

The Gesualdo Six

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

The objects of The Gesualdo Six Charity are to promote and advance education of the public in the art, science, and history of the musical arts in particular but not exclusively by:

- the presentation of concerts and recordings;
- commissioning new works;
- providing education projects for people of all ages;
- other ways as the Trustees shall agree.

Overview

The Gesualdo Six is committed to good practice which safeguards and protects children and adults from harm. The Charity recognises its duty of care towards all those with whom it works, particularly children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Charity understands that safeguarding is the responsibility of everybody, and that all singers, staff members, volunteers and trustees have a duty of care to abide by this policy and to report concerns. All suspicions or allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

All singers, staff members, volunteers and trustees are required to familiarise themselves with the Charity's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Policy Aims

This policy applies to all singers, staff members, volunteers and trustees of The Gesualdo Six and those taking part in The Gesualdo Six activities.

The purpose of this policy is to provide singers, staff members, volunteers and trustees with the overarching principles that guide the approach to the protection of all vulnerable people

This policy aims to:

- Protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who are members of, or receive services from, or volunteer for The Gesualdo Six.
- Ensure singers, staff members, volunteers and trustees working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are carefully recruited and understand and accept responsibility for the safeguarding of those vulnerable individuals they are interacting with.

- Ensure that safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is a primary consideration when The Gesualdo Six undertakes any activity, event or project.

This policy recognises vulnerable people as:

- Children up to the age of 16 or young people aged 16-18.
- Adults aged over 18 at risk as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. This might include adults with a learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs, or reduced physical or mental capacity.
- This policy also recognises risk is determined by the activity an adult is taking part in and not solely on the personal characteristics or circumstances of the adult, as such any adult can be at risk, and the risk can be temporary.

How The Gesualdo Six might work with vulnerable people

Involvement with vulnerable people might include, but is not limited to:

- Workshop participants and audience attendees

Roles & Responsibilities

- Safeguarding is the responsibility of all Trustees, but this is discharged through a lead Trustee who has a strategic, advisory and governance role separate from the day-to-day operational Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The Board has to approve policy and procedures. Operational management is delegated to the Director, or others the Director nominates, provided there is a key line of responsibility and accountability and regular reporting to the board. The Board should have, as a minimum, a brief report every meeting as to any safeguarding concerns that have arisen and any issues arising, and have a more detailed focus annually to check that policies and procedures remain suitable and also to review training needs and delivery.
- The Gesualdo Six has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (“DSL”).
- The DSL with the support of the lead Trustee for Safeguarding, is responsible for ensuring the implementation and monitoring of The Gesualdo Six’s safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- The DSL is responsible for the day-to-day operational management of the Safeguarding policy. They maintain records of attendance at training, receipt and reading of the safeguarding policy, ensuring that all records and related information is kept up to date. The DSL is responsible for reporting concerns or incidents to Social Services and, where necessary, the Police. The DSL will inform the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding of all

safeguarding issues as they arise and, at the DSL's discretion, inform all of the Trustees of any serious issues.

- The DSL is responsible for keeping all personal information relating to participants and volunteers confidential and securely stored, including that relating to safeguarding concerns. Personal and confidential information and records should be retained for a year after any safeguarding matter or concern is resolved or after the person to whom it relates stops being employed or a volunteer, and then it must be shredded.
- The DSL provides the required safeguarding reports to the Board at each meeting.
- If the DSL is subject to a complaint, it is the responsibility of the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding to investigate the allegation. The DSL along with the Trustee responsible for safeguarding, are responsible for reporting serious incidents to the Charity Commission.
- The Director and Executive team are responsible for making decisions in relation to the suitability of individuals for work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Training will be provided as appropriate, taking into account changes to legislation and in particular ensuring and recording that all participants have read [Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) in its latest iteration.

Guidelines for Singers & Staff

All singers, staff members, volunteers and trustees working with children, young people or vulnerable adults should adhere to the following principles when undertaking their work:

- Be a role model, displaying consistently high standards of behaviour and appearance.
- Always use language that is appropriate and socially acceptable.
- Always work in an open environment. Avoid unnecessary private situations and discourage secrets and/or closed communications.
- Make the experience of the activity fun and enjoyable for all involved. Singers and staff should always give participants enthusiastic and constructive feedback. In doing this, they should promote fairness and confront and manage any bullying.
- Everyone should be treated with respect at all times, regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. Any child, young person or vulnerable adult in performance with The Gesualdo Six is a valued member of the entire team and as such, is of equal importance to any other performer. At the same time, The Gesualdo Six expects similar respectful behaviour from all participants.
- Singers and staff must always follow procedures as outlined by the schools that The Gesualdo Six work in.

- Avoid unnecessary physical contact and maintain a safe and appropriate distance with adults at risk.
 - Circumstances may arise where a child touches a singer or staff member. This might occur when participants have learning difficulties or special needs, or when young children are used to hugging teachers in school and are participating in a project. In these situations, singers and staff should respond in a sensitive manner appropriate to the circumstances of the individual child and seek to minimise contact.
 - Where any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided in an open environment and with the consent of the adult at risk.
- Staff and singers should always use toilets specifically designated for their use.
- Singers and staff should always change in a room specifically designated for their use.
- Singers and staff must maintain professional boundaries at all times. Personal contact details should not be shared with children. Singers and staff should not communicate with children by phone, WhatsApp, email, or social networks (including Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, or X).
- Singers and staff should not travel alone with children.

Working with parents/guardians

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult wishes to take part in The Gesualdo Six activities, written permission (email is acceptable) should be obtained from parents/guardians where appropriate, before the activity takes place. Written permission will include: emergency contact details of any relevant pick-up arrangements – including permission for another adult to pick up the participant after the activity has finished.

Media

Photographs or video footage of anyone participating in a The Gesualdo Six project will not be taken unless appropriate consent has first been obtained. If related to children or young people, permissions will be sought from the parents/carers/school. For adult participants, permission will be sought from the participant directly or appropriate guardian. Where photographs and video footage are taken, care must be taken to ensure that the use of such material does not put any child at risk. Material should not be linked online to the full names of participants or any other personal information.

Recruitment practices around safeguarding / Disclosure & Barring Services Checks

If an existing or potential new member, staff member or volunteer will be working with children and/or vulnerable people as part of The Gesualdo Six activities, the appropriate level of DBS will be requested before that work is undertaken.

The level of DBS check required will be decided by the trustees and in line with DBS rules regarding regulated activity. The results of any check to inform a decision will be used confidentially.

The DBS will be paid for by the Charity. All DBS checks must be renewed every three years.

However, where a singer or staff already has an enhanced DBS check for the appropriate workforce from a previous employer or organisation and has already subscribed to the DBS update service, no further DBS check will be required. Where a singer or staff member has not subscribed to the DBS update service, a fresh DBS check will need to be undertaken in respect of their work with The Gesualdo Six.

Situations Where it is Impractical to Obtain an Enhanced DBS Check

In exceptional circumstances where there are valid reasons why it has not been possible to obtain an enhanced DBS check in time for a project, the Director may, in consultation with any other partners involved in a project, decide that the singer should be permitted to take part in a particular project. Where a singer without an enhanced DBS check is permitted to take part in a project, their work with children should be supervised at all times by a member of the The Gesualdo Six team with an enhanced DBS check.

Assessing Information Disclosed as a Result of a DBS Check

In the event of a DBS check disclosing information relevant to the individual's suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults, the certificate information will be retained until a decision regarding the individual's suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults has been determined. Responsibility for decisions concerning an individual's suitability to work with children rests with the Director and Chair of Trustees.

Teachers and Parents Accompanying Children

The Charity will assume that all teachers, parents and other adults accompanying children have been recruited according to practices laid down by select criteria in place at their schools including DBS checks, documentary evidence of qualifications and references followed through in writing.

Disclosure of Abuse and Reporting Procedures

Definition of Child Abuse

Child abuse happens when a person harms a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can also involve neglect. Children may be abused by family members, friends, people working or volunteering in organisation or community settings, people they know or strangers.

The NSPCC website has helpful information regarding different types of child abuse and possible signs and symptoms of abuse.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1188/definitions-signs-child-abuse.pdf>

Singers, staff and Trustees are expected to familiarise themselves with this information.

Defining Adult Protection and Safeguarding

Protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Local authorities and other agencies have a legal obligation to protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect. The statutory framework introduced under the Care Act applies to any person aged 18 or above who:

- Has needs for care and support (regardless of the level of need and whether the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, and
- As a result of those needs, is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Adult Abuse

The Statutory Guidance for Care and Support 2024 identifies the following ten types of abuse: physical, emotional/psychological, financial, sexual, organisational, neglect, discriminatory, domestic, modern slavery, self-neglect.

Signs and indicators of abuse and neglect

Abuse can take place in any context and by all manner of perpetrator. Abuse could be inflicted by anyone involved in The Gesualdo Six and / or at events they hold, including by, participants, staff, volunteers, or artists. There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is being abused or neglected, these include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries – or lack of medical attention when an injury is present.
- A person has belongings or money going missing.
- A person is not attending / no longer enjoying their sessions. You may notice that a participant in a workshop has been missing from sessions and is not responding to messages.
- Someone losing or gaining weight / an unkempt appearance.
- A change in the behaviour or confidence of a person.
- Self-harm.
- A fear of a particular group or individual.
- Someone may tell you / another person they are being abused – i.e. a disclosure.

Some examples of abuse include:

- Harassment of a participant because of their (perceived) disability or other protected characteristics.

- Not meeting the needs of the participant.
- A member intentionally striking another member.
- A staff member sends unwanted sexually explicit text messages to a participant.
- A participant threatens another participant with physical harm and persistently blames them for poor performance.

Abuse or neglect outside could be carried out by:

- A spouse, partner, or family member
- Friends, neighbours, acquaintances, or strangers
- People who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable
- Paid staff, professionals or volunteers providing care and support

Often the perpetrator is known to the adult and may be in a position of trust and/or power.

Disclosures

It is possible that during a project a child, young person or vulnerable adult might make a disclosure of abuse or of information that might be an indicator of possible abuse.

It is important that everyone knows how to respond appropriately to such disclosures.

They should follow these guidelines:

1. Stay calm.
2. Listen carefully to what is said and show that you are taking it seriously.
3. Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep it secret.
4. Tell the child/adult that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it.
5. Allow the child/adult to continue at their own pace.
6. Ask questions for clarification only. Avoid asking leading questions.
7. Reassure the child/adult that they have done the right thing in telling you.
8. Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared. When working in a school, this will be the teacher responsible for the group of the school's designated safeguarding lead. When working in other venues it will be the DSL for the Gesualdo 6.

9. Make no judgement about what you have heard.
10. Record what was said in writing as soon as possible. Use the child/adult's words, note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that you sign and date the record. If possible, it should be placed in an envelope and sealed. When in a school, the designated safeguarding lead will then take this record.
11. If you witness an incident of potential abuse in the course of your work for The Gesualdo Six you should alert the DSL as soon as possible.
12. Remember that whilst you may have been the first person a child or vulnerable adult has chosen to disclose to, it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for professional agencies following a referral from the school or from the DSL.

If the vulnerable person is in immediate danger or needs emergency medical attention – call the police and/or ambulance service.

Safeguarding Allegation Against a Member of the Foundation's Staff, Singers or Volunteers

Anyone should feel able to report concerns about professional conduct, in the knowledge that immunity from disciplinary action for "whistle blowing" in good faith is assured.

Any expression of concern regarding a charity team member must immediately be reported to the DSL who will in conference with the Safeguarding lead of the trustees decide on the most suitable course of action. This will later be reported to the board.

The reported problem will be immediately logged.

Confidentiality for all parties will be maintained at every stage of such an event. Please see below for named persons and contact details.

If abuse is found to have taken place any final resolution or decision will be taken in the best interest of the person who has suffered the abuse and the best interests of The Gesualdo Six.

Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with the constitution of The Gesualdo Six.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children, young people and adults at risk in England.

A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from: nspcc.org.uk/childprotection.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed and amended (if necessary) on an annual basis by the Board of Trustees. It will also be reviewed in response to changes in relevant legislation, good practice, or in response to an identified failing in its effectiveness.

Last Review Date: 26 November 2025

Next Review Date: 26 November 2026

Lead Safeguarding Trustee: Lizzy Holsgrove

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Hannah Pinney-Thomson (hpinnney@thegesualdosix.co.uk)