

Living Song CIC

Online Safeguarding Policy

Living Song is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. We strive to achieve the highest expectations of everyone engaged in Living Song work. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; this policy sets out our expectations for all.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's or vulnerable adults' health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care and vulnerable adults are given equal protection
- taking action to enable all children and young people and vulnerable adults to have the best outcomes.

Online Safety

Safeguarding online is complex and requires specific attention in relation to our work as Living Song CIC. **The same definition and culture of safeguarding applies to online safety as it does in the everyday world.** Many children enjoy and learn a great deal from being online and connecting with their friends on social media. There are many positive aspects to online learning and connection. There are however different risks posed by being and working online.

Increasingly educational professionals are encouraging children and young people to be online for music and singing lessons and group workshops and rehearsals. We need to be aware that we therefore become more a part of that world and must be fully aware of what children may be risking in all aspects of their online life.

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet, facilitated through technology like computers, tablets, mobile phones and other internet-enabled devices (Department for Education, 2018; Department of Health, 2017; Scottish Government, 2014; Welsh Assembly Government, 2018).

It can happen anywhere online that allows digital communication, such as:

- social networks
- text messages and messaging apps
- email and private messaging
- online chats
- comments on live streaming sites
- voice chat in games.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/Search?term=list+online+platforms>

Living Song works online with children and young people using 3 platforms: we have **Whatsapp groups** with Young Artists and Leader teams and we hold **Zoom sessions** with our choirs and singing

groups. We also **share resources on our website** and general information on our **Facebook page** and via **Twitter**.

In light of this, in addition to our Safeguarding, Child protection, Code of behaviour and Privacy policies, we are committed to the following:

1. Ensuring that our lead teams and artists are made aware of the risks children and young people may be exposed to while being online, such as bullying, radicalisation, sexual exploitation and exposure to inappropriate images and messages. We follow NSPCC guidelines in this regard. (<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/online-abuse>)
2. Ensuring our lead teams feel confident about the procedures for reporting any suspicions they may have with regards to a child's behaviour, or a child reporting a concern in the following way:
3. Fostering an open, compassionate culture during online sessions so that children and young people feel confident to speak out if they have a concern about their own or another child's safety. Leaders will:
 - a. Listen to children's concerns and respond calmly and non-judgmentally.
 - b. Follow the school's child protection policy and procedures when you have concerns about a child.
 - c. Report your concerns to the nominated child protection lead as soon as possible.
 - d. Make clear records of concerns following the school's procedures.
4. Understanding that children and young people may have limited time, or access online and may therefore be unable to participate in opportunities set up through Living Song.
5. Exploring with parents of young children (under 12) and with young people (13+) within our choirs and groups, the best way to support their children in their learning online, working towards an infantry of understanding about online access for each of our young participants.
6. Ensuring that all group members using **Whatsapp** for updates and information are OVER 16 and that we have received parental permission for 16-18yr olds to be part of the group. For Under 16 members we have a parent's only group for communicating updates and information.
7. Ensuring that there are always a minimum two professionals present in a **Whatsapp** group, one being a Safeguarding officer, in order to monitor all communications.
8. Committing to all participants in our **ZOOM** online sessions adhering to:
 - a. ensuring that all participants are 16 and over or have given parental/guardian permission to take part.
 - b. that any participant under 12 years old has a parent present in the room, or within earshot during the sessions.
 - c. using a neutral background as far as possible when connecting online, to protect their privacy.
 - d. presenting themselves in a way they would in a usual rehearsal / workshop session.
 - e. ensuring there are always a minimum of 2 adults in the session at any one time, including when using 'break out' rooms for small group, or sectional rehearsals.

9. Ensuring that though follow up online practice, or homework is encouraged, it is not enforced in recognition of the variation of accessibility to online technology for our participants.
10. Communicating regularly with parents/ guardians of under 16s with regards to online sessions via email, or on the phone, ensuring that permission has been received for their child to join any of our group activities.
11. Making sure that children 11yrs or under have their parent or guardian in the room or nearby with them during an online session. Ideally, they will connect with the leader at the end of the session for a quick update with their child and the leader.
12. Requiring parent/guardians of children 11yrs and under to sign a social online statement, in line with our policy.
13. Pointing all parents/ guardians of under 18s and all our 18 and over young artists to the CEOP and NSPCC for guidelines, risks and benefits of children and young people being online.
14. Ensure the leaders and any volunteers working with Living Song know who the Designated Child Protection Person (DCPP) is to report to at any time, should they have any concerns, before, during or after online sessions with children and young people.

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