

## **HHCOS Safeguarding Policy: Supporting Procedures**

### **Introduction**

HHCOS is committed to observing the rights of children (and adults at risk of harm\*) to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation and for them to be involved in any decisions that directly affect them. The purpose of these procedures is to ensure that all concerns about the care and protection of children, young people and adults at risk of harm (hereon referred to as children, but including other groups by association) are effectively managed. These procedures apply to all members, volunteer helpers and any persons contracted by HHCOS, who should all be aware of the Duty of Care on all those who work with children and young people as stated in the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and the National Guidance for Child Protection 2014.

### **Who is responsible?**

HHCOS will appoint a designated team to oversee the immediate safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk of harm. These will be members or contractors who are working regularly and directly with children of Haddo Voices, HHCOS and will be subject to PVG membership. The Management Committee will also share responsibility for reporting and taking action where necessary. All members, volunteers, parents and contractors are responsible for knowing and agreeing to abide by the Code of Conduct for the safeguarding of the young people of HHCOS and Haddo Voices.

All members and others associated with HHCOS are asked to report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or, if he/she is not present, to the next person on this list, in order of priority. They will then share the information in confidence directly with the DSO who will take action.

- 1. Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO):**  
**Name: Toto Coxe**  
**Contact details: [safeguarding@hhcos.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@hhcos.org.uk)**
- 2. Deputy DSO:**  
**Name: Andy Clubb**  
**Contact details:**
- 3. HHCOS Chairman:**  
**Name: Jenny Greener**

Founders: David Gordon CBE K.StJ and June Gordon CBE DL FRCM FRSA FRSE

Royal Patron: HRH The Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex KG GCVO ADC

Patrons: Joanna, the Marchioness of Aberdeen & Temair, Dr Neil Mackie CBE FRSA FRM, Patricia MacMahon D Mus(Hons) FRSA ARCM LRAM, Dr Lisa A Milne MBE

**Contact details: [chairman@hhcos.org.uk](mailto:chairman@hhcos.org.uk)**

**4. Management Committee members:**

Sheila Robertson  
Tricia Liddell  
Janet Hoper  
Jackie Ellington  
Toto Coxe  
Andy Clubb

### **Role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)**

The DSO is responsible for dealing with reported concerns by ensuring that any incident is recorded and reported to the appropriate agency for Child Protection. There should be a consistent and predictable response to allegations of Child abuse, therefore the procedure will be for the DSO (or next in line of responsibility) to take charge of:

### **Reporting incidents**

Whether to report an incident or whether he/she is unsure what action to take, the DSO should consult the Local Authority Child Protection Team (below) and/or police.

**Aberdeenshire Council Social Work (Children and Families)**

**Local Office: Tel 01467 537111**

The Social Work Children and Families team will advise on any issues, and will take necessary action, including passing the matter on to police where appropriate. However, should there be any situation in which children and adults at risk of harm are immediately endangered, the DSO should inform the police directly.

The advice of Police or Social Work Child Protection Team may be to consider suspending the individual from work with the organisation until the situation has been investigated. The wellbeing and interests of the child are paramount.

### **Recording incidents**

The following information will be written down as soon as possible after the concern has been noted, or within a minimum 24 hours. The individual who had the concern or to whom the disclosure was made should be the one to record the details if possible using the form *Reporting Child Protection Concerns* which they should pass to the DSO. Both the author and the DSO should sign this form. If the matter is then passed on to a statutory agency, this written information should be forwarded following any telephone contact with them. The information should include:

- Date and time
- Name of person making the report
- Name and date of birth of child
- As much family information as possible (names, addresses, phone numbers)
- Nature of the concern
- What the child actually said (if they did disclose anything)
- Any observations made that would support the concern
- Name of alleged abuser.

### **Reporting to OSCR: the Scottish Charity Regulator**

The DSO and Chairman should agree to report on behalf of the trustees 'any incident of abuse or mistreatment of vulnerable beneficiaries' to OSCR by email to: [notifiable@oscr.org.uk](mailto:notifiable@oscr.org.uk). Guidance and examples of the type of incident to be reported will be found at: [www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk) under 'notifiable events'.

### **Storing information**

All personal data should be securely stored confidentially by the DSO. The information can be shared confidentially with the Deputy DSO and Chairman. (Please see Data Protection Policy)

### **Maintaining Confidentiality**

Strict confidentiality should be observed around alleged incidents, primarily for the protection of the child but also to allow investigation of incidents to be properly conducted. It is good practice to only refer concerns directly upwards to the DSO or their deputy, who in turn will involve professional agencies directly, rather than sharing information too widely. Even if a statement is subsequently shown to be untrue or unfounded, it will be protected (from risk of alleged defamation) if it is made to the appropriate authority 'in response to a duty'. However, unjustified repetition of allegations to other persons will not be protected by this privilege and if untrue could be defamatory.

### **Child Protection training and awareness-raising**

- The DSO should have regular training/awareness-raising in child protection and safeguarding.
- The DSO will advise on the regular review of the policies and codes of practice issued by HHCOS.
- All members must receive information on the definition of child abuse and how to report concerns. This is the HHCOS **Code of Good Practice** and will be issued to all members, volunteers, parents, contractors, suppliers and others working for HHCOS by Management Committee. These will also be reviewed and updated periodically. Full information will be available on the website.

- HHCOS will ensure that children and young people understand their rights to be respected, to be involved and to be listened to.

### **What is abuse or neglect?**

Designated members and management teams will be made aware of the primary categories of abuse or neglect:

- *Physical injury*: either by deliberate act or by wilful failure to protect a child from danger;
- *Emotional abuse*: this may include degrading, name-calling, intimidation, absence of affection.
- *Neglect*: this may include failure to provide care or exposure to danger, starvation, or cold.
- *Sexual abuse*: where children are forced or persuaded to participate in any form of sexual activity by another person.
- *Non-organic failure to thrive*: children who fail to reach growth and developmental milestones through no reasonable medical or other explanation.

### **Recruitment of contractors, suppliers and volunteers**

HHCOS Management Committee will ensure that any person recruited to a post directly working with children is subject to the legal requirements under the 'Disclosure Scotland and Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme'. It is illegal for anyone who has been barred from PVG membership to undertake 'regulated work' with children, and illegal for anyone to employ a barred person to undertake such work. 'Regulated work' covers a range of activities with children, where these are part of the normal duties of the post. Posts requiring disclosure under the PVG Scheme include: Musical Director, Chorus Master, Pianist, Chaperones, Escorts, Regular volunteer helpers. Other posts may be added where necessary.

*Occasional* volunteers are not required to undergo full Disclosure but common sense should be practised and the Management Committee will supply the HHCOS code of practice to all members, volunteers, parents, contractors, suppliers and others working with or for HHCOS. These *must* be followed. Any observed contravention of the code of practice must be challenged and recorded.

### **E-safety**

- Children's photographs cannot be published online, in the press or on display without permission of their parents/guardians.
- No names or identifiers may be attached to published photographs of children.
- HHCOS will ensure that its social media content is appropriate for all ages.
- HHCOS members, parents, volunteers, contractors, suppliers and others will be advised in our code of practice not to contact non-related child members of HHCOS directly via social media.

## Links to other policies

Child protection and safeguarding is also covered under other policies, including: Equality, access and bullying policy; Health and Safety, including lone working; Data Protection Policy. In particular, areas of other policies relating to Child Protection include:

- *Supervision ratios:* HHCOS will ensure adequate supervision so that a minimum of two adults is always present with a group of children, in case an emergency arises.
- *Assessing risks:* Risk assessment for venues and equipment will be carried out. Incidents will be reported (see Health and Safety policy).
- *Performance:* Children are allowed to take part in performances on up to 4 days in any 6 months. If more than that, HHCOS must obtain a licence from the Local Authority.
- *Transport and attending venues:* Parental/Guardian consent in writing will be secured to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to transport children to another venue, transport children in members' cars, administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- *Storing personal data:* This will be stored securely in line with the Data Protection policy.

## Development and review of policy

The Management Committee is responsible for the regular review of the HHCOS Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

We are committed to reviewing our policies, procedures and good practice annually.

This procedure was reviewed on: November 2020

Signed: ..... Chairman,  
HHCOS

\*An 'adult at risk of harm' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their personal characteristics and/or life circumstances. Personal characteristics may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain.

(<https://www.psnipolice.uk/globalassets/advice-information/our-publications/policies-and-service-procedures/adult-safeguarding-290617.pdf>)