



## Safeguarding Policy and Procedure Policy statement

This policy and procedure document is written to enable the Committee to address issues where there may be safeguarding concerns. PAC's Committee has a duty of care to its members but does not hold any statutory authority.

The Committee recognises that some people may be potentially at risk of abuse and neglect. Where abuse or neglect is suspected, it will aim to respond in a prompt and efficient manner. The Committee will neither condone nor tolerate any form of abuse.

PAC cannot take the lead role in any Safeguarding Enquiry under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014. Where there are serious concerns regarding abuse or neglect, the Committee will seek advice and support from the relevant statutory authorities. In following safeguarding procedures PAC will strive to uphold key principles of privacy, dignity and respect, independence and choice. Human and civil rights will be upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religious or cultural background.

PAC will follow the principles enshrined within the Care Act 2014:

**Empowerment**

Focused on the individual making their own decision and gaining informed consent where possible.

**Prevention**

Seeking to take steps to prevent issues from arising or escalating.

**Proportionality**

Responding in a proportionate way to the issue/s being presented.

**Protection**

Seeking to keep the membership safe and protection for those deemed to be at risk.

**Partnership**

Reporting incidents to the relevant statutory bodies.

**Accountability**

Accurate recording of incidents.

PAC has a responsibility to ensure that its committee members understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

### VULNERABLE ADULTS

Depending on the nature of the allegation and the identified risk, it will seek to support the alleged victims and the alleged perpetrators in so far as this does not compromise any safeguarding enquiry or investigation into the allegation or place other adults at risk.

It will make every effort to respect the confidentiality of any information that is disclosed under this policy. However, depending on the seriousness of allegations confidentiality is not absolute. Information will be recorded and stored securely in accordance with Data Protection Act 2018. Information may have to be shared, on a 'need-to-know' basis only, to prevent danger to a person's life, danger to a person's health, danger to others, danger to the community or to prevent or to facilitate the investigation of a serious crime

PAC's approach to safeguarding is as follows:

- Being alert to members who exhibit health concerns that could put themselves or others at risk
- Being alert to inappropriate behaviour exhibited by a member. This could include sexual advances, bullying, aggression or violent behaviour, harassment or discrimination. Inappropriate behaviour can be exhibited face to face as well as via electronic communications or social media platforms.

Where the committee becomes aware of a safeguarding concern, steps will be taken, as needed, to ensure the safety of adult/s at risk is secured as a first priority. The steps to take to address this will be discussed and agreed between the Chair and the Committee in the first instance. No Committee member will act in isolation when dealing with a safeguarding concern.

Where the Committee becomes aware of a safeguarding concern, the first step will be to gather as much information as possible. Where appropriate a risk assessment will be developed and recorded as soon as possible after the concern comes to the attention of the committee. In developing the risk assessment, the committee will consider the level of risk and the action that needs to be taken. Assessment of risk will include risk to the individual member and risk to other members within PAC. Where it is deemed that the risk is high and immediate action needs to be taken, the committee will contact the relevant local authorities for advice and support. Advice will always be sought before moving to exclude any member from PAC on the basis of a safeguarding risk assessment.

As far as possible, the adult at risk's wishes will be respected as to whether or not to refer any concerns to the local authority as a Safeguarding Enquiry under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014. However, it may be necessary to override their wishes in the best interests of other adults at risk. All actions taken will be recorded. Any records will remain confidential to the Committee unless a prior decision has been taken to share the record with the relevant statutory bodies.

## **CHILDREN**

The choir's activities take place in a group setting with only occasional involvement of children. For example, joining the choir for one or two rehearsals before a concert. Within this setting there will always be more than one responsible adult present who is responsible for the child/children and who will remain with the child/children in the absence of the parent. Therefore the risk to children taking part in PAC activity is low.

However, Trustees take their duties to children seriously. PAC has a named Trustee who has the expertise, knowledge and skills to ensure that the welfare of the child is paramount. The Trustee has been checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

The Charity Commission defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable groups of children as:

- Protecting from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of health and development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

All charities should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of their beneficiaries so that the need for action to protect them from harm is reduced."

The following policy and protection procedures and activities adopted by PAC is taken from the Charity Commission Policy Paper, **Safeguarding children and young people 2014**

### **Child protection policy**

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- No child or group of children will be treated any less favourably than others
- All children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs
- The policy will be reviewed, approved and endorsed by Trustees annually
- The policy applies to all Trustees
- Children and parents will be informed of the policy and procedures as appropriate
- All concerns will be taken seriously by Trustees and responded to appropriately. This may require a referral to Children's Social Care Services and in an emergency, the Police.

### **Child protection procedures and systems**

- There will be a named person (and deputy) with a clearly defined role and responsibilities in relation to child protection
- A description of what child abuse is available. Relevant contact details to seek advice and guidance is available.
- There will be a process for recording incidents, concerns and referrals and these will be securely stored by the Safeguarding lead in compliance with relevant legislation
- There will be guidance on confidentiality and information sharing which clearly states that the protection of the child is the most important consideration

### **What is child abuse**

“Child abuse is any action by another person, adult or child, that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. We know that neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse.

An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one off event. It can increasingly happen on-line.”  
NSPCC 2016

### **Guidance on confidentiality and information sharing – Data Protection Principles**

Trustees have responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998 to make sure information is:

- Used fairly and lawfully
- Used for limited specifically related purposes
- Used in a way that is adequate, relevant, not excessive and accurate
- Kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary
- Handled according to peoples data protection rights
- Kept safe and secure

Using Data Protection Principles, the named Trustee or Deputy will record any safeguarding concerns and notify the appropriate agency. Concerns will be shared with the Trustee group and will remain confidential.

### **Resources available with the PAC Safeguarding Policy**

Resources will be updated annually as necessary by the named Trustee.

- Charity Commission Policy Paper “Strategy for dealing with safeguarding vulnerable groups including children issues in charities” (downloaded 26/10/16)
- Charity Commission Policy Paper “Safeguarding Children and Young People” 2014 (downloaded 26/10/16)
- HM Government “What to do if you're worried a child is being abused. Advice for Practitioners” 2015 (downloaded 26/10/16)

Liz Roberts (named Trustee)

Gill Calvin Thomas (deputy)

### **Review**

The policy will be reviewed every two years by the board of trustees/management committee.

Policy adopted on:

Date: 18 May 2021

L E Roberts  
Chairman