

## The Vigo Singers Safeguarding Policy October 2018

Vigo is an independent choir managed by a committee of volunteers elected at the AGM. As part of our objectives in the promotion of music for enjoyment and charitable objectives It presents three concerts a year. The Vigo Singers organise other events and tours on occasion.

We have a musical director (MD) and an accompanist for concerts who are self-employed and not members of the choir. The MD attends weekly rehearsals in term times and concerts.

The Vigo Singers do not advertise itself as an activity suitable for children/vulnerable adults. All our present choir members are independent adults and since its inception membership has remained in the 18 plus age bracket. Generally involvement with vulnerable adults and children is therefore normally limited to the occasional soloist who may be below 18 and children within the audience, both are normally accompanied by parents or a nominated person.

The Vigo Singers recognise its commitment to Safeguarding and sets out its approach below. This is based on 'Making Music guidance' for choirs with limited involvement with vulnerable adults/children.

**Commitment to safeguarding:** The Vigo Singers believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind. We recognise that we have a responsibility and are committed to safeguarding the well-being of all children, young people and vulnerable adults we come into contact with and to protecting them from harm.

### About this policy

- This policy applies to; all members, staff (whether employees or freelances), volunteers and anyone working on behalf of the Vigo Singers or taking part in Vigo Singers 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 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 and receive services from, or volunteer for, the Vigo Singers. We aim to ensure members, staff and volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are carefully recruited and 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 the Vigo Singers undertakes any activity, event or project.

**How the Vigo Singers might work with vulnerable people:** membership is normally 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
- Other musicians

**Named safeguarding person:** The Chairman of the Committee has responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to the Chairman in the first instance.

Any projects, events or other activities that will involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of the Committee and in line with established procedures and ground rules (see below).

**Procedures and ground rules:** A further document – ‘Ground rules, ways of working and procedures’ is available and forms part of this policy.

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

This document forms part of the Vigo Singers Safeguarding policy

- The policy applies to; all members, staff (whether employees or freelancers), volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Vigo Singers or taking part in Vigo Singers activities.

This document includes:

- Recruitment practices around safeguarding
- Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people
- Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse
- Procedures for dealing with concerns and incident of abuse

### **Recruitment practices around safeguarding**

If a situation arises where an existing or potential new member, staff member or volunteer will be working with vulnerable people as part of the Vigo Singers activities the appropriate level of DBS will be requested before that work is undertaken.

The level of DBS check required will be decided by the Committee and in line with DBS rules regarding regulated activity. The results of any check to inform a decision will be used confidentially and in line with equal opportunities.

### **Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people**

If the Vigo Singers organises an activity or event where they will be responsible for vulnerable adults they will ensure:

- Planning is carried out in line with this policy and procedures.
- The event is attended by an appropriate number of DBS checked adults – this will be a minimum of one but more when practically possible.
- Where practically possible the total number of adults in attendance (not necessarily DBS checked) compared with the total number of children will be appropriate to the activity and in line with good practice ensuring the safety of the vulnerable people. There is a main contact for safeguarding on the day - this will be an individual who has been DBS checked.
- The main contact has access to emergency contact details and other relevant details (e.g. information about picking up arrangements for vulnerable people).
- That if vulnerable people of different gender will be taking part in activities adults of different gender will be in attendance too.
- A vulnerable person is not be left alone with an adult, unless that adult is DBS checked and carrying out regulated activity.

**Working with parents/guardians:** If a vulnerable person wishes to take part in [the](#) Vigo Singers activities written permission (email is fine) should be obtained from parents/guardians where appropriate, and before the activity takes place. Written permission should include: emergency contact details of any relevant pick-up arrangements – including permission for another adult to pick up the vulnerable person after the activity has finished. When seeking permission from parents it is important to ask concerning any medical conditions and allergies

### **The role of volunteers:**

When organising events particularly concerts, where we may rely on the support of volunteers, that the volunteers are known to us and we will seek to ensure that they wear identification. A badge or sash will be provided as appropriate. These events are usually limited to three times a year.

### **Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse**

- If any member, staff or volunteer in the Vigo Singers witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they should immediately report it to the named safeguarding officer; The Chairman of the Committee
- If the named person is not available, or is involved in or connected to, the abuse, it should be reported to a DBS checked adult or member of the committee: If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the named safeguarding officer or an individual they trust.

### **Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse**

The Named person (or person reported in their absence) 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 committee members to decide how to handle the reported abuse. Excluding any committee members who may be 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.
- Where cases are escalated the committee will cooperate with the police or local authority in dealing with the reported incident.
- The Vigo Singers note it is not its role to investigate whether a child has been abused or not. It is not qualified to do so. This is the role of bodies such as social services, NSPCC or the police.

### **Responsibilities of outside organisations and parents**

Where an outside organisation is involved with the Vigo Singers they will be notified of their shared responsibility in the case of joint concerts with regard to vulnerable people and directed to our policy information on our website.

When staging concerts the Vigo Singers consider the safety and wellbeing of children in the audience to be the responsibility of the parents concerned and expect they would normally be in attendance. If Making Music, the National Federation of Music Societies. A company limited by guarantee. Registered in England no. 308632 Registered Charity in England no. 249219 and in Scotland no. SC038849. 8 Holyrood Street, London SE1 2EL. Tel 020 393 6030

this is not possible then a responsible adult must be nominated by the parent to the concert organiser in writing.

If there are larger groups of children or vulnerable adults attending then the ratio of adults to children must meet safety requirements.

Review date October 2019

Reviewed and updated by SD 26 October 2020 and agreed by the Committee on 28 October 2020

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