



Safeguarding Policy: Choristers and Probationers

Introduction and Purposes

- 1 The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mary the Less, Cambridge (LSM) is committed to safeguarding all those who attend worship and the other activities that are offered by the church. LSM follows the House of Bishops' 2017 safeguarding policy statement, Promoting a Safer Church (<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/cofe-policy-statement.pdf>) and the Diocese of Ely's policy and procedures 2017 (<https://www.elydiocese.org/safeguarding/policy-and-practice-guidance>). All participants agree to follow the good practice guide with children and young people.
- 2 The participation of children in the LSM Parish Choir is greatly welcomed and LSM has responsibility to ensure that they can participate in choir activities and public worship safely.
- 3 Subject to the Director of Music's assessment, discretion, and approval, children (aged 7-18) from schools across Cambridge may participate in the Parish Choir during worship and other musical activities as probationers and choristers.
- 4 Probationers are new recruits to the choir who train to be choristers. They have separate training sessions with the Director of Music, rehearsals with the choristers, and sing occasional services.
- 5 Choristers are senior members of the choir. They have rehearsals with the Director of Music and sing regularly at services.
- 6 The Director of Music is responsible for the music at Sunday Services, Festivals, weddings and funerals, and for overseeing all aspects of the musical life of the church, training the choristers and probationers, planning music schedules, and directing the Parish Choir.
- 7 The Assistant Organist is managed by the Director of Music and is responsible for taking over the duties of the Director of Music during their vacations or occasional absences, including the preparation and running of rehearsals.
- 8 The Director of Music and/or their Assistant Organist (or any other appointed person) are in attendance at rehearsals, services, and all other musical activities and are responsible for the safety of choristers and probationers.
- 9 The Director of Music and the Assistant Organist (or any other appointed person) are to go through the Diocesan child-protection procedures which include DBS checks and attendance on the appropriated Safeguarding Training Courses ministered by the Diocese.
- 10 All officers, staff, and volunteers in the church who, either supervised or unsupervised, on a frequent or infrequent basis, teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children or provide advice/guidance on physical, emotional or educational well-being to children, including all those ordained and ordinands, will also go through the child-protection procedures mentioned in Item 9 above.

Rehearsals

- 11 Rehearsals take place at the church every Friday during Cambridge School Term but including Christian annual festivals and feast days (e.g. Easter and Christmas), and begin according to the following schedule:

17:00	Probationers
17:30	Choristers
- 12 Probationers and choristers are asked to arrive at the church only 10 minutes before the beginning of their rehearsal session to report to the Director of Music and to collect their music in

the Choir Vestry. At the end of their respective rehearsal sessions at 18:15 and 19:00, probationers and choristers are asked to return their music to the Choir Vestry.

- 13 Choristers join the Parish Choir (adults) from 18:30 to 19:00.
- 14 There is a toilet breaks at 17:30 for which the toilets in the Parish Centre should be used, and a general break from 18:15 to 18:30.
- 15 During rehearsals, there is a single toilet in the vestry available to choristers, probationers, Director of Music, Assistant Organist, and clergy. Adult members of the choir are asked to use the toilets in the Parish Centre. Choristers and probationers are encouraged to use the toilets before or after rehearsals and services. In the event that there are a great number requiring the toilet during rehearsals, choristers and probationers are required to inform the Director of Music that they will use the toilets in the Parish Centre.
- 16 During the general break, probationers and choristers are allowed into the Parish Centre for refreshments, to use the toilets there, and to wander unsupervised in the enclosed garden, with the consent of their parents, except when parents or carers, who have expressly stated otherwise, are present to provide an alternative arrangement.
- 17 Probationers and choristers are not allowed to climb trees or other structures or buildings in the garden, and are required to use the space with consideration to others and especially to younger children.

High Mass and Other Services

- 18 Probationers and choristers are to arrive at 9:20 for a 9:30 rehearsal on Sunday mornings in preparation for High Mass at 10:30. The Director of Music will advise parents of the appropriate time to bring their children for other services and festivals.
- 19 LSM has neither dedicated facilities for children, nor staff to supervise or assist them, while they put on their cassocks and surplices. Probationers and choristers should be brought to the choir vestry by their parents or carers, who are expected to help their children into cassocks and surplices. Parents or carers, on their own and exclusive responsibility, may leave a child to do this unaccompanied.
- 20 At the end of the mass or service, the probationers and choristers return their music, cassock, and surplices to the vestry under the supervision of their parents or carers. They may be left to do this alone, on their parents' or carers' own and exclusiv responsibility.

Other Provisions

- 21 Visits, trips, tours, and concerts are planned by the Director of Music in consultation with the Secretary of the Music Fund and the vicar, and subject to a written consent from parents or carers.
- 22 Choristers are rewarded a small allowance for their attendance and may make use of a bursary scheme to help with music lessons, the rate of both being defined by the Music Fund and the PCC.
- 23 Written consent from parents or carers will be sought for the use and storage of photographs, the use of mobile phones, and social media interaction. Only the Director of Music, the Assistant Organist or an appointed person will be allowed to communicate directly with choristers and probationers if so consented.
- 24 The Director of Music will keep the register, contact details for the children, and consent forms in accordance to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- 25 This policy is to be given to all parents/supervisors of probationers and choristers. If they have any queries they may direct them, in the first instance, to Fr Robert Mackley (vicar@lsm.org.uk), to the Director of Music, Simon Jackson (directorofmusic@lsm.org.uk), or to the Parish Safeguarding Officer, Patricia Boulhosa (safeguarding@lsm.org.uk).
- 26 This policy will be reviewed in January 2023.