

Sansara Choir: Health and Safety Policy

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Sansara Designated First Aider

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Purpose and Scope

The aim of the policy is to:

- ensure that all reasonably practical steps are taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all persons taking part in Sansara's ("the Choir") activities,
- establish and maintain safe working procedures amongst staff, visitors and those taking part in the Choir's activities,
- make arrangements for ensuring safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances,
- develop safety awareness amongst staff and those using the Choir's services,
- formulate and implement effective procedures for use in the event of fire and other emergencies.

This policy is in addition to Health and Safety legislation and guidance. The maintenance of health and safety is the shared responsibility of the whole Choir community.

Statement of Intent

The Trustees and Managers of the Choir are committed to achieving a positive and effective health and safety culture throughout the activities of the Choir. They recognise and accept their duty as employers under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (s2/3/4 and 37) and supporting regulations. They aim for a level of health and safety excellence that is above the minimum compliance to legal standards.

The Trustees and Managers will meet their responsibility by ensuring:

- that strategic decision making supports Sansara to meet its legal obligations under health and safety legislation,
- to formulate and develop Health and Safety policy that sets direction for the Choir by communicating its values, beliefs and commitment to health and safety,
- so far as reasonably practicable, reduce to a minimum occupational sickness absence, accidents, injuries and loss, and promote good health every day,
- an organisational structure which allocates clear and accountable Health and Safety duties to those who have responsibilities to plan and implement the policy,

- provision of a safe and healthy place of work, with safe access to it,
- provision of safe and properly maintained Plant and Equipment,
- the safe storage of articles and substances,
- proper consultation with staff and those using the Choir's services on Health and Safety matters,
- that sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision of employees is given to ensure employees have an understanding of the principles of risk management, to enable them to identify the risks inherent, to competently carry out their duties and positively contribute to the Health and Safety of themselves and others and to avoid hazards in the workplace.

The content of this document will be made available to all staff and others as deemed appropriate and will be reviewed annually or sooner should Health and Safety legislation change.

Specific Responsibilities

Trustees and Managers

- The Trustees and Managers have ultimate responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of their employees and those using the Choir's services, and to ensure the Choir operates in a safe environment.
- The Trustees and Managers review and revise the Policy as necessary.
- The Trustees and Managers will see that staff and those using the Choir's services are given sufficient information to understand the nature of and avoid hazards, and to have due regard for their own Health and Safety and that of others.
- Health and Safety will be a regular Agenda item for Trustees' meetings.

Responsibilities of the Designated Trustee (DT)

The DT is responsible for ensuring the effective development and implementation of the general policy statement and achievement of the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring, review and auditing of preventative and protective measures of the management system on Health and Safety.

The DT and Managers are:

- to be available to the nominated Health and Safety contacts to discuss and seek to resolve Health and Safety problems and to co-operate with them in carrying out inspections of the workplace and to ensure an up-to-date of all Safety Contacts,
- to judge whether the steps which need to be taken to remove hazards are "reasonably practical" and lie within their executive authority and take action as appropriate,
- to ensure hazards are identified, recorded and communicated to the Trustees,
- to receive written reports from Safety Contacts following an inspection of the workplace and to reply and discuss points made with the relevant person(s),

- to monitor standards and the achievement of the annual Health and Safety plan and to provide an annual report on Health and Safety matters to the Trustees,
- to ensure the Choir's Health and Safety Policy is read by all employees and made available for interested parties,
- to take note of Health and Safety Bulletins and Instructions issued from time to time by the Health and Safety Executive or other statutory bodies,
- to ensure all Health and Safety Bulletins and other safety advice are circulated throughout the establishment as appropriate,
- to ensure all accidents, assaults, dangerous occurrences, occupational ill health, near misses and unplanned events are investigated, recorded and prompt action is taken to eliminate or control the immediate and underlying causes,
- to ensure all staff have access to competent advice on Health and Safety matters,
- to ensure periodic reviews of accident investigation reports are undertaken to check that appropriate actions have been implemented,
- to set a good example with regards to Health and Safety.

Managers

Choir Managers will have the responsibilities set out below.

- To be responsible for overview and management of all health and safety matters on site and to report to the Trustees, DT and Local Authority on matters relating to health and safety.
- To eliminate potential hazards and health risks and monitor that Health and Safety audits that take place.
- To ensure that adequate signing is in place and information on fire procedures is available to visitors.
- To ensure all Fire Action posters are up-to-date and visibly distributed around the sites used by the Choir unless provided already by the site owners.
- To take note of Health and Safety Bulletins and Instructions issued from time to time by the local authority or other statutory bodies.
- To ensure that new staff receive essential Health and Safety Induction as necessary.
- To ensure the Trustees' Health and Safety Policy is read by all employees and made available for interested parties.
- Set a good example with regards to Health and Safety.

The Choir Managers are to ensure that all premises used by the Choir meet the standards of this policy. They should ensure that regular hire sites have their own Health and Safety standards which are demonstrably met. In particular:

Fire Safety

- ensure that action has been taken to rectify any reported hazards or defects notified to the site owners and to ensure that adequate signing is in place with information on fire procedures.

Responsibilities of all staff members

All Choir staff have the day to day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice. They will be expected to deal with matters as they arise and to liaise with the Choir Managers.

All employees are to understand that they have a duty to take reasonable care for the Health and Safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work. They will ensure that:

- they familiarise themselves with the relevant Health and Safety arrangements of the Choir,
- they co-operate so far as is necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with as required by Health and Safety key personnel and the Trustees,
- they do not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of Health and Safety, safety and welfare,
- they are aware that failure to comply with the codes of practice for Health and Safety either by their actions or inactions may result in further investigation by the local council and may even result in criminal prosecution,
- they report any accident, dangerous occurrence, incident or near miss to the Choir Managers or DT so it can be reported onto the Council's reporting system
- when any member of staff notices an unsafe situation, the facts should be reported to the officials of the organisation in which the Choir is operating so they may take necessary steps to ensure that all persons are kept away from the area/equipment until the danger is removed/resolved.

As part of their day to day duties they will:

- ensure that they have addressed any potential emergencies and, where necessary, familiarise those using Sansara services with the procedures,
- give clear instructions and warnings as often as may be necessary,
- set an example by using safe working methods and abiding by any safety rules,
- ensure staff and those using the Choir's services wear personal protection when required,
- make recommendations for additions/improvements where problems or risks are identified,
- ensure all plant, machinery and equipment in the areas they work is adequately guarded and in good, safe, working order,
- report any health and safety concerns to the Choir Managers and Designated Trustee.

Visitors will be informed of safety procedures, e.g. fire exits.

Risk assessment

The Choir Managers will ensure that a risk survey of the premises, methods of work and all Choir sponsored activities is conducted annually (or more frequently if necessary). This survey will identify all defects and deficiencies, together with the necessary remedial action or risk control measures. The results of each survey will be reported to the Trustees.

Risk assessment records or policies exist for:

- Fire Safety/Evacuation Procedures
- First Aid
- Insurance policy
- Intruders on Site
- Managing Medicine and Medical Needs

Those using Sansara services are expected to:

- exercise personal responsibility for the safety of themselves and others,
- observe standards of dress consistent with safety and/or hygiene,
- follow the safety rules of the Choir and in particular the instructions of staff given in an emergency,
- use and not wilfully misuse, neglect or interfere with things provided for their safety.

Head Injuries

- In the case of injury to a child or vulnerable adult, parents/guardians are informed of a head injury by letter and phone call.
- Depending on the severity of the injury, the Designated First Aider will take over and/or an ambulance will be called.

HIV

- No person must treat an individual who is bleeding, without protective gloves.
- Protective gloves are stored in all first aid kits.
- Sponges and water buckets must never be used for first aid to avoid the risk of HIV contamination.

Emergency telephone number for staff, children and vulnerable adults using the Choir's services

A list of emergency telephone numbers for parents/guardians and next of kin for staff should be maintained by the Staff.

Parents/guardians are expected to:

- Support the Choir in any health and safety matters reported to them,
- Ensure individuals come to the Choir sessions in suitable clothing and footwear, consistent with safety and hygiene.

Fire Evacuation Procedures

- All staff and those using the Choir's services are expected to be familiar with the Choir's Fire Evacuation procedures.

- Staff are expected to familiarise themselves with where the fire extinguishers are located.

First Aid and Reporting Accidents/Incidents/Injuries/Near Misses

- A Risk Assessment to ensure that there is adequate First Aid provision is reviewed annually.
- In the event of an ambulance being called for an emergency, the DT will be notified.

Administration of Medicines to children/vulnerable adults

- The administration of medicines is covered in the sections below.
- Medicines should be kept in a secure cupboard or refrigerator in the premises used by the Choir.
- Staff should record the time medication is given and sign the medicines register.
- Parents/guardians give written consent to authorise staff to administer medication.
- No medication can be administered by staff without such authorisation.
- No child may carry prescribed medicines in premises used by the Choir.
- Parents/guardians may come into premises used by the Choir to administer prescribed medicine (if they have received permission from the Artistic Director).
- Exceptions will be when a child/vulnerable adult suffers from a condition, which requires on-going professional personal care.
- Forms should be completed by parents/guardians on admission or when the need arises.

Chronic Conditions in children/vulnerable adults

- Information about children and vulnerable adults suffering from other chronic conditions is passed to staff. If the information is confidential parents/guardians will disclose it on a 'need to know' basis.

Regular medication required for children or vulnerable adults

- In the case of regular medication being required for a child or vulnerable adult, parents/guardians must bring medicine to Choir staff. It must be clearly named and have written instructions for its administration.
- No medicine prescribed or otherwise, will be given under any circumstances by a member of the staff.

Epilepsy

- Staff should be made aware of individuals who are epileptic and the action to be taken if a fit occurs.
- An ambulance should be called immediately in the case of serious asthma, epileptic fits or any condition that is causing serious concern or is beyond the scope of day-to-day First Aid.

FIRST AID

- The number of certified First-Aiders will not, at any time, be less than the number required by law.
- A list of current First-Aiders must be displayed at Choir events.

- At the discretion of the Trustees staff will be given such training in first aid techniques as is required to give them a basic, minimum level of competence.
- First aid kits MUST be available at all Choir activities.
- Disposable latex gloves are available, and must be used at all times when dealing with blood and bodily fluids. Separate first aid waste bins are available for the disposal of soiled dressings and used gloves to avoid cross-contamination.
- If in doubt regarding the severity of an injury a second opinion should be sought from the designated first-aiders.

The person responsible for First Aid will

- Take charge of the situation where personal injury or illness has occurred and where further medical help is needed. This measure should be undertaken by the nearest and/or other members of staff, including onlookers directed away from the location of the incident.
- Record all accidents requiring medical attention in the accident log and submit electronic reports to the appropriate Local Authority.
- Ensure that adequate first aid supplies are provided.
- Maintain the supply of first aid equipment.
- Ensure that all staff and those using the Choir's services know who and where the First-Aiders are.
- Make sure no attempt to move an injured person should be made until appropriate examination and assessment have been completed. Best practice suggests the person who witnessed the accident should call for an ambulance.
- Make sure all serious injuries should be transported to hospital by ambulance as the patient's condition could worsen. In the case of a child/vulnerable adult, a responsible adult should accompany if the parent/guardian cannot be contacted in time.
- Know that in cases of serious injury, responsibility of the First-Aider or Appointed person ends when the patient is handed over to medical care.
- Realise that fatalities or major injuries must be reported immediately by telephone to the Corporate Health and Safety Unit and to the Chair of Trustees.
- Ensure that in the event of a fatal or serious injury, nothing at the site of the accident must be moved, except for helping the injured and moving bystanders, until an examination has been carried out.
- Remember that witnesses will be required to make a full written account of the incident. Therefore dates, times, witnesses, circumstances must be written down as soon as possible so that vital information is not lost.

Food and drink

- Staff and those using the Choir's services must wash their hands with warm, soapy water before handling food.
- All foodstuffs should be stored in suitable containers in clean cupboards out of the reach of vermin, flies, etc. Contaminated foodstuffs should be destroyed.
- Food waste disposal bins or bags must be emptied immediately after cookery sessions. Waste food from the should be disposed of in the provided bins or bags.
- The floor should be kept clean and any liquids mopped up as soon as possible.

FIRE PROCEDURES

- All members of staff must ensure that they know the fire procedures in their location.
- Staff must ensure that all those using the Choir's services know the fire procedures.
- Where possible, windows and doors should be closed by the last person leaving the room.
- In the event of a real fire the alarm should be activated from the nearest alarm point by breaking the glass and pressing if necessary (note: most churches do not have fire alarms).
- The Artistic Director is responsible for ensuring that everybody has left the building.
- Staff members are responsible for accounting for all children and vulnerable adults who are present for that session.
- Staff should be aware of alternative routes out of the site where they are working in the case of a route being blocked by fire.
- Staff should tell all those using the Choir's services where the assembly point is.
- Absent individuals must be reported to the local site manager.
- The fire evacuation is timed and a record is kept of the time.
- Staff must not fight fires unless they have been trained in the use of fire-fighting equipment.
- Staff know that the nearest emergency exit should be used in the case of an emergency.
- A head count is taken after each evacuation of the building and all fire escape routes must be kept free of all obstructions and flammable materials.
- Fire exit doors must be unobstructed at all times.
- All staff must have telephones and instructions for calling the emergency services should be easily accessible.

Strangers seeking access

All members of staff should be ready to offer help to a stranger in the building courteously, but if there is any sign of antipathy, should immediately seek help.

Risk Assessments

Health and Safety risks arising from the Choir's activities will be assessed by using the approved Risk Assessment format.

TRAINING

The Artistic Director is responsible for measuring the safety performance of staff and for identifying any training needs. They will ensure that training is extended where necessary to volunteer workers.

APPENDIX 1

Emergency procedures

This appendix covers in summary major emergencies involving actual or threatened harm to members of the Choir communities and also more routine emergencies affecting the normal running and business continuity of the Choir.

General Principles

- When an incident happens decide whether it requires the special Incident Management Arrangements in this plan or whether it can be managed by staff fulfilling their normal responsibilities and referring to the procedures and contacts signposted in this plan.
- Consider whether the incident is so major that the response should be led by the Police or Local Authority rather than by Choir staff.
- Decide who needs to be informed, how quickly and by whom.
- Keep all contact details of children, vulnerable adults, parents and carers, staff, trustees, local authority personnel, partner agencies and service providers up to date in the normal contact lists held by the Choir. Use this plan to signpost those contacts lists and ensure their resilience and accessibility.
- Ensure that everyone keeps a log of their actions in responding to the incident.