



Child Chorister Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

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This policy and procedure applies to York Minster child choristers who attend St Peter's School and should be considered alongside the Chapter of York Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

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Introduction

This policy and procedure should be considered alongside the Chapter of York Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and applies to York Minster child choristers who attend St Peter's School.

Governance

The signatories to this policy and procedure are David Colthup, Chapter Steward, York Minster and Jeremy Walker, Head Master, St Peter's School, York.

Signatories

York Minster

Name: David Colthup, Chapter Steward



Signed:

Date: 9 February 2026

St Peter's School

Name: Jeremy Walker, Head Master



Signed:

Date: 9th February 2026

Definitions

Choristers: This term refers to York Minster child choristers, who are aged 8-13 years old, both male and female and attend St Peter's School York 8-13 site.

Singers: Adults who are employed by the Chapter of York to sing at York Minster and guest singers.

York Minster Music Department staff: Individuals employed by the Chapter of York who are involved in working with the choristers. These include:

- Director and Assistant Director of Music (Music Department Safeguarding Lead)
- Chaperones, who have day to day oversight and care of the choristers

Precentor: The Precentor is a Residentiary Canon and Executive Trustee of the Chapter of York, responsible for liturgy and music, and the York Minster Music Department sits within their sphere of responsibility.

Section 1: Key contacts

York Minster	
Canon Precentor Canon James Milne	Email: precentor@yorkminster.org
Director of Music Robert Sharpe	Email: roberts@yorkminster.org
Asst. Director of Music and YM Music Department Safeguarding Lead Ben Morris	Email: benm@yorkminster.org
Asst. Organist: Adam Wilson	Email: adamw@yorkminster.org
Choir Chaperone: Ellen Harvey	Email: ellenh@yorkminster.org
Choir Chaperone: Lynda Houlston	Email: lyndah@yorkminster.org
Additional Choir Chaperones: Alex Nightingale, Emi Bels, Ben Rice (school staff)	
YM Cathedral Safeguarding Officer Caroline Wood	Email: carolinew@yorkminster.org Tel: 07843 339980
YM Police (available 24/7) Sgt Kadir Turcan	Email: police@yorkminster.org Tel: 01904 557222
St Peter's School	
St Peter's Head Master Jeremy Walker Head Master's PA C McTurk	Email (PA): HeadMaster@stpetersyork.org.uk Tel (school office): 01904 527408
St Peter's 8-13 Head Phil Hardy	Email: p.hardy@stpetersyork.org.uk Tel (school office): 01904 527344

PA Hannah Littledale	Email (PA): h.littledale@stpetersyork.org.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead (St Peter's 2-18) Tracey Allain	Email: t.allain@stpetersyork.org.uk Tel: 01904 527313 Mobile: 07394 569786 Holiday contact number: 07394 569786
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (St Peter's 8-13) Julia Jones	Email: j.jones@stpetersyork.org.uk Tel: 01904 527416 Mobile: 07718 185686 Holiday contact number: 07718 185686
St Peter's Health & Safety Co-ordinator Sarah Taylor	Email: s.taylor@stpetersyork.org.uk Tel: 01904 527311 Mobile: 07872 031095
City of York Council	
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	Email: mash@york.gov.uk Tel: 01904 551900
City of York Emergency Duty Team	Email: edt@northyorks.gov.uk Tel: 0300 131 2131
City of York Designated Officer (LADO)	Email: lado@york.gov.uk Tel: 01904 551783 (voicemail)

Section 2: Key policies and procedures

York Minster Music Department staff must be familiar with St Peter's School policies and procedures in addition to those relevant to York Minster; and must read and be familiar with Department for Education (2025), *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, with a requirement to read Part 1.

St Peter's School policy, procedures and standards apply to choristers at all times. Day to day operations and processes are set out in the chorister handbook and in procedures available from YM Music Dept.

If you have a concern about the well-being and safeguarding of a chorister, the important thing is to report it immediately - key staff at York Minster and St Peter's School can assist you with responding to your concerns and will work together to ensure children are safeguarded.

NB. Please speak with St Peter's DSLs re: Low Level Concerns (inappropriate behaviours) responses; and information regarding mental well-being etc.

Urgent and immediate concerns must be reported to the police on 999.

St Peter's School

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

available at: <https://www.stpetersyork.org.uk/about-us/reports-policies/safeguarding>

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Visits and Trips Policy
- First Aid Policy

available at: [School Policies | St Peter's School](#)

- Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedure

available from the Head's PA - email: HeadMaster@stpetersyork.org.uk

York Minster

- Chapter of York safeguarding children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable to abuse and/or neglect: policy and procedure documents

available at: <https://yorkminster.org/about-us/safeguarding/>

National guidance

- DfE (2025), Keeping Children Safe in Education - full guidance, and Part 1, available at: [Keeping children safe in education 2025 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

City of York Safeguarding Children's Partnership guidance

Referral information and threshold guidance, available at [Report a concern about a child or young person – CYSCP \(saferchildrenyork.org.uk\)](#)

Section 3: Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding children is everyone's business, and all York Minster staff and volunteers are expected to follow the relevant safeguarding guidance, and to report concerns immediately. In addition there are individuals with key responsibilities in relation to safeguarding:

St Peter's School Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL/DDSL)

- St Peter's School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding leads (DDSL), in accordance with Government guidance.
- Further information on the role and responsibilities can be found in St Peter's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedure, and in the national Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.
- Contact details for the St Peter's School DSL and DDSLs can be found in the "key contacts" section of this document.

York Minster Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO)

York Minster employs a professional safeguarding adviser, reporting to Chapter. The CSO leads on developing and disseminating safeguarding policy and procedures, safeguarding training and individual casework, all in line with Church of England guidance.

York Minster Music Department Safeguarding Lead (MDSL)

ALL staff within York Minster Music Department have a role in the safeguarding of choristers. To support this, York Minster has a Music Department Safeguarding Lead (MDSL). The role of the MDSL is:

- To provide a point of contact within the York Minster Music Department in relation to the well-being and safeguarding of choristers
- To liaise, and share information appropriately and proportionately, with St Peter's School and York Minster safeguarding leads, regarding the well-being and safeguarding of individual choristers
- To ensure that any concerns regarding the well-being and safeguarding of York Minster choristers are dealt with effectively, in a timely manner, and in line with York Minster and St Peter's School guidance
- To undertake appropriate training commensurate with the role, as identified by St Peter's School and York Minster safeguarding leads
- To provide leadership within the York Minster Music Department in relation to the well-being and safeguarding of choristers, and to supervise the safeguarding activity of others within York Minster Music Department
- To provide a reporting point for York Minster Music Department colleagues to share concerns about the well-being and safeguarding of York Minster choristers, or the behaviour of a colleague
- To embed a code of appropriate behaviour, and respond effectively to concerns about the behaviour of colleagues
- To report as appropriate to safeguarding leads within St Peter's School and York Minster
- To observe good, proportionate record keeping in relation to safeguarding of choristers and pass records on appropriately to the designated staff

Section 4: Safeguarding York Minster child choristers

St Peter's School safeguarding policies and procedures will apply to the care of, and management of safeguarding concerns related to, choristers throughout their tenure at St Peter's School including whilst in transit to and onsite at York Minster, and whenever under the care of York Minster such as on trips and tours.

York Minster staff and volunteers must respond to any concerns related to choristers in line with York Minster Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. Any concerns related to the choristers identified at York Minster will be reported to St Peter's School DSL in line with the school procedures.

Safeguarding

- York Minster and St Peter's school must work together to ensure the safeguarding and well-being of choristers, and must be familiar with all relevant policies and procedures.
- All staff at York Minster and St Peter's School are responsible for the safeguarding of children.
- All staff at York Minster and St Peter's School must behave in an appropriate manner towards children, and in accordance with the relevant codes of behaviour, including online behaviours.
- All safeguarding concerns must be dealt with effectively and in a timely manner.
- While the choristers are on site at York Minster and under the care of York Minster such as when on trips and tours, the Chapter of York's safeguarding policies and procedures shall apply in addition to St Peter's School policies and procedures.
- York Minster and St Peter's school will make any necessary amendment to respective safeguarding policies to provide that this is the case, will make the policies available to each other, and keep each other informed of updates in a timely manner.

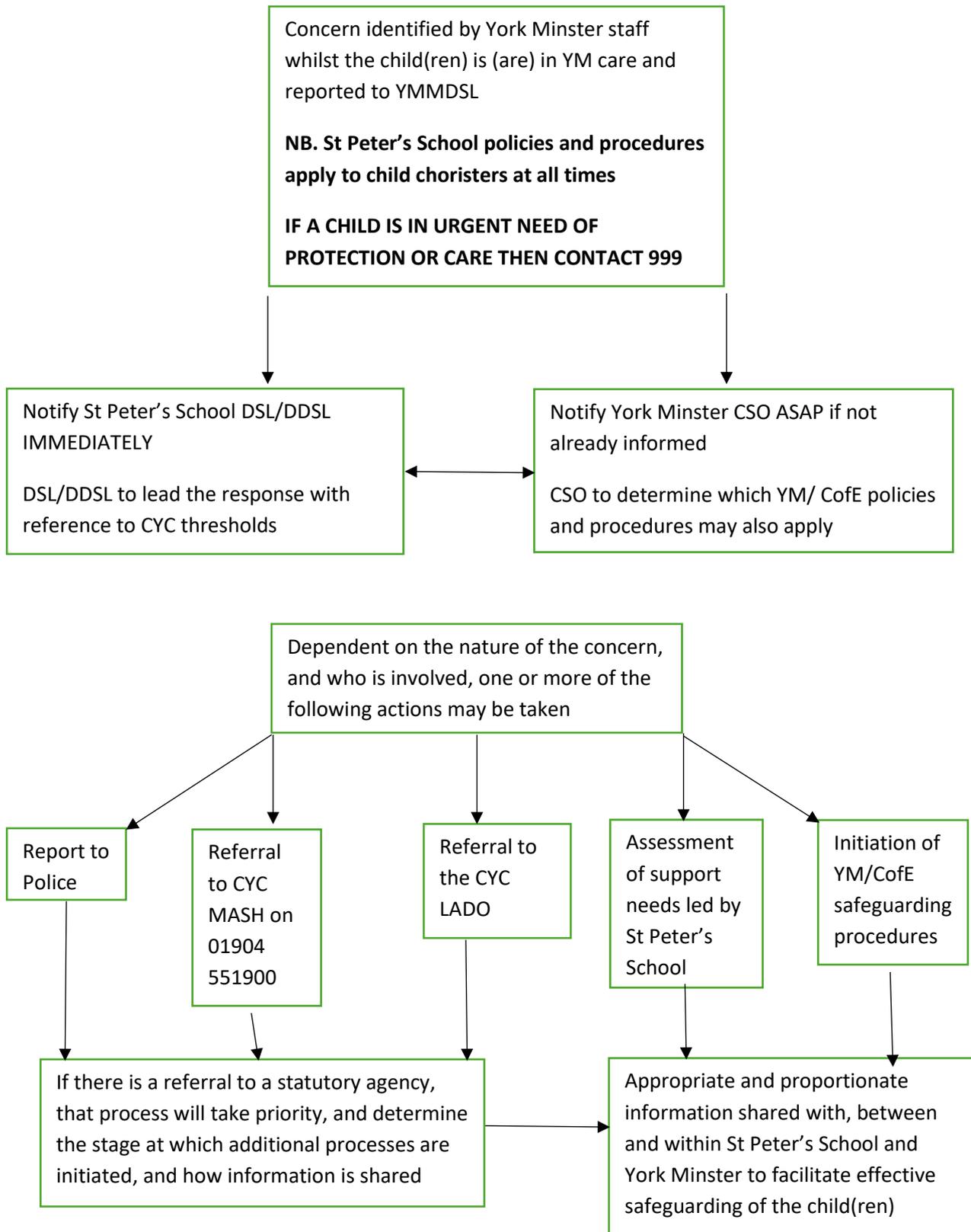
- York Minster Music Department staff must know and comply with the policies and procedures applicable to safeguarding of St Peter's School pupils whilst the choristers are in their care, including how to respond to disclosures.
- St Peter's School will pass on to York Minster CSO any concerns raised about the actions or behaviours of any staff or volunteers at York Minster.
- York Minster Music Department staff shall be provided with safeguarding training by St Peter's School and York Minster will ensure that all relevant staff attend such training.

Responding to safeguarding concerns - see the flowchart on the next page

- Where a safeguarding concern regarding an individual child/children is identified by St Peter's school, the DSL must liaise with York Minster Music Department and the York Minster CSO as appropriate and proportionate, and within GDPR guidelines, to ensure York Minster can safeguard the child, respond to their needs and initiate Church of England processes
- Where a safeguarding concern regarding an individual child/children is identified by York Minster, the YMMDSL must report this to the St Peter's School DSL and the York Minster CSO in order to ensure that York Minster and St Peter's School can safeguard the child and respond to their needs, agree and plan actions and co-ordinate activity
- In the absence of anyone else (e.g. the St Peter's School DSL, and/or the York Minster CSO), colleagues in YMMD must report concerns directly to **City of York Council Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** on **01904 551900** or mash@york.gov.uk.

Safeguarding York Minster child choristers flowchart

Procedure where a concern is identified by York Minster



Responding to low level concerns (see Appendix 4, <https://www.stpetersyork.org.uk/about-us/reports-policies/safeguarding> *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)*, p.107, states that “schools and colleges should ensure that they promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately”

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Any low-level concerns must be reported in the manner set out in the flowchart above.

Well-being

- It is acknowledged that, whilst rewarding, life as a chorister is demanding.
- York Minster Music Department will ensure that child choristers and their families are supported and provided with information on how to raise concerns about their child’s well-being
- The York Minster CSO and St Peter’s School DSL will meet regularly **at least twice a year** to discuss structural or strategic level issues.
- The relevant York Minster Music Department staff and St Peters music lead will meet regularly to discuss well-being of individual children (as appropriate), and the choristers as a whole. This will be particularly important at certain busy times of the year (e.g. Advent) or when specific activities are planned (e.g. choir trip)
- York Minster Music Department, St Peter’s School and chorister parent representatives will meet **twice a year** to liaise on general matters related to chorister well-being. Matters relating to individual children will not be discussed at this meeting.

Behaviour

- York Minster Music Department will manage the behaviour of child choristers in a manner consistent with St Peter’s School behaviour policy.

Anti-bullying

- York Minster Music Department will encourage kind, non-bullying behaviours at all times.
- York Minster Music Department will manage any reports or concerns regarding bullying of choristers in a manner consistent with St Peter’s School policy.

First aid, health and medicine

- York Minster Music Department must liaise with St Peter’s School re: health and medical needs of children; planned first aid and health interventions must be within St Peter’s School policies and procedures adapted as appropriate for York Minster.
- Health interventions must put the needs of the child first including emergencies on 999.
- Information re: a child’s specific needs, care, health and other plans, must be shared appropriately, proportionately and within parental consent guidelines to meet the child’s needs. **NB. If parents withhold consent, the St Peter’s School DSL and York Minster Music Department Safeguarding Lead will assess the situation.**

Section 5: Activities

Choir rehearsals

Choir rehearsals taking place at St Peter's School

All activities that take place at St Peter's School are under the oversight of the school and within the school's safeguarding and other policies and procedures.

Any York Minster staff leading or taking part in choir rehearsals on St Peter's School site must be DBS cleared and authorised to lead such activities on the school site, e.g.:

- The York Minster Director and Assistant Director of Music, along with the York Minster chaperones are cleared to work with York Minster choristers on St Peter's School site and are authorised to do so without the need of supervision by St Peter's School staff
- Should York Minster wish to introduce another professional into the rehearsal on St Peter's School site, they must inform the school and ensure that the activity takes place under the school's processes and practices for managing such activities

Any concerns that arise during the rehearsal must be reported directly and without delay to St Peter's School under the process outlined above.

Choir rehearsals taking place at York Minster

Whilst St Peter's School policies and procedures apply to York Minster choristers at all times, rehearsals taking place at York Minster are additionally subject to Chapter of York safeguarding and risk management policies and processes for a number of reasons, e.g.:

- St Peter's School is a "specified establishment"* where "regulated activity"* takes place with children. Anyone within the school who undertakes regulated activity is appropriately checked and/or supervised
- York Minster is not a "specified establishment" in terms of children's activities but "regulated activity" in relation to children takes place within York Minster. There will be individuals and groups present in York Minster who are not subject to the checks and policies that exist within a "specified establishment"

*[Department for Education \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk) – **Regulated activity in relation to children**

- York Minster is a different environment with differing risks associated with security, safeguarding and health and safety, all of which require site specific risk management plans, policies and procedures, e.g. rehearsal could take place within the Nave, the Quire or the Camera Cantorum.

The wider York Minster teams responsible for the floor of the Minster and all those working and visiting receive regular training in managing critical incidents, including evacuation – the choristers are included in the associated risk management plans.

York Minster staff working across St Peter's School and York Minster must be familiar with both sets of safeguarding policies and with any risk assessments and management plans that apply to the activity taking place and environment in which it takes place.

Chaperoning

Chaperones act in place of a parent/carer for the child(ren) under their care. They are expected to exercise the same care and control as a good parent might reasonably be expected to give, with a view to securing the child(ren)'s health, wellbeing and comfort.

The walk between school and York Minster takes place most afternoons in the school term and at other times to fit choir and service schedules. The children MUST be accompanied by no fewer than 3 x authorised people to chaperone the activity. This allows for an emergency situation where one chaperone may need to care for an individual child. The risk assessment and management plan for the walk between school and York Minster, **Chorister Rehearsals and Events at York Minster: Risk Assessment** can be requested from YM Music Dept.

Chaperones must maintain the shared register for choristers walking between school and York Minster for rehearsal/services, incl. listing adults present, and ensuring all children are accounted for at all stages; maintain a register for rehearsals and services outside of term and ensure that choristers are safely collected, as required, from the Minster at the end of their duties, in accordance with the procedures set out in the Chorister Handbook.

City of York Council Guidance for Chaperones can be found at: [child-chaperone-guidelines \(york.gov.uk\)](https://www.york.gov.uk/child-chaperone-guidelines)

Risk assessment

All activities involving York Minster choristers will be subject to a core risk assessment using St Peter's School policies, procedures and processes.

The York Minster Dir of Music will oversee the risk assessment of activities within York Minster, e.g. services (the task may be delegated to another appropriate York Minster Music Department colleague), in consultation with the appropriate staff at St Peter's School and York Minster.

All risk assessments must be "signed off" by the York Minster Precentor or Director or Assistant Director of Music, shared with the St Peter's School Health & Safety Manager, and the York Minster Police Sergeant, Health & Safety Manager and Safeguarding Officer, and stored appropriately.

Repeat activities (e.g. the walk from St Peter's School to York Minster) may be covered by an ongoing, risk assessment but must be reviewed periodically, at the start of each academic year, and where there are any significant changes to the routine, personnel or additional needs.

All new, irregular and unique activities must be subject to a risk assessment.

Choir trips

Any choir trips must be arranged using St Peter's School policy, procedures and processes, including risk assessments, overnight accommodation and staffing levels.

The York Minster Director of Music will oversee the planning of choir trips (the planning task may be delegated to another appropriate York Minster Music Department colleague), in consultation with the appropriate staff at St Peter's School.

All choir trips must be "signed off" by the York Minster Precentor or Director or Assistant Director of Music, shared with the St Peter's School Health & Safety Adviser, and the York Minster Police Sergeant and Cathedral Safeguarding Officer, and stored appropriately.

Section 6: Safer Recruitment and People Management

York Minster Music Department staff

York Minster Music Department staff will be employed by the Chapter of York using Safer Recruitment processes, compliant with [House of Bishops \(2021\), Safer Recruitment and People Management guidance](#):

All recruitment to York Minster Music Department will be done using the St Peter's School "**Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedure**" standards.

The Chapter of York shall make such changes as are necessary to its safeguarding policies and procedures and recruitment practices in order to meet St Peter's School standards.

Recruitment to some key posts in York Minster Music Department will include representation from St Peter's School on the selection panel.

Certain key York Minster clergy and staff will be listed on the St Peter's **Single Central Record**. These will include:

- The Canon Precentor
- The Succentor
- The Director of Music

- The Assistant Director of Music
- The Assistant Organist
- The Choir Chaperones

NB. This list is not exclusive and may be extended

In addition, York Minster Music Department **will ensure** that St Peter's School is provided with assurance that employment checks and required training have been completed satisfactorily, and that staff have signed that they have read and understood policy, procedure and guidance as outlined below. Evidence, including confirmation of staff signatures, must be submitted to Phoebe Robson:

phoeber@yorkminster.org who will collate and send to Sara Birch, PA to St Peter's School Chief Operating Officer. email: s.birch@stpetersyork.org.uk

Recruitment checks

The Chapter of York confirms that it will carry out the following checks on York Minster Music Department Staff before they can undertake any duties with the choristers:

- Verification of identity in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service Identity Checking Guidelines
- Confidential Declaration (CofE)
- Verification of appropriate qualifications
- Two satisfactory written references
- Verification of their right to work in the United Kingdom
- Verification that they are medically fit to carry out their role
- Employment history checked and any gaps in employment satisfactorily explained
- Other checks specified by St Peter's School from time to time in order for St Peter's School to comply with its statutory or regulatory obligations

Criminal Record, Disclosure and Barring checks (where eligible) and suitability:

- An enhanced disclosure certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS Certificate)
- A check of the Children's Barred List which confirms that the individual is not barred from working with children
- Where the person has lived outside of the United Kingdom for three months or more in the previous five years an overseas criminal records check or other appropriate check in the country or countries in question
- York Minster to provide St Peter's School with evidence (certificate number and date completed) that a satisfactory DBS Certificate has been seen for all York Minster Music Department staff before they commence working with the choristers so that St Peter's School may reasonably determine their suitability to work with children
- York Minster to provide St Peter's School with a copy of any DBS Certificate received for any member of York Minster Music Department staff that discloses any matter or information.
- York Minster agrees that it will provide St Peter's School with written confirmation that the checks have been completed before the individual can commence working with choristers.
- Where evidence of the DBS Certificate applied for in respect of an individual has not been received by St Peter's School by the date they are due to commence work with the choristers, St Peter's School policy is that the individual **will not be able to commence work**.

- York Minster undertakes to allow a person authorised by St Peter's School to inspect the records it retains in respect of Chorister Staff on reasonable notice for the purposes of confirming that the checks have been properly completed

York Minster undertakes to immediately notify St Peter's School if any York Minster Music Department staff:

- are or become barred from working with children or adults
- are the subject of a referral to the DBS or any successor body
- are arrested, charged or convicted of any criminal offence the circumstances of which could have an impact on the welfare of children or adults
- receive a police caution, reprimand or warning the circumstances of which could have an impact on the welfare of children or adults
- are subject to a formal child protection investigation, or any member of their household under section 47 of the Children Act 1989
- may reasonably be considered to pose a safeguarding risk to children or adults
- York Minster agrees to provide St Peter's School with all information relevant to the notification so that St Peter's School may determine whether the person who is the subject of the notification remains suitable to work with the Choristers

York Minster will assist St Peter's School with making any referral to the DBS that St Peter's School is required to make in respect of any York Minster Music Department staff.

York Minster agrees to take any steps as St Peter's School reasonably requires to enable St Peter's School to comply with its statutory or regulatory obligations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and, upon request, to provide evidence of completion.

Safeguarding training and knowledge

York Minster Music Department (YMMD) staff, including adult singers, must undertake safeguarding training in line with both St Peter's School, and York Minster/Church of England requirements. **ALL training certificates must be forwarded to: phoeber@yorkminster.org**

Church of England requirements

- All York Minster Music Department staff must undertake Church of England safeguarding training at Basic Awareness AND Foundation levels initially.
- York Minster Music Department staff in **leadership** positions must undertake Church of England safeguarding training at Leadership level.
- Church of England safeguarding training must be renewed at 3 year intervals, but only at the highest level previously taken (i.e. Foundation level for most YMMD staff; Leadership and Senior Leadership level for York Minster Music Department staff in leadership positions)
- Senior staff in York Minster Music Department may be required to undertake additional, non-core, safeguarding training commensurate with their roles and responsibilities within the Church (e.g. Safer Recruitment training)

St Peter's school requirements: Evidence of completion of ALL requirements listed below to be collated by York Minster and sent to s.birch@stpetersyork.org.uk

All York Minster Music Department staff must read and understand:

- **ANNUALLY** Keeping Children Safe in Education, Part 1 as a minimum; and, additional sections as directed by St Peter's DSL, available at: Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- **ANNUALLY** Must sign that they understand that ALL concerns regarding a chorister are reported to the St Peter's School Designated Safeguarding Lead AND the York Minster Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (this may be via the Music Department Safeguarding Leads – the Canon Precentor, the Director or Assistant Director of Music)

York Minster Music Department Safeguarding Leads and chaperones in addition to the above, must attend/view:

- **ANNUALLY** St Peter's School annual safeguarding update briefings
- **AS REQUIRED by** St Peters School DSL briefings and relevant training

York Minster Music Department Safeguarding Leads must also undertake/read:

- [Home Office Prevent Duty online training course 1 - Awareness](#)
- Any additional training as advised by the St Peter's School DSL
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025), Part 5 and annex B, available at: [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)