in their own life.

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1 All allegations of bullying are taken extremely seriously. The procedures for the reporting and addressing of incidents of bullying are set out below:

- Complaints can be reported to any supervisor.
- Support and reassurance will be offered, and the supervisor will explain what steps will be taken next.
- A designated safeguarding contact will be present at all events as set out in the YOUTH CHOIR Safeguarding Policy Ground Rules and Procedures. The supervisor will immediately inform the designated safeguarding contact.
- The designated safeguarding contact will decide who is best placed to deal with the complaint. If a group is involved in the bullying, all parties concerned will be interviewed independently. The supervisors may then wish to speak to the group as a whole.
- The supervisors will record each person's statement of events.
- Any independent witnesses will be interviewed.
- YOUTH CHOIR's named safeguarding lead will be kept informed at all stages of the procedure.
- Where the complaint concerns a participant under 18 or vulnerable adult, the parents or guardian of that participant will be informed and may be invited to accompany the participant at any meetings to resolve the complaint.

4.2 At the conclusion of the investigation, if the supervisors decide that bullying has taken place:

- Full support and advice will be given to the victim at all stages of the procedure.
- Perpetrator/s will be asked to understand how their actions have made the victim feel.
- It will be explained to the perpetrator/s that they are in contravention of YOUTH CHOIR rules.
- Support and guidance will be given to the perpetrator to avoid a reoccurrence of the bullying.
- The situation will continue to be discreetly monitored by supervisors to make sure the problem is resolved.
- If a person is found to be bullying, they may be asked to leave the event/be suspended/be excluded.
- In the event that a person is excluded, the chairs of both the CYC Sub-Committee and of CNCS Committee will be informed.

5. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY

5.1 This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if a major incident dictates, or there is a change in legislation or statutory guidance.