

# Safeguarding Policy

## Kent Police Male Voice Choir

### Introduction

KPMVC recognises that the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount and that we have a duty of care when they are in our charge. We will do everything that we can to provide a safe environment whilst they attend our activities.

### We will:

- Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect and celebrate their achievements
- Recruit and select all those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults on our behalf with care and appropriate assessment (see appendix C).
- Provide a code of conduct for all Choir Members.
- Respond to concerns and allegations appropriately without delay in accordance with KPMVC Safeguarding Procedures.

### Legal Context

The law requires any organisation involving young people and vulnerable adults to take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to their welfare are minimised, and where there are concerns, to share them with other local agencies. The relevant legal requirements arise from:

The Children Act 1989

The Children Act 2004

The Family Law Act 1996 (as amended)

The Human Rights Act 1999

The Protection of Children Act 1999

The Sexual Offences Act 2006 (as amended)

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The relevant government guidance includes Safe from Harm 1993

Working Together to Safeguard Children 1999

Caring for the Young and Vulnerable 2000

Data Protection Act 2018

General Data Protection regulations

KPMVC recognises that it is not the role of our organisation to decide whether or not a child or vulnerable adult has been abused. This is the role of the Social Services department who have legal responsibility or the NSPCC who have powers to investigate child protection concerns under the Children's Act, or the Police.

### Good Practice

In developing this policy, KPMVC has taken input from the national amateur music performance association Making Music.

## Who are Children or Vulnerable Adults?

In this context anyone up to the age of 19 is a child and anyone over 18 years who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation is a vulnerable adult.

## How KPMVC Operates

KPMVC is a Registered Charity, composed of choir members. Officers are elected and others co-opted to serve on the committee. Rehearsals are run by our Musical Director or a substitute on occasion, with an accompanist. There are neither employed staff nor volunteers in the conventional sense.

## Definitions of Abuse

- **physical abuse**, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, or inappropriate sanctions;
- **sexual abuse**, including encouraging relevant individuals to look at pornography, harassing them by making sexual suggestions or comments, or sexual acts where the individual has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting;
- **psychological abuse**, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks;
- **neglect and acts of omission**, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating; and
- **financial or material abuse**, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;
- **discriminatory abuse**, including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

## Dealing with a Suspicion or awareness of abuse

When an allegation of abuse has been declared the matter is to be reported to the Safeguarding Officer (or the Choir Chairman or the Choir Secretary) who shall:

- Be accessible and receptive.
- Listen carefully.
- Take it seriously.
- Reassure the child/ young person/ adult in a vulnerable situation that they are right to tell.
- Negotiate getting help.
- Find help quickly.
- Make careful records of what was said using the child's/young person's/ adult in a vulnerable situation's own words as soon as is practicable following the disclosure. Date, time and sign the record. This record would be used in any subsequent legal proceedings.

It is not appropriate to:

- Jump to conclusions
- Directly question the child or adult in a vulnerable situation or suggest words for him/her to use.
- Try to get the child/young person/ adult in a vulnerable situation to disclose all the details.
- Speculate or accuse anybody.

- Make promises you cannot keep.
- Give your opinion; just state the facts as reported to you.

If you suspect abuse has taken place or abuse has been brought to your attention you are obliged to take action but you must also ensure at all times that the welfare of the child/young person/ adult in a vulnerable situation is paramount and the interests of the person against whom the allegation has been made are protected.

Where practicable you should obtain the following information:

- Contact details for the child/young person/ adult in a vulnerable situation
- Details of the allegation or suspicion including where known the name of the alleged abuser and the circumstances, which brought the alleged abuse to your attention

This information should be recorded on the attached form (see Appendix B).

### **Reporting Suspicions or Allegations of Abuse**

You should immediately report any suspicion or allegation of abuse to either the Safeguarding Officer, the Choir Chairman or the Choir Secretary. If one of those to whom report is to be made is involved in the incident then they are to be excluded from the reporting procedure.

Do not attempt to assess yourself whether or not the allegations are true and do not attempt to deal with any suspicion or report of abuse yourself.

The recipient of the report may:

- Provide appropriate support for the child/young person/ adult in a vulnerable situation
- Report the suspicion or allegation to the relevant agencies who may include the Police and/or Social Services and/or Disclosure and Barring Service (“DBS”)
- Make a written record of the contact at any of these agencies to which the case is reported
- Provide appropriate support for the person against whom the allegation has been made
- Confirm to the person who originally reported the allegation that action has been taken

KPMVC has a duty to take all allegations or suspicions of abuse seriously and to take the appropriate action, including referral to the DBS. In light of this anyone against whom an allegation has been made may be suspended from their role in the Choir whilst appropriate investigations are undertaken. If the DBS subsequently bars a person against whom an allegation has been made (or at all), the Choir will not be permitted to engage the individual in regulated activity.

It is important to maintain a level of trust between the Choir and the Kent Police and therefore it is considered important to disclose immediately, to the Kent Police Authorities, any incident which affects anyone connected with the KPMVC whether Choir Member, Office Holder or Volunteer.

### **Young Musicians Programme**

KPMVC supports and sponsors a young musicians programme that seeks to encourage young musicians to play an instrument or sing during a live performance. It is our policy and procedure that at all times the young person MUST be accompanied by a parent or authorised person. It is usual in the first instance for the parent (or authorised person) to give permission for the young musician to so play/sing. With permission we advertise the programme on our web site

Most choir members are independent adults. It happens only rarely that a child or vulnerable adult joins, rehearses and performs with us.

Choir rehearsals and performances are group activities, and there is no need for a member of the choir to be alone with another member of any age. KPMVC is therefore unlikely to be targeted by a person seeking opportunities to abuse children or vulnerable adults. Nonetheless KPMVC recognises the need to safeguard any young and vulnerable members and the Committee has therefore agreed the following Safeguarding Policy. It is the policy of KPMVC that no Choir Member shall be left alone with a child or vulnerable adult.

1. KPMVC will publicise its Safeguarding policy on its website ([kpmvc.co.uk](http://kpmvc.co.uk)) and draw it to the attention of members at the beginning of each season.
2. The trustees of KPMVC have a duty of care to the Charity which will include taking necessary steps to safeguard and take responsibility for children and vulnerable adults.
3. All activities should respect the right to personal privacy. In all activities Choir Members, Office Holders and Volunteers are required to be aware that physical contact with a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted. This also applies to discussing sensitive issues with the aforementioned.
4. All reasonable steps must be taken by the Trustees to ensure that children and vulnerable adults come to no harm and to act in their best interests. A risk assessment of Choir activities is appended to this policy.
5. It is the responsibility of us all to challenge unacceptable behaviour. This includes inappropriate touching, inappropriate language, suggestive comment (even in jest) or perform personal acts for the person at risk even if requested so to do.
6. Monitoring of the safeguarding policy will take place regularly and procedures will be reviewed annually at committee meeting. Approved at a committee meeting on .....
7. Young people will be welcome to participate in choral music requiring children and/or youth voices with KPMVC as long as they bring a parent or other responsible adult who remains responsible for them throughout rehearsals and performances.
8. KPMVC have nominated a Safeguarding Officer, Mick Pepper, who is CRB-checked and who will attend appropriate training as required.
9. Choir members will report any concerns to the Safeguarding Officer. **Detailed Guidance is available from the Safeguarding Officer.**
10. In the absence of the Safeguarding Officer the matter should be brought to the attention of the Secretary of the KPMVC or the Chairman. A permanent confidential record will be kept of the report.
11. If KPMVC should need to recruit staff, then we will apply safeguarding principles to ensure that appointees are suitable to work with young or vulnerable people.

12. Under the Data Protection Act 1998, individuals have a right of access to personal data that relates to them. This right of access may include a right to request access to records (in whole or in part) relating to suspicions or allegations of abuse involving the person making the request

13. Signed by the Secretary on behalf of the Committee.



**Appendix B – Record of Alleged Abuse**

**RECORD OF ALLEGATION OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE**

Date & Time of Initial Report: .....at .....

To: Responsible Person (Name): .....

Name of Complainant	Name and contact details of Child/ Young Person/ Adult in a vulnerable situation	Place of alleged abuse

Name(s) of people present.....

**Details of Allegation or Suspicion**

*(Please give as much information about the allegation or suspicion, including if you suspect abuse what alerted your attention to the situation. Please include names of all the people involved.)*

Name person reporting incident (capitals): .....

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Email address: .....

## **Appendix C – Safer Recruitment**

A key way of protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm is to ensure the careful recruitment of those working with them.

### **1. Job/role description**

Construct a clear and accurate job description and person specification, or for an unpaid role, a role outline, to set out what tasks and responsibilities the applicant will undertake, and the skills and experience required. This will include the employment being contingent on satisfying a Kent Police Vetting procedure.

### **2. Advertise**

Advertise unpaid roles in appropriate professional places.

### **3. Application form**

Ask all applicants to complete an application form for all paid roles (a Curriculum Vitae may be used for voluntary roles but an application form is good practice and is recommended). Always ask for, take up and check two references.

The KPMVC is responsible for the appointment of those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, paid or unpaid. At least two individuals must be responsible for recruitment. All those involved in recruitment must be capable and competent and able to keep personal matters confidential.

### **4. Confidential Declaration Form**

Ask all applicants to complete a Confidential Declaration Form. The form of this will be decided as appropriate.

### **5 Shortlist (paid posts)**

Shortlist, carefully examining the application forms. Ensure those shortlisted meet the requirements of the person specification.

Shortlist (unpaid posts). Review any interest from volunteers and assess suitability against requirements.

### **6. Interview**

Have a face-to-face interview (or informal discussion if unpaid) with pre-planned and clear questions to assess applicants' suitability for the role. It may also be appropriate to ask the individual to complete a test or presentation if applicable. Check identification and the Confidential Declaration Form.

### **7. Offer the role**

Decide whom to offer the role to. This decision will be made by the interviewing panel. This is subject to completion of all checks to the satisfaction of the KPMVC. No role can commence until satisfactory checks have been completed.

### **8. Checks**

Once the applicant has been offered the role, subject to satisfactory checks, ask the applicant to complete a Vetting Form.

Always check the applicants' two references. If someone has either never lived in the UK or spent a period of time overseas (i.e. lived abroad), the person making the appointment should request an additional check and ask the applicant to obtain criminality information from the country where he/she was resident. It is also recommended to undertake an occupational health check for paid roles where possible.

### **9. Appoint**

Once all checks are satisfactory and support the interview decision, the person can be formally appointed. It is recommended to add an end date to unpaid roles. This can always be extended but helps set expectations for both parties.

### **10. Probation period**

Have a period of probation for any paid role (or a settling-in period for unpaid) and review throughout, as well as at the end of this period.

### **11. Induct, train and support**

Induct new unpaid and paid workers.