



London Pro Arte Choir

Safeguarding policy July 2024 **Review 2026**

Introduction

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

London Pro Arte Choir (LPAC) is a music group open to all. We believe that a child, young person or adult at risk should never 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 with whom we come into contact, and to protecting them from harm.

This policy applies to everyone connected to LPAC. This includes, but is not limited to: members, volunteers, staff and individuals engaged to provide a service (e.g. freelancers).

Definition of vulnerable people

- Children up to the age of 19.
- Anyone aged over 18 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.
- This policy also recognises 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 the risk can be temporary.

Aims of this policy

- To protect children, young people and adults at risk who are members of, or receive services from, or volunteer for London Pro Arte Choir.
- To ensure members, staff and volunteers 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.
- To ensure that safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk is considered when London Pro Arte Choir undertakes any activity, event or project.

Responsibilities

- The LPAC Safeguarding Lead has responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to Gill Ellen in the first instance.
- Any projects, events or other activities that will involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of the Safeguarding Lead and in line with established procedures and ground rules.



How LPAC might work with vulnerable people

London Pro Arte Choir membership is open to those over 16 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
- Event partners e.g. joining with a children's choir from a local school
- Relatives and friends of members who attend rehearsals and concerts in a volunteering capacity

Members of the audience attending concerts who are vulnerable adults or young people should bring their own support if needed.

Ways of working

London Pro Arte Choir 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 self-employed Musical Director, or a substitute on occasion, with an accompanist. They are not employed staff in the conventional sense.

LPAC does not advertise itself as suitable for children or vulnerable adults. Most choir members are independent adults. However, some young people and vulnerable adults do on occasion rehearse and perform 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.

LPAC has the following ground rules:

- Young people will be welcome to participate in choral works requiring children and/or youth voices with LPAC, as long as they bring a parent or other responsible adult who remains responsible for them throughout rehearsals and performances.
- Alternatively if young people of the age of 16 and above, with the knowledge and consent of their parent or guardian, wish to join LPAC, the choir will identify DBS certified members to act as the responsible adult throughout the rehearsals and performances they attend.
- A vulnerable person will not be left alone with an adult unless that adult is DBS checked.
- Choir members will report any concerns to the Safeguarding Lead.

Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse

- The Safeguarding Lead will first make a decision based on the immediacy of the concern and the following two factors:
 - If the vulnerable person is in immediate danger or needs emergency medical attention – call the police and/or ambulance service.



- 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.
- Make a note of the concerns reported to them and ensure that confidential records are kept.
- Speak with committee members to decide how to handle the reported abuse, excluding any committee members who were 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 is in need of protection.
 - Holding an internal investigation – for less serious incidents where the committee feels 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 having been 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.
 - Allow both parties to bring a friend or representative to the meeting if they wish.
 - Ensure that meetings will be attended by the named Safeguarding Lead and at least one other committee member.
 - Invite all parties 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:
 - Escalate the incident to the relevant authority.
 - Further investigation – with established procedures and timelines to work towards a resolution.
 - A decision or resolution.

Policy review

The policy will be reviewed every two years by the committee. Members of LPAC will be informed of any changes to the policy and be invited to comment. The policy will also be reviewed in response to changes in legislation, good practice or in response to an identified failing in its effectiveness.