



Safeguarding Policy

Version B May 2026

1. Our Commitment

Our Dementia Choir (ODC) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all adults involved in our activities. This policy applies to all trustees, staff, choir leaders, volunteers, supporters, chaperones, carers, and anyone acting on behalf of ODC.

ODC expects partner organisations to uphold the same safeguarding standards.

People living with dementia may experience memory loss, reduced concentration, communication difficulties, and disorientation, which can increase vulnerability. ODC is committed to providing a safe, positive, and inclusive environment where all adults feel respected, supported, and able to raise concerns.

2. Purpose of This Policy

This policy ensures that everyone involved with ODC understands:

- Relevant safeguarding legislation, policy and procedures
- Their responsibilities for recognising, responding to, and reporting concerns
- Who to contact if they have a safeguarding concern

3. Safeguarding Policy Statement

ODC will:

- Proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of all adults during choir activities
- Uphold its duty of care to protect vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, or exploitation
- Ensure the welfare of members is paramount in all decisions
- Treat all people with dignity and respect, regardless of age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion, or beliefs
- Recognise that some adults may be additionally vulnerable due to dementia, communication needs, or dependency



- Work in partnership with carers, families, and agencies to promote wellbeing
- Maintain an open, listening culture where concerns can be raised without fear
- Ensure activities include risk assessments and a designated safeguarding lead for each event
- Ensure all choir members attend with their designated carer/chaperone
- Respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse
- Apply this policy whenever a concern arises that someone involved with ODC has:
 - harmed or may have harmed a vulnerable adult
 - committed a criminal offence against a vulnerable adult
 - behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm
 - Ensure actions are proportionate, respectful, and centred on the adult's voice
 - Require all personnel to familiarise themselves with this policy
 - Provide carers/chaperones with a copy of this policy
 - Apply disciplinary procedures where policy breaches occur
- There may be times when a family member or carer is considered a vulnerable adult due to the pressures and demands of their caring role. In such cases, this policy will apply to them.

4. Implementation

ODC will ensure:

- Clear lines of accountability for safeguarding
- Access to legal and professional safeguarding advice
- Regular safeguarding reports to the Board
- Effective procedures for responding to concerns, including poor practice

A Safeguarding Lead and Deputy

- Designated safeguarding leads
- Effective information sharing arrangements with relevant agencies
- Codes of conduct with zero tolerance for abuse
- Risk assessments that include safeguarding considerations



5. Safeguarding Leads

Safeguarding Lead: Caroline Killeavy - Chief Executive

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Daniela Smith – Musical Director

They are the first point of contact for any safeguarding concern.

6. Abuse and Neglect

Abuse is a violation of a person's human and civil rights and may be deliberate, negligent, or due to omission. Abuse can occur in any setting or relationship.

The Care Act 2014 identifies the following categories:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional/Psychological
- Neglect and Acts of Omission
- Financial or Material
- Discriminatory
- Organisational/Institutional
- Self-neglect
- Domestic Abuse (including coercive control)
- Modern Slavery

Indicators include unexplained injuries, missing belongings, withdrawal, changes in behaviour or hygiene, fearfulness, self-harm, or disclosures of abuse.

All concerns must be taken seriously.

7. Prevent Duty

The organisation recognises its responsibilities under the Prevent Duty to safeguard individuals who may be vulnerable to radicalisation or extremist influence. We are committed to identifying early signs of concern, promoting an environment that supports resilience against extremist narratives, and taking proportionate action where risks are identified. Any concerns relating to radicalisation will be treated as safeguarding matters and reported through the organisation's safeguarding procedures, including referral to the appropriate local Prevent team where necessary.



8. Mental Capacity and Decision Making

UK law presumes adults have capacity unless proven otherwise. To decide, a person must be able to:

- Understand information
- Retain it long enough to decide
- Weigh it up
- Communicate their decision
- Capacity may fluctuate due to dementia, illness, anxiety, medication, or other factors.

Key principles:

- Adults must be supported to make their own decisions wherever possible
- Unwise decisions do not equal lack of capacity
- Decisions made on behalf of someone lacking capacity must be in their best interests and use the least restrictive option
- Coercion or fear may impair capacity

If abuse is suspected and the adult cannot make an informed decision, ODC must refer to the Local Authority

In emergencies, ODC may need to act immediately to protect an adult, including sharing information or preventing contact with a person causing harm

9. Promoting Good Practice

All ODC personnel (volunteers and employees) should model safe, respectful behaviour. Good practice includes:

- Creating a fun, enjoyable singing environment
- Working openly and avoiding unobserved situations
- Treating everyone with respect
- Prioritising welfare over performance goals
- Maintaining appropriate physical boundaries
- Ensuring manual support (e.g., posture) is necessary, explained, and done openly
- Involving carers/chaperones wherever possible



- Supervising groups in pairs when away from carers
- Giving constructive feedback
- Avoiding excessive pressure or rehearsal
- Ensuring mixed gender trips have mixed gender staff
- Securing carer/family member consent for emergency medical treatment
- Keeping written records of illness, injury, or treatment during activities
- Ensuring photo consent

10. Safe Recruitment

10.1 Trustees

All new trustees must self-declare any reasons they may be prevented from acting as a trustee, by completing the Charity Commission Trustee Declaration Form upon joining. This may include

- unspent convictions
- terrorism association
- registration on the sexual offenders register

Should a declaration be made, an assessment will be made on the suitability of the candidate to function as a Trustee. No person with a known background of abuse will be allowed to function as Trustee.

Under no circumstances should Trustees participate in the direct delivery of the service, nor should they form personal relationships with beneficiaries. Staff and volunteers should supervise all Trustee visits.

10.2 Employees and Volunteers

All staff, volunteers must undergo safer recruitment checks, including DBS.

Anyone barred from working with vulnerable groups or have a known background of abuse will not be permitted to participate

10.3 External Groups and Performance Organisers

Safeguarding risk assessments must be completed for activities involving external groups



A copy of their Safeguarding Policy will be requested, and supervision of choir members will be by staff, volunteers, carers and family members at all times when performing or working with external groups.

10.4 Choir Members/Carers/Family Members

Any beneficiary participating in the choir, their carers/family members, will be required to sign a declaration identifying the following;

- unspent convictions
- terrorism association
- sexual offenders' registration

Where an unspent conviction is disclosed, a risk assessment will be undertaken to determine whether any safeguards, restrictions, supervision arrangements, or role adjustments are appropriate to enable participation.

11. Reporting Procedures

Any concern raised by or about a vulnerable adult must be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy

Confidentiality will be maintained in line with the Data Protection Act and UK GDPR

Information may be shared internally for safeguarding purposes

Information may be shared externally without consent where:

- the adult or others are at risk
- the adult is under coercion
- a crime has occurred or may occur
- the adult lacks capacity
- required by law

Decisions to share or not share information must be recorded with reasons

Allegations must be recorded clearly and stored securely

Information is restricted to those who need to know

Concerns raised to carers/chaperones must be passed to the Safeguarding Lead



12. Responding to Allegations or Suspicions

Allegations must be managed fairly, quickly, and consistently

It is not ODC's role to determine whether abuse has occurred, but to report concerns

ODC will support anyone who raises concerns in good faith

Actions must respect the rights and dignity of all involved

If an allegation of harm or abuse is made against a member of the ODC team (volunteers and employees), the Safeguarding Lead will:

- log the incident
- contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours
- inform the Board of Trustees (without names or details at this stage)
- Investigations may include:
 - criminal investigation
 - adult safeguarding investigation
 - disciplinary investigation

Anyone with a previous conviction for abuse is automatically excluded from working with vulnerable adults.

Ends