



AOTOS Safeguarding Policy

The words 'child', 'children' and 'young people' are used interchangeably to mean any person under 25 years.

1. Background

AOTOS is an educational charity with objects to advance education in the teaching of singing and connected subjects primarily by:

1. bringing together teachers of singing and other interested persons at annual conferences and regional events
2. providing, or assisting in the provision of, teacher training initiatives and courses

("AOTOS Activities")

AOTOS is a membership charity. Membership is open to any person or organisation who is concerned with the education, training and use of the singing voice.

AOTOS is essentially an organisation directed at adults professionals (i.e. teachers of singing) but it is recognised that many of its members work with children and young people who are often involved in demonstrations during the course of AOTOS' Activities.

○ 2. Policy Statement

AOTOS believes that it is unacceptable for a child, young person and anyone else coming into contact with AOTOS during the course of AOTOS Activities including, but not limited to, Charity Trustees, AOTOS members, staff, volunteers and contractors (referred generally in the remainder of this policy as "Persons in Contact") to experience abuse of any kind.

AOTOS recognises its responsibility to safeguard all Persons in Contact and to promote their welfare commitment to practice which protects them.

2.1 AOTOS recognises that:

- all Persons in Contact, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- the welfare of Persons in Contact, in particular children or young people, is paramount
- the importance of working in partnership with children and young people, their parents and guardians, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

2.2 The purpose of this policy is:

- to ensure that there is a safe environment for all Persons in Contact who are involved with/present at AOTOS Activities
- to provide Charity Trustees, members, volunteers, staff and contractors with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a Person in Contact may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm or abuse. It is recognised that many AOTOS members will be subject to safeguarding policies and procedures in relation to their professional career.

This “AOTOS policy” and related policies and procedures as referred to at paragraph 2.4 below (“AOTOS Policies”), relates primarily to AOTOS Activities but it may be used to enhance or supplement any other safeguarding policies and procedures to which an AOTOS member may be subject. If an AOTOS member has any queries as to which policy and procedures might apply to him/her/them (or if there are any inconsistencies between the AOTOS Policies and such other policies and procedures to which he/she/they are or might be subject), he/she/they should seek immediate clarification from the AOTOS Designated Safeguarding Lead (see below)

2.3 This policy applies to all Charity Trustees, AOTOS members, volunteers, staff and contractors of AOTOS.

2.4 We will seek to safeguard Persons in Contact by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead; a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and a Lead Trustee for Safeguarding (see the AOTOS Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Role Description and Procedures document);
- adopting a Code of Conduct for Charity Trustees, volunteers (including AOTOS members when volunteering in relation to AOTOS Activities), staff and contractors which sets out AOTOS’ culture and how such persons should behave
- adopting a Members’ Code of Ethics
- adopting an Online Safety policy
- adopting a Facebook Code of Conduct for members
- adopting an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy
- adopting an Anti-Bullying policy for trustees; staff, volunteers and contractors
- adopting a Whistleblowing policy for trustees, staff, volunteers and contractors
- adopting a Recruitment policy for the recruitment of trustees, staff, volunteers and contractors and ensuring all necessary and eligible safety checks are made (ie Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks) and such other relevant checks for persons from overseas)
- adopting a policy for the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders based on the [sample policy from the DBS](#)
- sharing information about safeguarding with all visitors to AOTOS Activities, including parents, children and young people
- sharing information about safeguarding concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving presenters, parents and children and young people appropriately
- providing effective support for less experienced AOTOS members through supervision, support and training information
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for Persons in Contact by applying health and safety measures, first aid, fire safety and digital safety policies in accordance with law and regulatory guidance (see the AOTOS Health and Safety Policy and the Covid Risk Assessment)
- recording and securing information securely and in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance (see the AOTOS Privacy Policy)
- adopting a clear procedure for reporting safeguarding incidents and alleged breaches of any of the AOTOS Policies, including but not limited to referrals in the case of suspected abuse of a child or young person (“Safeguarding Incident”).

○ **3. Procedures for reporting alleged Safeguarding Incidents**

All alleged Safeguarding Incidents should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (“DSL”). If the DSL is not available, then the allegation should be passed to the Deputy

Safeguarding Lead or the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding. The officer contacted will record a note of the reported incident and will advise the Trustees, in accordance with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Role Description and Procedures document referred to at paragraph 2.4 above, on the appropriate action that needs to be taken

If the allegation concerned relates to the Designated Safeguarding Lead then this should be reported to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead or to another member of the Safeguarding Team.

■ **Record keeping**

Any AOTOS trustee, staff member, volunteer, contractor, member or any other Person in Contact, who is notified of or receives information regarding an alleged Safeguarding Incident, whether or not relating to an AOTOS Activity, should make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event into context, and giving the date, time and location. All records should be dated and signed.

- All handwritten records should be retained, even if they are subsequently typed up in a more formal report.
- Written records of concerns concerning children and young people should be kept securely in a secure place even where there is no need to make a referral immediately.
- All records relating to safeguarding child protection concerns involving children and young people should be kept in a secure place and will remain confidential.

○ **4. Reporting actual or alleged Safeguarding Incidents to the Charity Commission as a serious incident**

The Trustees have a duty to report to the Charity Commission as a serious incident any actual or alleged Safeguarding Incident that has “resulted in or risks significant harm to beneficiaries and other people who come into contact with the charity through its work.”

Further details of what, when and how to report are set out in the Charity Commission’s guidance (link below):

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

○ **5. Availability of Safeguarding Policy**

This AOTOS Policy will be made available to all Persons in Contact and also members of the public by posting it on the AOTOS website or by such other means as the Trustees shall from time to time determine.

○ **6. Training for Members**

All Charity Trustees and AOTOS Members are advised to obtain additional appropriate safeguarding training on a regular basis and to keep AOTOS informed accordingly.

○ **7. Review**

This AOTOS Policy (and its implementation and effectiveness) will be reviewed bi-annually or earlier if required and updated/amended as appropriate.

○ **8. This policy**

In preparing this policy and the AOTOS Policies referred to herein, the Trustees have had regard to, amongst other things, the following:

- the Charity Commission’s guidance on safeguarding (link below); and
- the relevant sections of the Charity Governance Code (again, link below).

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

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■ **Contact details**

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Lead Trustee for Safeguarding: Chair

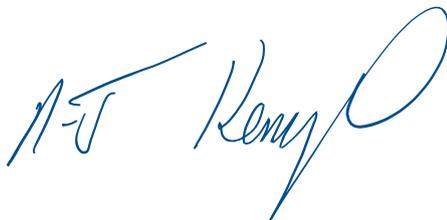
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Signed:



Nicola-Jane Kemp
AOTOS Chair

on behalf of the Association of Teachers of Singing

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