



Code of Conduct

Last updated November 2024

This document sets out the conduct that we expect of everyone involved in Steel City Choristers. As well as some general principles that apply to everyone, there are separate sections for adult volunteers, paid workers, Clerks, Choristers and Trustees.

Any queries regarding this Code of Conduct should be directed to enquiries@steelcitychoristers.org.uk, or in person to the Director of Music or one of the Trustees.

1. General Principles

1.1 Everyone involved in Steel City Choristers should be mindful of the organisation's core values, which can be remembered by the acronym **CARE**:

Community – we value, trust, and empower our people

Ambition – we aim for excellence and pursue innovation

Resilience – we work hard, accepting and learning from our mistakes

Enjoyment – we have fun doing what we do together

1.2 These values should underpin everything we do, and be reflected in everyone's behaviour. This means that everyone involved in Steel City Choristers should:

- cherish our community, never taking our singers, volunteers or audiences for granted
- have high expectations of the standard of our music making, our operational practice, and our general behaviour towards each other
- be realistic about the challenges involved in running a choir and committed to working constructively together to find a way through them, forgiving and avoiding blame for mistakes
- treat each other as whole people, recognising that everyone has a choice as to whether to be involved, and that they will only stay with us if they enjoy their experience.

1.3 It is important that everyone is aware of other key policies that are relevant to their positions: these are indicated as relevant throughout this Code of Conduct.

- In particular, the [Safeguarding Policy](#) is of great importance. Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility, and it is essential that all those who have contact with children in their role with Steel City Choristers, and all Trustees, are familiar with this.
 - Another policy that has universal importance is the **Health and Safety Policy**.
- 1.4 All safeguarding concerns should be reported in line with our Safeguarding Policy. If you have any other concern about someone's conduct (including your own), you should report it to a Trustee or to the Director of Music as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the Trustee or Director of Music will bring your concern to the attention of the Board of Trustees.

2. Conduct for Volunteers

- 2.1 All volunteers should work together and with other members of the choir community in a harmonious way, having regard at all times to the values of Steel City Choristers set out in section 1.1 above.
- 2.2 All volunteers who come into contact with children must be aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. Those with responsibility for looking after children must undertake appropriate safeguarding training, and DBS checks are necessary for all those with leading roles. This is detailed further in the [Safeguarding Policy](#).
- 2.3 All volunteers should be clear about who coordinates their activity, and to whom they should report. This will either be a Trustee, or another officer appointed by the Trustees.
- 2.4 Volunteers should be aware that ultimate responsibility for safeguarding, health and safety, finance, information governance, and all other areas of Steel City Choristers' operation, lies with the Trustees, and therefore that the nature of volunteer roles may change occasionally in line with decisions made by the Trustees.
- 2.5 Volunteers may come into contact with information about individuals as part of their role, including sometimes sensitive information (e.g. chaperones should be aware of relevant medical conditions of choristers). This information **must** be treated with appropriate confidentiality as per the [Privacy Policy](#); in particular, it should not be shared beyond those who need to be aware of it, or be used for any other purpose.
- 2.6 One particular aspect of information confidentiality to be noted is that, whenever emailing multiple external people on Steel City Choristers business (whether from a Steel City Choristers account or not), any external email addresses must be blind copied ("Bcc") rather than included in the main "To" or "Cc" fields. For the purposes of this clause, "external" email addresses includes any non-Steel City Choristers addresses unless permission has been gained to share that email address more widely.

- 2.7 Chaperones should be familiar with the **Chaperone Policy** and abide by this at all times. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be the main point of contact for chaperones. A rota for chaperoning duties will be organised by the DSL, and any changes to this (e.g. a chaperone not being able to fulfil their expected duties) should be notified to the DSL at the earliest opportunity.

3. Conduct for Paid Workers

- 3.1 Paid workers are expected to follow all of the standards of behaviour in Section 2 (for volunteers), in addition to the following.
- 3.2 Steel City Choristers does not employ any staff. It pays freelance professionals on both a regular (e.g. Director of Music and Singing Teacher) and occasional (e.g. accompanists for individual events) basis. The nature and scope of this work, including the rate of pay, will always be agreed in advance with a relevant Trustee. In some cases these agreements may be delegated; for example to the Director of Music when appointing accompanists.
- 3.3 The Director of Music holds a unique position amongst paid workers, in that they regularly lead sessions (e.g. rehearsals) and for the duration of those sessions hold responsibility for safeguarding and other areas of health and safety (supported by chaperones whenever children are present). The Director of Music therefore needs to be up to date with safeguarding training, risk assessments, and their responsibilities therein.
- 3.4 In addition to the above, all paid workers are also expected to abide by the general principles of this Code of Conduct including our organisational values, and the specific expectations for Volunteers set out in section 2.

4. Conduct for Clerks

- 4.1 Steel City Clerks (adult members of the choir) are expected to follow all of the standards of behaviour in Section 2 (for volunteers), in addition to the following.
- 4.2 Clerks will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding safeguarding declarations on becoming a member of the choir.
- 4.3 For anything other than safeguarding issues, Clerks' main point of contact is the Director of Music.
- 4.4 Clerks are expected to attend weekly rehearsals wherever possible, especially in the run-up to performances, and to let the Director of Music know at the earliest opportunity if they cannot attend (or if they are likely to be late).

- 4.5 Clerks should review the choir diary as soon as it is distributed and let the Director of Music know at the earliest opportunity if they are not able to attend any performances or rehearsals.
- 4.6 Clerks will be provided with music, robes, and a choir polo shirt for performances; they are expected to look after these and bring them to rehearsals and performances wherever required.
- 4.7 Clerks should familiarise themselves with the Code of Conduct for choristers (section 5), act as role models to our choristers and changing voices, and to play an active role in the community of the choir to help all feel welcome.
- 4.8 In addition, Clerks are asked to consider other ways in which they can contribute to the wider life of Steel City Choristers, such as:
- taking advantage of opportunities to promote Steel City Choristers, including helping to identify and attract new Clerks
 - looking out for opportunities for the choir to sing for communities in and around Sheffield, particularly those that would not otherwise have access to choral music
 - considering what time and skills they have to contribute to the running of the choir
 - becoming a Friend, and consider giving financially (although there is no requirement to do so), and to encourage friends and family to become Friends too.

5. Conduct for Choristers

- 5.1 To ensure a happy and harmonious environment, all children in the choir are expected to:
- i. Behave at all times in line with our organisational CARE values: Community, Ambition, Resilience and Enjoyment.
 - ii. Sing to the best of your ability every time you come to choir.
 - iii. As far as you can, ensure that you arrive at choir sessions ready to begin on time and ask your parents to let us know on the choir mobile if you are running late.
 - iv. Be kind and respectful to, and supportive of, your fellow choristers and adult choir members, including choir chaperones and the Director of Music. This includes looking out for, and taking care of new and younger choristers, and ensuring no one is left out.
 - v. Take good care of things around you to avoid damage to property, including our folders and sheet music, and the buildings that we sing in.

- vi. Put mobile phones on silent during rehearsals and not use them or other electronic devices during choir sessions, other than during breaks (unless being used as an assistive technology).
- vii. Always sign in when you arrive and sign out when you leave, making sure a chaperone is aware that you have arrived or are leaving.
- viii. Report any bullying to a choir chaperone or the Director of Music immediately - bullying is not tolerated in any form.
- ix. Obey any public health regulations or advice that may be in place from time to time (such as those that were in place during COVID-19). Parents, chaperones and the Director of Music will know what these are, and will make sure that you are aware of them.
- x. Never engage in:
 - Bullying – physical, verbal or written (including on digital and social media)
 - Aggressive behaviour – pushing, hitting, fighting, or verbal aggression
 - Bad language – swearing, insults, or name-calling
 - Shouting (unless in an emergency)
 - Running indoors
 - Invasion of personal space (such as uninvited touching of others).

6. Conduct for Trustees

- 6.1 Trustees should be aware of their legal responsibilities and liabilities as a charity trustee, which are summarised at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved>
- 6.2 Trustees are expected to deal with colleagues and other parties with integrity, honesty and respect at all times. This includes being mindful of the values of Steel City Choristers listed in section 1.1.
- 6.3 Trustees have a responsibility to protect the reputation of Steel City Choristers, and should be mindful of this when conducting any business, especially with third parties, whether acting on behalf of Steel City Choristers or otherwise.
- 6.4 All Trustees are expected to play an active role in the leadership of the organisation. This means both contributing actively to discussions at board meetings, and assuming a degree of leadership responsibility that they exercise between meetings.
- 6.5 Trustees should make every reasonable effort to attend Board meetings, and to give apologies as far in advance as possible when they cannot attend. It is expected that Trustees will have read materials circulated for meetings in advance, and come to meetings ready to contribute their views.

- 6.6 Trustees are expected to be a member of (and sometimes chair) at least one board committee. The methods of operation of these committees differ according to their needs, and are set by the committee chair in discussion with other members.
- 6.7 With regard to any financial matters, including spending on behalf of the charity, reimbursement of expenses, and fees, Trustees should abide by the **Financial Expenditure and Expenses Policy**.
- 6.8 Any potential conflicts of interest should be declared to other Trustees (and, where appropriate, to the Charity Commission) at the earliest opportunity.
- 6.9 Any sensitive information regarding the running of Steel City Choristers, or personal information about its members, should be treated with appropriate confidentiality. In particular, Trustees must abide by the terms of the [Privacy Policy](#), and care should be taken with electronic communications (including emails and sharing of documents via Google Drive) that sensitive information is not shared beyond its intended and appropriate audience.