

Farnham Youth Choir

Code of Conduct for Volunteers (includes appendices on the role of Liaisons and Chaperones)

The purpose of the Code of Conduct for Volunteers is to set out standards of behaviour expected from volunteers of Farnham Youth Choir. All volunteers should ensure that they have read and comply with this Code of Conduct.

Volunteers should maintain the highest standards of behaviour in the performance of their duties by:

- Fulfilling their role as outlined in their written volunteer role description, or in accordance with instructions from the Operations Manager or a Trustee, to a satisfactory standard;
- Performing their volunteer role to the best of their ability in a safe, efficient and competent way;
- Following the charity's policies and procedures as well as any instructions or directions reasonably given to them;
- Acting honestly, responsibly and with integrity;
- Treating others with fairness, equality, dignity and respect;
- Raising concerns about possible wrongdoing witnessed by the volunteer in the course of the volunteer's role with Farnham Youth Choir with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or with a Trustee.
- Meeting time and task commitments and providing sufficient notice when they will not be available so that alternative arrangements can be made;
- Acting in a way that is in line with the purpose and values of the charity and that enhances the work of the charity;
- Communicating respectfully and honestly at all times;
- Observing safety procedures, including any obligations concerning the safety, health and welfare of other people in line with training provided to volunteers;
- Reporting any health and safety concerns;
- Directing any questions regarding Farnham Youth Choir's policies, procedures, support or supervision to the volunteer's supervisor;
- Addressing any issues or difficulties about any aspect of their role or how they are managed in line with Farnham Youth Choir's complaints procedures;
- Declaring any interests that may conflict with their role or the work of the charity (e.g. business interests or employment). If any doubt arises as to what constitutes a conflict of interest, volunteers may seek guidance from a trustee;
- Keeping confidential matters confidential;

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- Exercising caution and care with any documents, material or devices, containing confidential information and at the end of their involvement with Farnham Youth Choir returning any such documents or material in their possession;
- Seeking authorisation before communicating externally on behalf of Farnham Youth Choir;
- Maintaining an appropriate standard of dress and personal hygiene;
- Disclosing the fact that they have been charged with, or convicted of a criminal offence by prosecuting authorities (or given the benefit of the Probation of Offenders Act 1907 as amended) to the Chair of Trustees.[1] For the avoidance of doubt, volunteers are not required to disclose the fact or details of 'spent convictions' under the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016 (as amended) to Farnham Youth Choir, except in line with necessary protections under The Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 Act.

Volunteers are expected NOT to:

- Bring the charity into disrepute (including through the use of email, social media and other internet sites, engaging with media etc.);
- Seek or accept any gifts, rewards, benefits or hospitality in the course of their role;
- Engage in any activity that may cause physical or mental harm or distress to another person (such as verbal abuse, physical abuse, assault, bullying, or discrimination or harassment on the grounds of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community);
- Be affected by alcohol, drugs, or medication which will affect their abilities to carry out their duties and responsibilities while volunteering;
- Provide a false or misleading statement, declaration, document, record or claim in respect of [insert Charity name], its volunteers, employees or charity trustees;
- Engage in any activity that may damage property;
- Take unauthorised possession of property that does not belong to them.
- Engage in illegal activity while carrying out their role.
- Improperly disclose, during or after their involvement with Farnham Youth Choir ends, confidential information gained in the course of their role with Farnham Youth Choir.

In addition, the Trustees will:

- Act legally and properly - by acting with integrity, honesty, within the law and our governing document, and in the charity's best interests at all times;
- Create a safe space - in which everyone is encouraged and feels able to speak;

- Positively challenge each other, but avoid being confrontational;
- Instead, we ask open questions that will help us work together to explore/test an idea, or suggestion;
- Think, then speak - what can I say succinctly that will most help the Board?
- Feel able to ask the questions that need to be asked - there is no elephant in the room or, if there is, we're all working together to get it out;
- Act strategically - by thinking externally and longer term;
- Understand that operational delivery is the remit of the Operations Manager and the Artistic Director. Trustees must recognise that when they are acting operationally, they are volunteers, like every other volunteer;
- Focus on solutions - by talking about the past, only to learn from it, avoid talking about what we can't do and, instead, focus on what we could do;
- Welcome differing viewpoints - respect each other's right to hold a different opinion and recognise our own right to do so too;
- Don't make assumptions - about who someone is, but rather respond based on the facts/content of what they said;
- All contribute - the contribution of the young, old, or those with lived experience is different to that of the professionals but isn't less than;
- Everyone has something to give and something to learn;
- And no one person is allowed to dominate the conversation to the exclusion of others;
- Are slow to take offence – and quick to apologise, always;
- Give permission - to everyone else to remind us when we inadvertently stray from the above;
- Accept our responsibility – for ensuring that everyone is treated fairly, with respect and kept safe from harm.

Where a volunteer is found to be in breach of the standards outlined in this Code of Conduct or any of Farnham Youth Choir's other policies and procedures this may result in the volunteer's position being terminated. Notwithstanding the foregoing, volunteers should note that Farnham Youth Choir may terminate a volunteer's position without cause.

Volunteers acknowledge that no employment relationship is created in the context of their role with Farnham Youth Choir.

The board of charity trustees will review the Code of Conduct for Volunteers at 3-year intervals or as appropriate. The Operations Manager is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively. All other staff and volunteers, including charity trustees, are expected to facilitate this process.

Signed

Name

Date

[1] In seeking information from volunteers about criminal convictions (or the fact that they have been charged with an offence or given the benefit of the Probation of Offenders Act 1907 (as amended)) charities should comply with data protection law and be aware of the limitations on the circumstances in which it is possible to process such information (e.g. see section 55 of the Data Protection Act 2018). It is also important that charities have due regard to the provisions of the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016 (as amended). If a charity has any doubt about its rights and responsibilities in this regard, it should obtain legal advice.

See below for Appendices A & B: roles of the Chaperone and Liaison

Appendix A **The role of the Chaperone**

Chaperones should first and foremost carry out their role in line with the The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014, and in line with the training they have received from their local authority (in the majority of cases for FYC, that will be training provided by Surrey County Council).

In line with the guidance above, and for the avoidance of doubt, chaperones have the authority to end rehearsals if they are running over the allotted time or if singers are clearly tired, hungry or otherwise uncomfortable. FYC is committed to the safeguarding and welfare of its singers at all times.

Only as it does not conflict with the regulations and training referred to above, chaperones for the Senior Choir should:

- Understand the unique leadership system within FYC's Senior Choir, whereby Senior and Part leaders are responsible for ensuring that the choir are dressed appropriately, on time, with their hair to the expected standard and that discipline and good behaviour are modelled and encouraged;
- Enable the Senior and Part leaders to be the lead communicators with the rest of the choir.

Chaperones must hold a licence issued by Surrey County Council or Hampshire County Council. This includes an Enhanced DBS, which is renewed along with the Licence every three years. Chaperones must bring their ID card to concerts and wear black where possible.

Chaperones must read the running order in advance of the concert or event and arrive 10 mins before the children are called and make their presence known to the Lead Chaperone. The Lead Chaperone will brief all chaperones and introduce them to the qualified First Aider.

The Lead Chaperone will undertake a visual risk assessment of all areas used before the choir arrives. Chaperones must familiarise themselves with the venue: stage, dressing rooms, toilets and fire exits.

Chaperones will be given a running order for the day, ID badge, contact/medical details for the young people, an up to date photo sheet and register provided by the Operations Manager.

The Choir Liaison will sign the children in as they arrive. Each chaperone should also sign in the children in their group, using the register provided. They should document the arrival time of each child and the name of the adult due to collect them at the end of the concert. The Choir Liaison is responsible for introducing the young people to their chaperones.

Chaperones must introduce themselves to their group so the young people know to whom they should report.

Records of any injury or accident to a child must be fully recorded in the incident book, which will be in the First Aid bag managed by the FYC duty First Aider. A parent and the local authority must be informed at the earliest opportunity.

A chaperone is not allowed to undertake any other job whilst acting as a chaperone e.g. official first aider.

Chaperones should carry a mobile phone at all times. The contact numbers for the Lead Chaperone and Operations Manager will be on the contact sheets.

Chaperones oversee the whole choir but each chaperone will be allocated up to 12 young people that they will be specifically responsible for. If one of the choir steps out during the concert and the responsible chaperone doesn't see it or is busy with another incident another chaperone must make sure the child is spoken to and taken to the first aider who will be sitting at the front with the chaperones.

Chaperones must have the young people in their sight at all times other than when in a toilet. Even when the choir is performing, the chaperones must have a clear view. A chaperone should stand outside the toilets but make sure that no adults are in the block before your children enter. It is acceptable on occasion for one chaperone to stand outside the toilet whilst the others supervise your group when getting changed, for example. This scenario should be managed by the Lead Chaperone.

Breaks: If present at the place of performance or rehearsal for more than 4 hours but less than 8, the children must have a MINIMUM meal break of 45 minutes and another 15 minute break. If they are in the place of performance for more than 8 hours, they will need an additional 15 minute break. You must inform the Lead Chaperone if you think the children need an extra break for example in hot weather.

The children must not leave the premises whilst in your care.

The Chaperones must not leave the choir without arranging for another licensed chaperone to step in.

If a safeguarding issue arises that cannot be resolved immediately, then inform the Lead Chaperone and call the Operations Manager. Record any incidents in writing using the incident book in the first aid kit (not on your phone) and sign and date the report.

At the end of the performance the chaperones must ensure that the person previously nominated collects the young person. The departure time must be noted down in the register when the child leaves. Any children not collected at the allotted time should stay on the premises with two of the following: a chaperone, the Lead Chaperone or the choir liaison until they are collected. In the event that a child is not collected after a reasonable time (or no contact with the parent or carer has been possible), despite ringing our emergency contact numbers, then you should ask the venue staff to let you wait safely inside the building and call the police on 999.

Ensure that all registers, contact sheets, photo sheets and ID badges are returned to the Lead Chaperone.

The Lead Chaperone ensures that all registers, contact sheets, photo sheets and ID badges are returned to the Operations Manager.

The information held on the registers, contact sheets and photo sheets is confidential and should NOT be recorded in any way including on phones, computers etc.

The FYC Management and Musical Team are extremely grateful for the time, support and care provided to the young singers by our chaperones. It is a hugely important and rewarding role. Concerts simply couldn't take place without the dedication of our chaperones.

Appendix B **Choir Liaison role description**

Each choir has at least one Liaison, who acts as the first point of contact for members and parents during rehearsals and concert days. They are also the main point of contact for the Choir Director.

Liaison duties include:

- Arriving at least 10 mins before the rehearsal starts to ensure the room is set up correctly. Ensuring the room is tidy after the rehearsal (other parents can help with this).
- Checking in singers at the beginning of the rehearsal and ensuring that they are signed out and collected by an adult at the end.
- Ensuring that at least two DBS checked adults are at the rehearsal/concert venue whilst children are present.
- Liaisons should always sit either inside or outside the rehearsal room and be aware if any singers leave to go to the toilet, or for any other reason.

Drafted using guidance from <https://www.charityexcellence.co.uk/> and <https://www.charitiesregulator.ie/en>
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- Being on hand to assist the Choir Director if necessary.
- Updating the choir register weekly, using the FYC Google Drive.
- Communicating known absences to the Choir Director.
- Communicating with the Operations Manager.
- The liaison should have a mobile phone with them on rehearsal/concert days to respond to last minute absences and delays.
- The liaison should regularly check the FYC Liaison e-mail address (especially on rehearsal/concert days).
- The Operations Manager will e-mail the draft WB to liaisons to check (usually on a Thursday or Friday). Liaisons are welcome to suggest any changes before the WB is circulated the following Monday.

Safeguarding:

Liaisons must read the current [FYC Safeguarding policy](#) and the [Annexe to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023'](#) then confirm they have done so [here](#).

A key element of the Liaison role is in ensuring the safety of the children in our care.

- Be aware of all fire exits in the building.
- Ensure you know who the Duty First Aider is and where the First Aid kit is kept. Records of any injury or accident to a child must be fully recorded in the incident book, which will be in the First Aid bag managed by the FYC duty First Aider.
- If a safeguarding issue arises that cannot be resolved immediately, then call the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Liz Chapman - 07836 595585). Record any incidents in writing using the incident book in the first aid kit (not on your phone) and sign and date the report.
- Any children not collected at the allotted time should stay on the premises with two DBS checked adults. In the event that a child is not collected after a couple of hours, despite ringing our emergency contact numbers, then you should ask the venue staff to let you wait safely inside the building. Call the Operations Manager and then the police on 999. Never offer to give a child a lift home or remain on your own with a child.
- The information held on the registers, contact sheets, photo sheets are confidential and should NOT be recorded in any way including on phones, computers etc.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Operations Manager (info@fyc.org.uk).