



Guidelines for Good Practice for the Safeguarding of Children in the Chapel Choir

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1 Background and introduction

- 1.1 The Chapel Choir of Jesus College is made up of adult choral scholars and choral volunteers (male and female singers, mostly undergraduates and postgraduates) and choristers and probationers (boys aged between 7 and 14). The Director of Music is responsible for the training and direction of the Choir. They are assisted ordinarily in this by two Organ Scholars (ordinarily undergraduates) who play the organ and piano for rehearsals, services, concerts, recordings, tours and any other events involving the Choir. The Organ Scholars assist with the direction of the Choir and are responsible for teaching theory of music to the choristers and probationers. The Director of Music is assisted in the administration of the Choir and its activities by the Choir & Chapel Office Coordinator. All activities in the College Chapel are overseen by the Dean of Chapel, who is assisted by the Assistant Chaplain and the Secretary to the Dean and Chapel Office. The Director of Music and Dean of Chapel report annually to the College Council on the activities of the Choir and Chapel.
- 1.2 The College is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for choristers and probationers, as well as for its staff and students, and all reasonable steps will be taken to protect all parties from harm. In order to achieve this, the College will ensure its staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised. Furthermore, the College will endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the care and protection of children and vulnerable adults.

- 1.3 This policy outlines the way in which the College intends to deal with such matters and applies to all members of the College community whose duties bring them into contact with choristers and probationers.
- 1.4 The College has a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a Designated Officer for Safeguarding Children (DOSC), whose details can be found at the close of this document.
- 1.5 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:
 - Jesus College Policy on the Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk
 - Chorister Handbook (particularly Choristers' Rules)
 - Handbook for Adult Choir Members
 - DfE publication '[Keeping children safe in education](#)' (September 2023)
 - Legal Affairs and Employment Sub-Committee report on the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
 - Staff policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders

2 Definitions

- 2.1 A "chorister" is any member of the Chapel Choir under the age of 18. A "probationer" is a trainee chorister who is not a member of the Chapel Choir.

3. Special Provisions

3.1 Application of these Provisions

The provisions for special recruitment and training procedures and for the conduct of Disclosure and Barring Service checks are applied to staff and Fellows working with children or adults at risk. The conduct of Disclosure and Barring Service checks are also applied to adult members of the Chapel Choir. The College Council reviews the application of these provisions from time to time, to take account of any changed arrangements in the College, new risks and/or new legislation.

3.2 Recruitment and Training of staff involved in the care and education of choristers

- 3.2.1 The following procedures will be used for all candidates to whom the College offers a position which will bring them into regular unsupervised contact with children or adults at risk:

- Applicants will be asked to complete an application form.
- Identity will be carefully checked and applicants will be required to provide photographic documentation to confirm identity.
- Applicants will be asked to provide original documentation to provide proof of qualifications.

- Professional and character references will be sought, preferably including someone who can comment on the applicant's experience of working with children or adults at risk.
- Previous employment history will be verified through references.
- Applicants will be required to undergo an appropriate level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- All appointed staff will be required to complete an agreed probationary period.
- All staff will be issued with the Jesus College Policy on the Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk. Safeguarding training will be provided to those working with children and/or adults at risk every three years and training records will be kept by the Head of HR.

3.3 Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosures

3.3.1 Those who are involved in work situations where they have sustained or prolonged unsupervised access to children or adults at risk are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Legislation. This means that prospective staff, workers or volunteers must declare all criminal convictions, however long ago; and these will be taken into account when deciding on their suitability for working with children or adults at risk. No one will be permitted to undertake a role which involves regular contact with children or adults at risk without a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Copies of DBS clearance documents will be held on individuals' personnel files held by the Head of HR but remain the property of the individual and will not be attached to academic files.

3.3.2 A criminal record may not prevent a person from working for Jesus College in any other capacity (see Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders). If that person is then asked to undertake tasks which will bring them into unsupervised contact with children or adults at risk, such as work experience placements, any criminal conviction must be declared to the Head of HR who will take appropriate advice where necessary and will decide whether this task should be allocated to another member of staff.

3.3.3 In line with the DBS recommendations, the College will seek disclosures every three years.

3.3.4 Those closely involved with the care and education of the choristers who must be DBS-checked are:

- The Dean of Chapel, Chaplain and Assistant Chaplain
- The Director of Music
- The Chaplain
- The Choir & Chapel Office Coordinator
- The Organ Scholars or Assistant Organist
- The Choir Chaperone

- Chorister Singing Teachers
- Adult members of the Chapel Choir
- The Porters
- Any parent or other adult who has voluntary chaperoning responsibilities on a choir tour or visit

In line with Church of England safeguarding policy, where additional members of the clergy are on occasion engaged to conduct Chapel services, they must hold a valid license from the Bishop of Ely, or be confirmed as 'safe to receive' by the office of the Bishop in whose Diocese they are licensed for ministry, thus confirming that relevant DBS checks and safeguarding training are up to date and that there are no current safeguarding concerns about them.

Ordinands on attachment at Chapel as part of their ministerial training must provide evidence to the Dean of Chapel or Chaplain of a valid DBS certificate from their Diocese, which will be recorded on their Working Agreement.

- 3.3.5 Adult members of the Chapel and College Choirs, Chapel Clerks and Secretaries, Ordinands on attachment at Chapel, and other members of the College staff or Fellowship who may encounter choristers or probationers under the age of 18 are asked to read the College's policies and guidelines on Safeguarding. New adult members of the Chapel and College Choirs who rehearse and perform regularly with the choristers and probationers are required to sign a document confirming that they have read and understood these documents. The Code of Conduct is included in the Handbook for Adult Choir Members, distributed to all adult members of the Choir annually.

4. Code of Conduct

Those working with children or adults at risk must follow the Code of Conduct below which is based upon Church of England's Code of Safer Working Practice (2021).

4.1 *If you work with children or adults at risk you must:*

- Treat all individuals with respect and dignity.
- Respect people's rights to personal privacy.
- Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language are respectful.
- Ensure that children, young people and adults know who they can talk to about a personal concern.
- Record and report any concerns about a child, young person or adult and/or the behaviour of another worker with the person responsible for overseeing their work and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Designated Officer for the Safeguarding of Children. All written records should be signed and dated.
- Obtain written consent for any photographs or videos to be taken, shown, displayed or stored.

- Always aim to work with or within sight of another adult.
- Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet.
- Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around.
- Ensure that the child and parents are aware of any activity that requires physical contact and of its nature before the activity takes place.
- Ensure that all photographs and videos taken which feature choristers, taken during, for example, a tour or concert, are shared with the Choir & Chapel Office. Such photography should only occur in relation to the group activities of the Choir, be primarily for the College's use and benefit, and occur with the consent of those being photographed.

4.2 *You must not:*

- Use any form of physical punishment.
- Be sexually suggestive about or to an individual.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group.
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.
- Show favouritism to any one individual or group.
- Allow an individual to involve you in excessive attention seeking.
- Allow unknown adults access to children, young people and adults at risk. Visitors to activities for children, young people and adults at risk (e.g. singing workshops) should always be accompanied by an approved person.
- Give lifts to children, young people or adults at risk who you are supervising, on their own or your own (unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. in an emergency for medical reasons).
- Allow strangers to give lifts to children, young people or adults at risk.
- Smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of children, except when this is a social situation with family members/carers present
- Arrange social occasions with children and young people (other than events which also include family members/carers) outside organized group occasions.
- Befriend children, young people or adults at risk on social media.
- Make or store photographs or videos of individual children in the Choir on your personal phone, devices, cameras or computers, or not in relation to the group activities and purposes of the Choir.

- 4.3 *In addition, with specific reference to choristers and probationers:*
- You must not make any contact with choristers or probationers or their families for reasons unrelated to the activities and work of the Choir.
 - On no account should you give a chorister or probationer a gift or do anything which could be in any way considered a bribe or inducement to enter into a relationship or give rise to any false allegations of improper conduct against you.
 - There must be no social media contact between you and the choristers or probationers of the Choir. This includes being 'friends' with choristers or probationers on Facebook etc.
 - If you are invited to participate in social activities by chorister families, you are welcome to accept such invitations, but you are asked to provide a written record (i.e. an e-mail) to the Choir & Chapel Office Coordinator, for the purposes of your own protection.

4.4 *Physical Contact*

- 4.4.1 Applying cautious common sense, a member of staff, worker or volunteer should not have any physical contact with a child or an adult at risk unless it is to prevent an accident or injury to themselves or anyone else (e.g. to prevent a fall) or in the case of medical assistance being needed (e.g. to administer first aid), in which case the prior consent of the affected person should be requested where possible. Where appropriate, consent from parents or those with parental or caring responsibility should be obtained. Any necessary physical contact with a child or an adult at risk should always be within the guidelines of being open to scrutiny, minimal, with the person's permission (where practicable) and to their benefit alone.
- 4.4.2 If a child or an adult at risk is hurt or distressed, the staff member, worker or volunteer should do his/her best to comfort or reassure the affected person without compromising his/her dignity or doing anything to discredit the person's own behaviour.

5. **Day-to-day activities**

5.1 **Rehearsals in East House**

- 5.1.1 Choristers and probationers attend rehearsals in East House regularly. They are delivered to these rehearsals by parents or guardians, but some older boys, with parental consent, make their own way to rehearsals. Two responsible adults (usually the Director of Music, one of the Organ Scholars or the Choir and Chapel Office Coordinator) will be present from ten minutes before the time that a rehearsal begins, and will remain until all choristers have been collected or delivered to the Porters' Lodge for supervision until parents/guardians are available to collect them.

- 5.1.2 There will always be two DBS-checked adults present in East House during rehearsals (ordinarily the Director of Music and one of the organ scholars; sometimes the Choir & Chapel Office Coordinator).
- 5.1.3 The toilets in East House are used by members of staff working in the building. Choristers and probationers are therefore instructed to use only the lockable cubicle, and not the urinal. Choristers and probationers request permission from the person taking the rehearsal before leaving to go to the toilet.
- 5.1.4 Playtime on the field outside East House is supervised by the persons taking the rehearsal who will ensure that appropriate safety measures are taken when e.g. crossing the road.

5.2 Rehearsals, services and other events in the College Chapel

- 5.2.1 Choristers attend rehearsals, services and other events in the College Chapel regularly. They are either delivered to these events by parents or guardians or, with parental agreement, some older boys make their own way to the College. A responsible adult (usually the Director of Music or one of the Organ Scholars) will be present from ten minutes before the time that a rehearsal begins, and will remain until all choristers have been collected or delivered to the Porters' Lodge for supervision until parents/guardians are available to collect them.
- 5.2.2 There will always be two DBS-checked adults present during rehearsals, services or other events in the College Chapel.
- 5.2.3 There are no toilets directly accessible from the Chapel. Choristers needing to visit the toilet are instructed to use the lockable toilets in Cloister Court. Boys are not permitted to travel from the Chapel to the toilet alone and they will be accompanied by an Organ Scholar or chaperone.
- 5.2.4 There is ordinarily a break of 10-12 minutes between the end of a pre-service rehearsal and the start of the service. Squash and biscuits are normally served to the choristers in the vestry during this break by parents who volunteer for this activity on a rotational basis. There will always be a DBS-checked adult in the vestry during this break time, in addition to the parent or parents assisting with refreshments. This practice is also observed during intervals in concerts, breaks during recording sessions and other events when the choristers are not singing in the Chapel but are required to be present in the building.

- 5.2.5 At the end of a service, any chorister who has not been collected by a parent/
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guardian within ten minutes of the published collection time may be taken to the Porters' Lodge and asked to wait under the supervision of the Porters. Parents/ guardians will be telephoned to make them aware of this and will be expected to identify themselves to the Porters on duty before taking a chorister home.

5.3 Use of images and videos in publicity

- 5.3.1 For the purposes of publicity, photographs and videos of the Choir are displayed on the College and Choir websites and shared on the College and Choir social media accounts, namely Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Photographs are also used in concert programmes and promotional material, and may also be distributed as part of press releases.
- 5.3.2 All parents are asked to sign a document indicating that they are willing for images and videos of their children to be used in this way.
- 5.3.3 Photographs and videos of individual choristers or probationers will not be used online or in other publicity without the explicit permission of the parents and the College.
- 5.3.4 No photograph or video of a child online or elsewhere may give their name without the explicit permission of their parents and the College.
- 5.3.5 Where video broadcasts (e.g. livestreamed Chapel services) are being made in which choristers or probationers appear, any relevant Local Authority licenses will be secured in advance by the Choir & Chapel Office.
- 5.3.6 The Choir & Chapel Office requests that all photographs and videos which feature choristers, taken during, for example, a tour or concert, by other Choir members or adults associated with the Choir be shared with the Choir & Chapel Office. All adult members of the Choir, parents and chaperones are made aware of this request.
- 5.3.7 Electronic images and videos of members of the Choir will be stored only in password-protected folders on the College network.
- 5.3.8 The College and Choir websites are updated regularly and expired material is archived within guidelines on the storage of digital material.

5.4 Health and Safety

- 5.4.1 All spaces in the College used by the choristers and probationers are required to comply with current Health and Safety legislation. The Chapel, as an ancient building, carries certain exemptions, including uneven floors etc., of which all choristers and probationers are made aware.
- 5.4.2 Adults with regular responsibility and leadership of chorister activities undertake training in First Aid. The Porters are able to administer First Aid and should be contacted in relation to any accidents or situations requiring urgent assistance, recording and reporting, or further medical help to be called.
- 5.4.3 All trips, visits and tours are fully risk-assessed in advance (see 6.1).

5.5 Confidentiality

- 5.5.1 All information regarding children and adults at risk is highly confidential and should only be shared with appropriate parties on a need-to-know basis.
- 5.5.2 All staff are expected to exercise reasonable care and refer to the College policy on Identification and Handling of Confidential Records and the Staff Handbook when dealing with confidential information.
- 5.5.3 Information on choristers and probationers and their families, including dates of birth, home addresses and contact details, allergies, dietary requirements and passport information, is held securely by the Chapel & Choir Office, and shared internally only with the DBS-checked adults listed in 3.3.4 (excluding adult Choir members, visiting clergy and Ordinands) for choir training and administrative purposes.
- 5.5.4 Contact details for the families of choristers are only shared with other chorister families (for the purposes of arranging lifts to rehearsals etc.) with the explicit prior permission of the individuals concerned.

6 Tours and special projects

From time to time, the Choir takes part in performances or other events away from Jesus College. These can include visits to churches or concert halls in the UK for concerts, to other colleges or local venues for rehearsals, and travel to venues abroad for performances.

- 6.1 Detailed risk assessments are carried out in advance of all trips and tours, and the College takes responsibility for travel insurance for the whole group. A member of staff may perform a reconnaissance trip in advance of the visit or make use of a reliable agent to inform safe planning.

- 6.2 Permission to travel abroad is sought from the College Council. Magistrates' or other licenses are also sought by the College in advance of tours or any projects which involve child performance and/or the need to miss school.
- 6.3 Detailed guidance on good practice during a trip or tour is communicated to all those on the tour or visit.
- 6.4 During sightseeing visits or other leisure pursuits, choristers and probationers are normally separated into small groups of four or five children for whom a designated DBS-checked chaperone is responsible at all times.

7 Implementation, monitoring and review

- 7.1. All staff, students, workers and volunteers at the College involved in the care and education of the choristers and probationers, or with whom the choristers and probationers are likely to come into contact during their time as members of the Choir will be made aware of this policy and a copy will be available on JNet and from the Head of HR. Furthermore, a copy of this policy will be given to all relevant bodies with whom the College works and will be made available to parents and guardians of choristers and probationers upon request.
- 7.2 Failure to follow the guidelines in this policy is considered a serious offence and will be investigated thoroughly and dealt with through the College's disciplinary procedure. Serious breaches may lead to dismissal.
- 7.3 This policy takes immediate effect. The College's Designated Safeguarding Lead has responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, which will be reviewed by the Safeguarding and Prevent Committee on a regular basis (at least annually) following its implementation, and additionally whenever there are relevant changes to legislation or current working practices.
- 7.4 **Suspicion of abuse**
 - 7.4.1 Any student, choir member, staff member or Fellow who witnesses or suspects abusive behaviour towards a child or vulnerable adult should record the details and report it to the DSL, the DOSC, the Dean of Chapel or the Head of HR. It is not the College's responsibility to investigate any suspicions. This requires expertise which the College does not have, and the responsibility is to report it only. Investigations will be carried out by the appropriate authorities with the full cooperation of the College.

- 7.4.2 The College's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will appropriately record an allegation or reported incident. They will be responsible for contacting the statutory child protection agency, such as the Local Safeguarding Children Board, or the Police if necessary. (See section 7.5 for details about what happens in the event of an allegation or complaint.) During an investigation into allegations of abuse, it may be appropriate to suspend a worker or remove them from having any contact with children or adults at risk until an investigation has been carried out.
- 7.4.3 Any allegations of abuse made against any worker will be thoroughly investigated and dealt with through the disciplinary procedure. Serious breaches may lead to dismissal.

7.5 In the event of a complaint or allegation

- 7.5.1 The Jesus College Policy on the Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk sets out the procedures for dealing with a complaint or allegation and should be read in conjunction with this document.

8 Contact details

The following people involved with the care and education of the choristers and probationers are trained in safeguarding, and may be contacted about any details of this policy:

Designated Safeguarding Lead, Jesus College, Cambridge
The Bursar
bursar@jesus.cam.ac.uk
01223 339497

Designated Officer for Safeguarding Children (DOSC) with regard to the College and Chapel Choirs
Dr Christopher Burlinson
cmb29@cam.ac.uk
01223 330788

Mr Benjamin Sheen
Director of Music
director-of-music@jesus.cam.ac.uk
01223 339474

The Rev'd James Crockford
Dean of Chapel
j.crockford@jesus.cam.ac.uk
01223 339433

The Porters' Lodge
Jesus College
porters@jesus.cam.ac.uk
01223 339339

Cambridgeshire Local Authority Designated Officers for Safeguarding
(LADO)

LADO@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

01223 727 967

Outside office hours, at weekends and on public holidays contact the
emergency duty team on **01733 234 724**

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