



**A JOINT SAFEGUARDING  
AGREEMENT TO ENSURE  
CONTINUITY AND SEAMLESS CARE  
FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
OF WELLS CATHEDRAL CHOIR**

**[POLICY LINK](#)**

<b>Title of Policy</b>	A Joint Safeguarding Agreement To Ensure Continuity And Seamless Care For Children And Young People Of Wells Cathedral Choir
<b>Applies to</b>	Whole School and Wells Cathedral
<b>Endorsed by</b>	Head Master and Dean of Wells Cathedral
<b>Responsibility</b>	Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Cathedral Safeguarding Officer
<b>Date reviewed</b>	March 2024
<b>Next review</b>	March 2025

## **A Joint Safeguarding Agreement To Ensure Continuity And Seamless Care For Children And Young People Of Wells Cathedral Choir**

### Background and Review Process

Written by Cathedral Chief Operating Officer, and the School Safeguarding Lead Professional on 26 April 2019 and updated annually in February each year with additional input by the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager as part of the preparation for the governing body of the School and Cathedral to review and approve.

The document was reviewed by both School and Cathedral together and independently in March 2024 with no material changes.

It is also worth noting that this Partnership Agreement was seen by the independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse (IICSA) and the expectation is that this Agreement continues to guide, shape, develop, and deepen the working relationship between Wells Cathedral and Wells Cathedral School in relation to safeguarding arrangements for Cathedral Choristers whilst educated at Wells Cathedral School.

### 1. Introduction. This Agreement:

- 1.1. Confirms that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that the Cathedral, and the School, have a responsibility for keeping children and young people safe.
- 1.2. Aims to ensure that children and young people, who are members of Wells Cathedral choir, receive continuity and seamless care both in school and in the Cathedral.
- 1.3. Recognises that when the children and young people are in school their care and well-being is the responsibility of Wells Cathedral School and while in the Cathedral their care and well-being is the responsibility of the Chapter of Wells Cathedral.
- 1.4. Acknowledges that both organisations have distinct safeguarding policies which are available to children, young people, their parents, and carers.
- 1.5. Recognises that both sets of policies have a legal basis in section 11 of the Children Act 2004

### 2. Section 11 of the Children Act 2004

Any provision of services under section 114 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 must make arrangements for ensuring that – (a) their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and (b) any services provided by another person pursuant to arrangements made by the person or body in the discharge of their functions are provided having regard to that need.

3. The organisational responsibilities are set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children* HM Government 15 December 2023. Organisations should have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Organisational responsibilities	Wells Cathedral Who/How	Wells Cathedral School Who/How
<p>1. A clear line of accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children</p>	<p>Wells Cathedral Chapter's statement on safeguarding can be found here:  <a href="https://www.wellscathedral.org.uk/aboutus/safeguarding/">https://www.wellscathedral.org.uk/aboutus/safeguarding/</a></p> <p>The Diocesan Safeguarding Manager (DSM), currently Mr Ben Goodhind is employed by the Diocese of Bath &amp; Wells and he and his team (DST) are available under the auspices of a service level agreement to provide expert advice, encourage best practice and to ensure that the policy and supporting procedures are implemented.</p> <p>Responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and operation of the safeguarding policies and procedures, commissioning of safeguarding training, and liaison primarily with the DSM rests with the Chief Operating Officer, currently Mrs Jackie Croft. This responsibility will transfer to the interim Chief Operating Officer Nicky McClean from 1 May 2024 until a new appointment is made. Miss Joanne Austin, the Diocesan and Cathedral Safeguarding Case Worker (DCCW) assists and is present in the Cathedral at least one day per week.</p>	<p>Wells Cathedral School's safeguarding policy dated September 2022, is reviewed every September and can be found in the General Information and Policies section of the Wells Cathedral School website:  <a href="https://wells.cathedral.school/our-school/">https://wells.cathedral.school/our-school/</a></p> <p>The lead professional for all matters (DSL) pertaining to Safeguarding is Mr Martin Ashton, Deputy Head (Pastoral).</p> <p>The DSL is supported by members of the Safeguarding Team (DDSLs) and Welfare Team.</p> <p>There are plans to re-structure the Safeguarding/Welfare Team during academic year 2024/2025 and led by Martin Ashton as whole school DSL.</p> <p>Martin Ashton to update following appointment of Assistant Head, Pastoral and DDSL for a September 2024 start.</p>
<p>2. A senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements;</p>	<p>Currently, the Acting Dean, the Venerable Anne Gell. To be transferred to the new Dean, The Very Revd Toby Wright from 16 June 2024.</p>	<p>Mrs Elizabeth Shelton is the Safeguarding Governor.</p>
<p>3. A culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services; (Listening to and involving children and young people).</p>	<p>On a day-to-day basis the choristers are listened to by the Chorister Coordinator, currently Alex Jenkins. Although employed by Wells Cathedral School they act in this capacity for both the School and</p>	<p>On a day-to-day basis the choristers are listened to by the Chorister Coordinator, currently Alex Jenkins. Although employed by Wells Cathedral School they act in this capacity for both the School and</p>

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	<p>Cathedral. They are not acting as a Cathedral volunteer.</p> <p>The Cathedral will ensure it listens to those who advocate for children, such as parents and carer/guardians and, as part of this, will ensure they have access to information available on what constitutes a safeguarding concern and who to refer it to.</p> <p>Two responsible adults will attend all practices to ensure chorister welfare at rehearsals. The Acting Director of Music and Chief Operating Officer have implemented a training programme for these responsible adults to ensure they fulfil their duties in accordance with Cathedral expectations. This training programme involves new chaperones being mentored by more experienced chaperones, an annual role refresher, at which the chaperone handbook is reviewed and updated.</p> <p>The Acting Precentor holds a weekly team meeting with the music department. The agenda for this meeting includes chorister welfare and they will alert the Chief Operating Officer and the DSM to any safeguarding concerns.</p> <p>One “Chorister Parent Tea” meeting is held in each academic year to discuss the choir diary, practical arrangements, and any other matters of concern to all. The meetings are attended by the Acting Precentor, the Acting Director of Music, the Head Master, DSL, and the Chorister Coordinator.</p> <p>There is also a meeting with each year group once a year to address particular issues and concerns. The Acting Director of Music, Acting</p>	<p>Cathedral. They are not acting as a Cathedral volunteer.</p> <p>The Acting Precentor holds a weekly team meeting with the music department. The agenda for this meeting includes chorister welfare. The meeting is attended by the Chorister Coordinator, who will alert the School to any safeguarding concerns in accordance with its procedures.</p> <p>Choristers are listened to by their tutors, currently Mr Harvey Brink and Mark White, in the senior school and by their form teacher in the Prep School.</p> <p>Choristers who are boarders are also monitored and listened to by their house parent.</p> <p>Concerns are fed through to the School Welfare team; serious concerns are escalated to the School Safeguarding team, and this will also alert Heads of Prep and Senior Schools.</p> <p>Termly pastoral meetings take a strategic overview of pastoral care in both the Senior and Prep schools.</p> <p>Termly safeguarding meetings take a strategic overview of safeguarding in both the Senior and Prep schools. This meeting is attended by the Safeguarding Governor.</p> <p>Termly Cathedral/School Safeguarding Lead meetings have been set up since mid-2018 to ensure good communications, coordination of best practice and establishment and strengthening of good working relationships.</p> <p>Wells Cathedral School has many channels for listening to children.</p>

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	<p>Precentor attend, and the Chorister Coordinator is invited to attend where able.</p> <p>Three times per year there is a Chorister Sub Committee meeting attended by Cathedral and School representatives and Safeguarding matters specific to choristers are discussed at this meeting, in addition to other concerns.</p> <p>Issues between any meetings are dealt with by the Acting Director of Music and the Chorister Coordinator. Escalation to the Chief Operating Officer and the DSM will take place if there is a risk of harm to a child or a safeguarding allegation against a member of staff, volunteer, or any other church officer, including clergy.</p> <p>There is a parents evening in Lent term and individual consultation with chorister parents based on chorister reports in which general concerns can be aired. These meetings are staffed by the Acting Director of Music. Any areas of safeguarding concern will be flagged to the DSL.</p> <p>Termly Cathedral/School Safeguarding Lead meetings have been set up since mid-2018 to ensure good communications, coordination of best practice and establishment and strengthening of good working relationships.</p> <p>The Cathedral and School will work together and regularly issue a questionnaire, one to parents and one to choristers, seeking feedback. Collation of the results will be done in partnership. Results and actions will be shared and agreed at the Chorister Care Sub-Committee meeting.</p>	<p>Questionnaires are used to gain informative feedback on boarding. Other ad-hoc questionnaires issued on safeguarding related matters such as bullying, well-being etc.</p>

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<p>4. Arrangements which set out clearly the processes for sharing information, with other professionals and making referrals to statutory agencies; and where required voluntary or third sector organisations.</p>	<p>Where a child is judged to be at risk of significant harm and/or in need of additional support it is necessary to share all relevant information with the statutory agencies. These arrangements are detailed in the guidance documents issued by the Church of England.</p> <p>All staff are aware that any safeguarding concerns can be raised with the DST, the DSM or the DCCW as described in the attached flow-chart. Reports may also be made online.</p> <p>The DSM will provide guidance to the Chief Operating Officer on individual cases to determine if an investigation and/or a referral to the LADO is necessary. The DSM will be accountable for that referral.</p> <p>The DSM will make the DSL at the School aware of any safeguarding concerns.</p>	<p>Wells Cathedral School will follow its policy and procedures in relation to reporting to the statutory agencies.</p> <p>Wells Cathedral School Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy is written in line with Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership guidelines. It is reviewed by the regular cycle of Independent Schools Inspections. This states that where it is believed that a child or young person is suffering from, or is at risk of, significant harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately. Staff members follow the procedures set out in accordance with the the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures (SSCP) which can be found at <a href="mailto:SSCP@somerset.gov.uk">SSCP@somerset.gov.uk</a></p> <p><b>Any staff member</b> can make a direct referral to children's social care or other external services such as early help services. However, if anyone other than the DSL makes a referral, they should inform the DSL that a referral has been made as soon as possible. Staff must share information with children's social care and/or the police where there are immediate concerns that a child may be at risk of harm or neglect. If staff members are unsure whether a referral should be made, they should speak to the DSL.</p> <p>The School DSL or one of the other deputies, will inform the Chief Operating Officer and DSM of any significant safeguarding concerns that warrant a referral to external agencies.</p>
<p>5. A designated professional lead for safeguarding. Their role is to support other professionals in their agencies to recognise the needs of children, including rescue from possible abuse</p>	<p>Ben Goodhind is the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager (DSM) and he is the designated lead professional for safeguarding. He is supported by his safeguarding</p>	<p>The designated professional lead for safeguarding (DSL) is Mr Martin Ashton, Deputy Head (Pastoral). Mr Ashton is a member of the Senior Management Team at Wells</p>

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<p>or neglect. Designated professional roles should always be explicitly defined in job descriptions. Professionals should be given sufficient time, funding, supervision, and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively;</p>	<p>team, including but not limited to the DCCW, Miss Joanne Austin. The Chief Operating Officer, Mrs Jackie Croft (interim COO is Nicky McClean from 1 May 2024) is overall responsible for the implementation of safeguarding strategy and practices and liaison on a day-to-day basis.</p> <p>The Chapter member with oversight for Safeguarding, is the Acting Dean, the Venerable Anne Gell. This will change to the new Dean, The Very Revd Toby Wright with effect from 16 June 2024.</p> <p>Their safeguarding responsibilities are explicitly defined in role descriptions and are available upon request.</p>	<p>Cathedral School. Details of his role are defined explicitly in his role description, available upon request.</p> <p>Mr Stephen Bradford was appointed in September 2023 as Safeguarding and Welfare Officer and he is one of the DDSLS. An Assistant Head, Pastoral, will be appointed from September 2024 and will act as the primary DDSL in the Senior School and deputise for Martin Ashton when he is absent from school or off duty.</p>
<p>6. Safe recruitment practices for individuals, (staff and volunteers) whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a disclosure and barring service (DBS) check;</p>	<p>All staff and volunteers are recruited in line with the House of Bishops' guidance on Safer Recruitment. A list of roles that require DBS checks is available upon request.</p> <p>Safeguarding awareness training is provided via the set modules rolled out by the Church of England National Safeguarding Team, and local training is provided by a trainer working within the DSM's team to all staff, volunteers, and clergy. Records of the training provided are held on a bespoke database.</p>	<p>Wells Cathedral School's Recruitment and Selection Policy follows the Safer Recruitment guidelines.</p> <p>Detailed guidance is available in the HR Dept policies.</p> <p>All staff responsible for recruitment do on-line safer recruitment training.</p>
<p>7. Appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>employers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role;</li> </ul>	<p>Employed adult choir members (Vicars Choral and Choral Scholars) and those who support the choir receive safeguarding training prior to commencing employment and regularly thereafter.</p> <p>A safeguarding code of conduct has been cascaded via the staff handbook and there is an annual sign-off process whereby the Vicars Choral and other adults who work</p>	<p>Wells Cathedral School follows Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership guidelines and School policies in inducting, training, and updating all staff.</p> <p>Records of the training provided are held by HR in the management and safeguarding database.</p> <p>Every member of staff, volunteer and site resident is trained every</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>staff should be given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare; and</li> <li>all professionals should have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.</li> </ul>	<p>regularly and closely with the choristers are reminded of their safeguarding responsibilities in relation to staff and chorister relationships and the fact that terms and conditions of employment re. housing prohibit children under the age of 18 visiting their houses without chaperones.</p> <p>Cathedral Education guides, Clergy, Sunday School leaders are on a three-year cycle of training. Records of the training provided are held by HR in the management and safeguarding database.</p> <p>The performance development review (PDR) process was reintroduced in 2023. This is the current review mechanism for safeguarding performance, but there is an intention to supplement with oversight from a Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Panel - established in early 2024.</p> <p>Wells Cathedral staff involved in teaching choristers will have access to WCS training materials to assist with a desire for a consistent approach to behaviour management in respect of choristers between the Cathedral and WCS. The Cathedral will work with WCS to put in place a process of observation of chorister rehearsals throughout the year to assess progress.</p>	<p>year in safeguarding according to the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, including important reminders, key systems, and according to annual KCSIE (Keeping Children Safe in Education) updates. This is reinforced with a compulsory questionnaire to be completed.</p> <p>Every two years all members of staff involved in regulated activity with children (those with direct contact with children such as teachers, music teachers etc) are trained by the DSL via the 'Basic Awareness' Cascade pack provided by the SSCP.</p> <p>All Staff are expected to be aware of, and behave in accordance with, the Staff Code of Conduct. There is an electronic 'Neutral Notification system in place for staff to self report or report other colleagues for any form of behaviour that may pose a risk of harm to a child or may be in breach of the Staff Code of Conduct.</p>
<p>8. Clear policies in line with those from the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;</li> </ul>	<p>All allegations of this kind, whether it be against staff, volunteer, or clergy, must be reported to the DST directly. The DSM will notify the Chief Operating Officer.</p> <p>The DSM is accountable for referring to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) which is a statutory requirement and to the Police if necessary.</p>	<p>All staff are aware (and are repeatedly reminded) that they should raise any safeguarding concerns about the behaviour of a member of staff within the School with the Head Master or the DSL as delegated by the Headmaster. Concerns about adults who are not employed by the School but who are working with school pupils can be raised either with the Head</p>



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or</li> <li>behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.</li> </ul>	<p>Allegations that fall short of these criteria may nevertheless amount to inappropriate conduct, in which case the DSM will liaise with the Chief Operating Officer, and they will consider whether to handle this by way of advice, supervision and training, to use disciplinary processes, or a combination of these. The DSM is accountable for reporting it to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).</p> <p>The Cathedral Complaints Policy and its Whistleblowing Policy are both available on the Cathedral website.</p>	<p>Master or the DSL or a Deputy DSL. Safeguarding concerns about staff will be reported to the LADO as appropriate, in line with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and follow up actions taken as advised. Concerns about the DSL should be reported to the Headmaster and concerns about the Headmaster should be reported to the Chair of Governors.</p> <p>For further detail refer to Wells Cathedral School Safeguarding Policy and to Wells Cathedral School Suspected Malpractice (Whistleblowing) Policy.</p> <p>The School DSL, or one of their Deputies, will inform the DSM.</p>
<p>9. Reporting procedure of each organisation</p>	<p>The Cathedral flow-chart articulates the reporting procedure and gives contact details. This includes out of hours referrals.</p> <p>If the DSM makes a LADO referral and/or the DSM determines there is a need for a core group in relation to the Cathedral Choir the DSM will convene the meeting. The lead professional for Wells Cathedral School will be invited to the core group by the DSM if the matter under discussion (either current or historic) impacts the School or its reputation. If in doubt, the DSM will consult the DSL.</p> <p>Where the Cathedral is making a child protection or child in need referral in relation to a child linked to Wells Cathedral School it is the DSM responsibility to ensure that the Wells Cathedral School DSL is aware.</p>	<p>Wells Cathedral School will follow its own internal procedures and will ensure that where it is making an external referral in relation to a Safeguarding matter that impacts the Cathedral Choir it will inform the DSM.</p> <p>Where Wells Cathedral School is making a child protection or child in need referral in relation to a child linked to the Cathedral Choir it is the Wells Cathedral School's DSL responsibility to inform the DSM.</p> <p>If Wells Cathedral School calls a safeguarding meeting in relation to a member of the Cathedral Choir the Chief Operating Officer and the DSM will be invited to attend.</p>
<p>10. The Cathedral and Wells Cathedral School are both responsible in their separate entities for ensuring they hold up to date, relevant information</p>	<p>Chorister Contact details alongside other specific consents (photography and video for example) will be completed at time</p>	<p>All relevant information for each child is held in the Wells Cathedral School management and safeguarding database.</p>

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<p>on each child as well as the necessary consents and parental agreements to cover all reasonably foreseen eventualities.</p> <p>The Cathedral and Wells Cathedral School are jointly responsible for ensuring that a single record is held of employees in both organisations who come into regular contact with choristers.</p>	<p>of joining the choir and will be updated annually. Records are held by the Music Department Coordinator, currently Mrs Melanie Lawlor.</p> <p>Wells Cathedral supplies information each year (usually September) to Wells Cathedral School to ensure that the Cathedral School Single Central Register is checked and updated.</p>	<p>Wells Cathedral School holds a Single Central Register of employees of the Cathedral and the School who have regular contact with the Choristers. This Register is held by the HR Bursar and is checked and updated with the Cathedral in September of each year.</p>

This Agreement sets out the organisational arrangements as required by section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to ensure that children and young people, who are members of the Wells Cathedral choir, receive continuity and seamless care both in School and in the Cathedral.

To support this Agreement Wells Cathedral School and Wells Cathedral Safeguarding leads will:

- Meet termly to formally discuss the workings of this Agreement.
- Identify ways in which we can improve the care and well-being of the children and young people.
- Report back to both governing bodies, at least annually, on progress made on the delivery of this Agreement.

This Agreement will be reviewed annually by the Chapter of Wells Cathedral and the Governors of Wells Cathedral School in March of each year.