



Registered Charity: 1195909

## **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy**

Last updated November 2024

### **Introduction**

1. Steel City Choristers is committed to celebrating equity, diversity and inclusion and eliminating inequity and unlawful discrimination and bias in all that we do. This means that we:
  - aim for all aspects of our work and activity to be as accessible to, inclusive of, and representative of all sections of society as possible;
  - actively oppose discrimination, harassment and bullying in all its forms; and
  - consider equity, diversity and inclusion to be central to the choir's CARE values (Community, Ambition, Resilience, Enjoyment).
2. This policy applies to everyone involved with the choir and everyone has an individual responsibility to uphold its aims and standards. We will publish this policy so that it is clear to everyone associated with Steel City Choristers what behaviours we expect them to share. We will provide guidance and training as appropriate in support of the aims of this policy.
3. For the purposes of this Policy and related documents, 'Steel City Choristers' refers to the whole choir community, including both child Juniors and Choristers and adult Clerks and Extras, as well as Trustees, volunteers and paid musicians.

### **Our commitment to EDI**

4. It is Steel City Chorister's aim to build an inclusive community that:
  - promotes equity, fairness, dignity and respect for everybody associated with Steel City Choristers and creates a safe and inclusive environment for all in which they and their feelings are valued and respected; and
  - ensures that no-one associated with Steel City Choristers is subjected to harassment, intimidation, abuse or unlawful discrimination because of age, disability, gender, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. These are the protected characteristics set out in the Equalities Act 2010.
5. We will therefore:
  - make equity and diversity a key consideration in all of Steel City Choristers' activities, including our recruitment procedures, membership, community work,

performances and management and decision-making processes;

- create an operational environment that is open and welcoming and free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, microaggressions and unlawful discrimination, that promotes dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued;
  - make decisions about who we ask or pay to deliver services to or on behalf of Steel City Choristers on the basis of merit and without prejudice to their personal or protected characteristics (apart from any necessary and limited exceptions and exemptions allowed under the Equality Act); and
  - keep our practices and procedures under review and review this policy at least annually or as need arises.
6. Within the guidelines on Data Protection, we may collect data about the people we work with by characteristics including age, gender, ethnic background and disability to assist us in reviewing this policy and its operation and to consider and take action on any issues.

### **Specific Operational Implications**

7. Steel City Choristers' commitment to EDI has implications for everything we do. The specific implications for a range of particular situations is set out below.
8. When recruiting and working with our Choristers we will:
- ensure our recruitment marketing is inclusive and does not discourage diversity among potential recruits to the choir, including by using photos of children of different genders and ethnicities in our recruitment literature and publicising opportunities to join the choir in a wide range of places;
  - adopt an audition process this is as inclusive and equitable as possible, particularly for those with no prior musical experience;
  - record diversity characteristics for all new Juniors and Choristers, making the question compulsory to encourage responses, but including an opt-out option of "rather not say", and reminding people to fill it in;
  - include preferred pronouns in our Chorister registration form;
  - ask new members' about any disabilities, special needs or medical or other requirements, asking about parents' and families' needs too, and updating our records annually each September; and
  - actively seek opportunities to promote equity, inclusion and diversity in our Chorister Youth Work Programme.
9. When planning our repertoire, which will be predominantly from the sacred English choral tradition, we will aim to:
- sing music by both male and female composers and from a range of nationalities and cultures;
  - sing in different languages, including those spoken by our members, asking them to

help with pronunciation;

- avoid where possible pieces that include the use of military metaphors, including in hymns; and
- ensure that the music we perform is of relevance to and interest to the communities for whom we sing.

10. When planning our performances we we will aim to:

- perform to a diverse range of audiences, including for those that would not otherwise have access to choral music;
- build links with and perform at churches and other organisations /venues across varied parts of Sheffield and beyond;
- perform in places that are as accessible and diverse as possible; and
- offer adjusted literature when possible e.g. large print, or yellow paper.

11. When considering the accessibility and cost of our activities we will:

- aim to rehearse in spaces that are as accessible as possible;
- encourage parents to arrange lifts between themselves, especially when a venue isn't on public transport;
- avoid charging fees to either singers or hosts, so money is never a barrier to accessing our choral training or our performances; and
- seek to raise funds to be able to offer any necessary financial assistance with the exceptional additional cost of trips and tours, so that no-one is prevented from taking part for financial reasons.

12. When making decision, we will:

- actively listen to the observations and ideas of a diverse range of people for how to improve our activities and their experience as part of the choir community; and
- aim to involve a diverse range of people in our decision making in order to ensure a range of perspectives are brought to bear and avoid groupthink.

13. It should be noted that joining Steel City Choristers as a Junior or Chorister or adult Clerk is subject to an informal audition. For children, an invitation to sing with Steel City Choristers is based solely on musical potential and a voice suited to singing in a Cathedral style choir and will not be affected by or judged against any protected characteristic other than by age.

### **EDI in Relation to Religion**

14. Steel City Choristers is a choir rooted in the English choral tradition, and therefore many of its performances will be in churches, whether singing for services or performing concerts, and most of the music performed will be Christian in nature. However, Steel City Choristers is not a Christian organisation, and it is open to people of all faiths, and of none.

15. While members of the choir will at times be invited to participate in discussions about church services and the meaning and purpose of the music that we perform, this is purely for the purpose of understanding the music and how it relates to the surrounding worship and buildings. There is no expectation that any member holds any particular belief in relation to the music we sing, nor that they partake in church services beyond what is required for leading sung and spoken worship. We expect all members to behave respectfully and appropriately in every venue that we sing in and at all times in respect of the communities we sing for.

### **Pastoral Care**

16. Pastoral care in relation to any matters of equity, diversity and inclusion is available from our Pastoral Care lead Joy French who may be contacted via [joyfrench@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:joyfrench@hotmail.co.uk).

### **Raising a Concern**

17. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) or sexual orientation. These are the protected characteristics set out in the Equalities Act 2010.
18. Concerns about bullying, harassment, victimisation or unlawful discrimination will be taken seriously. Any such acts will be dealt with under grievance or disciplinary procedures and appropriate action will be taken, which may lead to membership of the choir being withdrawn.
19. If anyone associated with Steel City Choristers believes they or anyone else have been discriminated against within or by the choir, or has experienced harassment or abuse at a Steel City Choristers event, they should raise this with one of the Trustees. An exception to this is if it relates to a safeguarding issue, in which case the Safeguarding Policy should be followed.
20. The Board of Trustees will listen, and if necessary, gather more information and/or investigate the complaint and take action as appropriate (if the complaint is against a Trustee, they will not be part of this process). Any action taken will follow the principle that discrimination is not tolerated, and will take into account our CARE values. In extreme circumstances this may lead to expulsion from the choir if someone has acted in a way that is unlawful or contrary to our values.
21. Further information about how to raise a concern is available in our [Feedback Policy](#), published on our website.

### **Enquiries**

22. Any enquiries about this policy should be directed to the Chair of Trustees via [enquiries@steelcitychoristers.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@steelcitychoristers.org.uk).