



## Different Voices. One Song. Safeguarding and Wellbeing Policy

Including Additional Safeguarding Arrangements for Participants Aged 16 and 17

Policy field	Details
Version	Draft v1.0 for committee adoption
Prepared for	Different Voices. One Song.
Date prepared	12 May 2026
Date adopted by committee	12 May 2026
Review date	By 31 December 2026, or sooner if the project changes, a concern arises, or under-18 participation increases
Safeguarding / Wellbeing Lead	Sheila Manzano
Deputy / second point of contact	Laura Crane

### Purpose of this document

This policy sets out how Different Voices. One Song. will help keep participants, volunteers, committee members and visitors safe from harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, neglect and avoidable wellbeing risks during the project. It also sets clear boundaries because the project has a mental health awareness purpose but is not a counselling, therapy, medical or crisis service.

This document has two parts: Part A applies to the whole project; Part B sets out additional arrangements for participants aged 16 and 17.

### Guidance context

- In safeguarding guidance for England, a child is generally treated as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.
- Organisations running activities for children and young people should obtain appropriate parent/carer consent and gather information needed to keep young people safe.
- Children’s personal data merits particular protection under UK GDPR, so the project will only collect information needed for safe delivery, consent, communication and reporting.
- The project will follow proportionate safeguarding practice for a short-term, volunteer-led community music project and will seek advice if any concern is outside the committee’s experience.

**Community. Understanding. Inclusion. Together.**

♥ Empathy

✿ Respect

🌱 Connection

🎵 Joy



## Part A - Safeguarding and Wellbeing Policy for the Whole Project

### 1. Scope

This policy applies to all committee members, volunteers, project leads, participants, musicians, creative contributors, guests and anyone involved in activities delivered under the name Different Voices. One Song.

The policy covers rehearsals, meetings, recording sessions, publicity activity, social media, media activity, travel or arrival/departure arrangements connected with the project, and any related public-facing activity.

### 2. Project boundaries

Different Voices. One Song. is a community music and mental health awareness project. It exists to support creativity, connection, confidence, inclusion and awareness. It is not a clinical service.

- The project does not provide counselling, therapy, diagnosis, medical advice, crisis intervention or mental health treatment.
- Participants will not be required to share personal stories, diagnoses, trauma, mental health experiences or neurodivergent experiences.
- Participants may choose to share experiences, but this must be voluntary, consent-led and handled sensitively.
- Project volunteers and committee members may listen, support, signpost and follow safeguarding procedures, but they must not act as counsellors, therapists or crisis workers.
- If someone appears to be at risk of harm, the project may need to share information with appropriate safeguarding or emergency services.

### 3. Core safeguarding principles

- Everyone has the right to take part in a safe, respectful and inclusive environment.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, but named leads are responsible for coordinating responses.
- Concerns should be taken seriously and recorded promptly.
- The project will work in a trauma-informed and neurodivergent-aware way, avoiding pressure, public disclosure or unnecessary personal questions.
- The project will share information only where necessary for safety, safeguarding, legal, insurance or consented project purposes.

**Community. Understanding. Inclusion. Together.**

♥ Empathy

🌸 Respect

🌱 Connection

🎵 Joy



#### 4. Named responsibilities

Role	Named person	Responsibility
Chair / Project Lead	Sheila Manzano	Overall project oversight, safe delivery, record keeping and safeguarding coordination.
Safeguarding / Wellbeing Lead	Sheila Manzano	First point of contact for safeguarding and wellbeing concerns; keeps concern records; seeks advice/escalates when needed.
Treasurer	Diane Davis	Ensures financial records and insurance payments are managed appropriately.
Secretary	Laura Crane	Supports registration, attendance, consent records and participant communication.
Deputy safeguarding contact	Laura Crane	Second point of contact if the concern involves Sheila or she is unavailable.

#### 5. Code of conduct

All committee members, volunteers and participants are expected to:

- treat everyone with dignity, kindness and respect;
- respect personal boundaries, confidentiality and consent choices;
- avoid discriminatory, intimidating, bullying, sexualised, abusive or humiliating behaviour;
- avoid pressuring anyone to disclose personal experiences or take part in media activity;
- not photograph, film, record or share another person without consent;
- follow reasonable safety guidance from project leads and venue staff;
- raise concerns promptly with the Safeguarding / Wellbeing Lead.





## 6. Registration, consent and attendance

- All participants must complete a participant registration form before taking part fully.
- The project will collect emergency contact details, access needs, relevant safety information and consent preferences.
- Attendance will be recorded at each rehearsal/session for safety, evaluation and grant reporting.
- Consent for photography, video, audio recording, public release, media and storytelling will be recorded.
- Participants can ask to update their consent choices at any time, although withdrawal may not always be possible once material has already been publicly released.

## 7. Wellbeing approach during sessions

- Participants may take breaks, step out, use a quiet space if available, or leave early if needed.
- Participants should not be put on the spot or pressured to perform, speak publicly or explain personal experiences.
- Project leads should offer clear instructions, predictable session structures and reasonable adjustments where possible.
- If someone becomes distressed, the immediate response should be calm, private where possible, and focused on support and signposting rather than probing for details.
- Detailed personal disclosures should not be explored in the group setting.

## 8. Responding to concerns

A safeguarding or wellbeing concern may include abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying, harassment, discrimination, self-harm concerns, suicidal thoughts, serious distress, unsafe behaviour, inappropriate conduct by an adult, or any situation where someone may be at risk of harm.

1. If there is immediate danger or a medical emergency, call 999.
2. If urgent health advice is needed but it is not an immediate emergency, advise the person to contact NHS 111, their GP, local crisis service or an appropriate support service.
3. Listen calmly. Do not promise absolute confidentiality. Explain that information may need to be shared if someone is at risk of harm.
4. Record the concern factually as soon as possible using the project concern/incident form.
5. Report the concern to the Safeguarding / Wellbeing Lead or deputy.
6. The Safeguarding / Wellbeing Lead will decide whether advice, parent/carer contact, local safeguarding referral, police, emergency services or other action is required.
7. Keep records secure and share only with people who need to know.

**Community. Understanding. Inclusion. Together.**



Empathy



Respect



Connection



Joy



## 9. Confidentiality and information sharing

The project will respect confidentiality wherever possible. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where there is a safeguarding concern, risk of harm, legal requirement, insurance requirement, or a need to seek professional advice to keep someone safe.

## 10. Media, photography, filming and recording

- The project is public-facing and may receive local, regional, national or online media interest.
- Participants must be told clearly that involvement may lead to recognition if they appear in photographs, video, interviews, radio, TV, public posts or online articles.
- The project will obtain consent before using identifiable images, video, voice, quotes, stories or interviews.
- Participants are not required to share personal stories publicly.
- For participants aged 16 or 17, parent/carer consent and young person consent will be required for media, photography, video, audio recording, interviews and storytelling.
- The project will respect people who do not want to be photographed, filmed or identified wherever reasonably possible.

## 11. Data protection and record keeping

- Participant information will be collected only where needed for administration, safety, safeguarding, consent, communication, evaluation, funder reporting or insurance purposes.
- Records will be held securely by the Chair / Project Lead using Microsoft OneDrive.
- Access will be limited to people who need the information for project delivery, safeguarding, safety, consent or reporting.
- Safeguarding concern records will be kept separately from general attendance or registration records.
- The project will not publish personal data, stories, images or recordings without appropriate consent.

## 12. Risk assessment and insurance

- The project will complete proportionate risk assessments for rehearsals, recording activity, venues, media activity and any public-facing activity.
- The project will arrange suitable insurance before rehearsals or recording activities begin.
- The committee will consider risks relating to accessibility, wellbeing, safeguarding, venue safety, travel/arrival/departure, equipment, refreshments, photography/filming and recording.

## 13. Safer volunteering and adult conduct

- The committee will consider whether any role requires a DBS check or additional safer recruitment step before that person works directly with participants aged 16 or 17 or adults at risk.
- Adults should avoid unnecessary one-to-one unsupervised situations with participants, especially 16- and 17-year-olds.

**Community. Understanding. Inclusion. Together.**



Empathy



Respect



Connection



Joy



- Communication with participants should be appropriate, project-related and, where possible, through agreed project channels.
- Any concern about the conduct of a volunteer, committee member, supplier, musician, photographer, media representative or other adult must be reported to the Safeguarding / Wellbeing Lead or deputy.

#### 14. Signposting

The project may signpost to support but must not attempt to provide clinical help. The following signposting should be available to participants:

Need	Suggested signpost
Immediate danger	Call 999
Urgent health or mental health advice	NHS 111 or GP
Samaritans	116 123, 24/7
Shout text support	Text SHOUT to 85258
Childline, for under-19s	0800 1111
Local crisis / safeguarding support	[INSERT LOCAL DETAILS / WEBSITE]

### Part B - Additional Safeguarding and Wellbeing Policy for Participants Aged 16 and 17

#### 15. Status of 16- and 17-year-old participants

Participants aged 16 or 17 are welcome to take part, but they will be treated as children/young people for safeguarding purposes because they are under 18. This means additional consent, supervision, communication and media safeguards apply.

#### 16. Parent/carer consent

- A participant aged 16 or 17 must provide their own consent and must also have parent/carer consent before taking part.
- Parent/carer consent must cover participation, emergency contact, relevant health/safety information, photography/video, audio recording, media/publicity and optional storytelling/interviews.
- If parent/carer consent is not provided, the young person may not take part in the relevant activity.
- If a young person declines consent for a media, photo, video, recording or storytelling activity, their decision must be respected even if parent/carer consent has been given.

#### 17. Supervision arrangements

- At least two responsible adults should be present during any session where 16- or 17-year-olds are taking part.
- A young person should not be left alone one-to-one with an adult in a closed or isolated space unless there is an immediate safety reason.

**Community. Understanding. Inclusion. Together.**

♥ Empathy

🌸 Respect

🌱 Connection

🎵 Joy



- If a private conversation is needed, it should take place where others can see but not necessarily hear, or with another appropriate adult nearby.
- Arrival and departure arrangements should be clear, including whether the young person leaves independently or is collected.

### 18. Communication with 16- and 17-year-olds

- Communication should be limited to project-related information and kept appropriate in tone and timing.
- Where possible, parent/carer contact details should be included in important communication about attendance, consent, media activity, rehearsals and recording.
- Private messaging should be avoided unless necessary for project administration or safeguarding, and records should be retained where appropriate.
- Adults should not use personal social media to build private relationships with young participants.

### 19. Media and public visibility for 16- and 17-year-olds

- The young person and their parent/carer must understand that the project may be shared publicly through social media, press, online articles, radio, TV, recording release and World Mental Health Day activity.
- Identifiable use of a 16- or 17-year-old's image, voice, name, quote, story or interview requires recorded consent from both the young person and parent/carer.
- The project should avoid publishing unnecessary identifying information about young people, such as school/college, home location, detailed diagnosis, family circumstances or sensitive personal history.
- A young person should never be pressured to share a mental health story, neurodivergent experience or personal disclosure for publicity.

### 20. Mental health, disclosure and distress involving 16- and 17-year-olds

- If a young person appears distressed, the project response should be calm, supportive and proportionate.
- Do not investigate, interrogate or ask leading questions. Listen, reassure and record facts.
- If a young person discloses abuse, neglect, exploitation, self-harm risk, suicidal thoughts or risk from another person, this must be treated as a safeguarding concern.
- The Safeguarding / Wellbeing Lead should consider whether to contact a parent/carer, seek safeguarding advice or contact emergency services. Parent/carer contact should not happen if doing so could increase risk to the young person.
- If there is immediate danger, call 999.

### 21. Transport, arrival and departure

- The project does not normally provide transport for participants.
- Adults involved in the project should not give lifts to young participants alone unless this has been specifically agreed in advance with parent/carer consent and another committee member is aware.

**Community. Understanding. Inclusion. Together.**

 Empathy
  Respect
  Connection
  Joy

Different Voices, One Song is a community project celebrating neurodivergent minds and building a more inclusive, compassionate world.



- Attendance sheets should record whether the young person attended and any unexpected absence or early departure should be followed up where appropriate.

## 22. Recording sessions and public events

- The same safeguarding standards apply at recording sessions, media calls, public events and rehearsals.
- The project should brief external adults, such as photographers, videographers, journalists, studio staff or musicians, that 16- and 17-year-olds may be present and that consent and safeguarding boundaries apply.
- Young people should know who to speak to if they feel uncomfortable, pressured or overwhelmed during recording or media activity.

## 23. Escalation and reporting for concerns about a young person

8. Immediate danger: call 999.
9. Safeguarding or welfare concern: report to Sheila Manzano as Safeguarding / Wellbeing Lead, or to the deputy if Sheila is unavailable or involved in the concern.
10. Record the concern factually, using the young person's own words where possible.
11. Do not promise confidentiality.
12. Seek advice from the appropriate local safeguarding route if the committee is unsure what to do.
13. Inform parent/carer where appropriate, unless this may increase risk or compromise safety.

## 24. Adoption and review

This policy shall be adopted by the committee of Different Voices. One Song. and reviewed by 31 December 2026, or earlier if the project changes, a safeguarding concern arises, the number of 16- and 17-year-old participants increases, or funders/insurers/venues require changes.

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair / Project Lead	Sheila Manzano		
Treasurer	Diane Noble		
Secretary / Participation Lead	Laura Crane		

Guidance sources used to inform this draft

- HM Government / Department for Education: Working Together to Safeguard Children - statutory guidance. A child is defined as anyone under 18.
- NSPCC: consent and safeguarding guidance for activities and events involving children and young people.
- Charity Commission: safeguarding duties and keeping people who come into contact with charities safe from harm.
- ICO: children's information and UK GDPR guidance; children's personal data merits particular protection.
- NCVO: safeguarding policy and procedure guidance for voluntary organisations.

**Community. Understanding. Inclusion. Together.**

