



Liverpool Universities
Society of Change Ringers
Safeguarding Policy

Published 2023; Reviewed 2026

Contents-

- 1- Introduction**
- 2- Definitions**
 - 2.1 Vulnerable Adults
 - 2.2 Children and Young People
 - 2.3 Safeguarding Terms
- 3- Tower Visitors**
 - 3.1 Under 18s
 - 3.1.1 Young People in the Bell Tower
 - 3.1.2 Under 18s Visiting the Tower
 - 3.2 Vulnerable Adults
- 4- Safeguarding Us as a Society**
 - 4.1 Safety within the Tower
 - 4.2 Non-Ringers / Learners
 - 4.3 Work and Upkeep of the Tower
 - 4.4 General Safeguarding Considerations
- 5- The Role of the Committee in Safeguarding**
 - 5.1 Oversight and Governance
 - 5.2 Safeguarding Officer Support
 - 5.3 Risk Management
 - 5.4 Ensuring Accountability
 - 5.5 Promoting a Safe Culture
 - 5.6 Compliance with Legislation and Standards
 - 5.7 Support for Those Affected
- 6- Useful Links**

1. Introduction

This safeguarding policy has been developed to ensure that all members, learners, and visitors of the Liverpool Universities Society of Change Ringers (LUSCR) are kept safe, supported, and protected from harm while involved in bell ringing activities.

The safety and well-being of children, young people, and vulnerable adults are of paramount importance, and it is the collective responsibility of every member to uphold these standards.

The policy reflects relevant government legislation and church directives, along with best practices for safeguarding as set out by organizations such as the Church of England, the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, and safeguarding authorities.

It is crucial that everyone involved in LUSCR activities - whether regularly or occasionally - familiarizes themselves with and adheres to these guidelines.

For the purposes of this policy, the term "regulated activity" refers to regular, one-to-one physical training with young people under the age of 18. Any ringer or volunteer engaging in such activity will be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. It is also essential that all individuals disclose any relevant criminal record, particularly in relation to offences involving minors or vulnerable adults.

The LUSCR is committed to providing a safe and inclusive space for all participants, across all member institutions: the University of Liverpool, Liverpool John Moores University, Liverpool Hope University, Edge Hill University, Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts, and the University of Chester.

2. Definitions

This section clarifies the key terms used in this safeguarding policy, ensuring a shared understanding of vulnerable individuals and safeguarding concepts. These definitions help inform our practices and procedures for keeping everyone safe.

2.1 Vulnerable Adults

A vulnerable adult is defined as any person aged 18 or older who, due to physical, mental, or emotional circumstances, is unable to care for themselves or protect themselves from abuse, exploitation, or neglect. Vulnerability can arise due to a range of factors, such as disability, illness, social isolation, or other personal circumstances that impact an individual's ability to live independently or safely.

2.2 Children and Young People

Children and young people refer to individuals under the age of 18. Their protection is a priority, and they are particularly at risk due to their relative powerlessness and dependency on others for safety, care, and guidance. Safeguarding practices aim to ensure that their participation in activities is always in their best interest and that they are kept safe from harm.

2.3 Safeguarding Terms

- **Risk Factors:** These are circumstances or experiences that increase the likelihood of an individual becoming vulnerable to abuse, neglect, or exploitation. They may include factors such as family instability, mental health issues, or social isolation.
- **Protective Factors:** These are the elements in an individual's environment that reduce the likelihood of harm or exploitation. These factors may include a dedicated support system, access to resources, and positive role models.
- **Trauma:** Trauma refers to emotional, physical, or psychological harm caused by an event, series of events, or circumstances that have a lasting impact on an individual's mental, physical, or emotional well-being. Trauma may result from abuse, neglect, or adverse life experiences.
- **Trauma-Informed Practice:** This refers to an approach that recognizes the prevalence of trauma and its effects on individuals, promoting an environment that is safe, supportive, and responsive to the needs of individuals who may have experienced trauma. Trauma-informed practices prioritize safety, trust, collaboration, and empowerment.

3. Tower Visitors

The following guidelines are in place to ensure that all tower visitors - whether they are young people, vulnerable adults, or members of the public - are safe while attending events or activities at the bell tower.

3.1 Under 18s

3.1.1 Young People in the Bell Tower

To maintain a safe environment for young people in the bell tower, the following steps must be adhered to:

1. Parents must give written consent for their child to participate in ringing activities, outings, or meetings. They should be informed of all arrangements, including any medical conditions and transport responsibilities.
2. If a child is at immediate risk of harm, emergency services must be contacted, followed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
3. Attendance registers should be kept ensuring that everyone present is accounted for.
4. Children must always be supervised. Access to hazardous areas, like the bell chamber, should only be allowed under the supervision of the Ringing Master, Deputy Ringing Master or Steeple keeper.
5. At least two adults (preferably one of each gender) must be present when children or young people are ringing or being supervised.
6. Any form of physical contact, such as touching, should only occur when necessary for teaching, supervision, or in an emergency, ensuring respect for personal space.
7. First aid provisions should always be available, and all local tower arrangements should be approved by the PCC in accordance with parish safeguarding policies.
8. The Tower Captain should hold a copy of the parish safeguarding policy and ensure that all ringers have access to it.
9. The necessary insurance should be in place for all events, training sessions, or ringing.
10. A Safeguarding Officer should be appointed for each local ringing society to oversee safeguarding activities.

3.1.2 Under 18s Visiting the Tower

When a minor is visiting the tower, the following guidelines apply:

- The Ringing Master and Safeguarding Officer must be notified in advance of any visitors under 18.
- For visitors aged 16-18, a parent or guardian must provide written consent if the minor will be unaccompanied during the session.
- At least one individual with a current DBS check must be present in the ringing chamber at all times to ensure the minor's safety.

3.2 Vulnerable Adults

For any vulnerable adult attending tower events, the following provisions will ensure their safety:

- Two adults, preferably one from the LUSCR committee, should be present when a vulnerable person is in the ringing chamber.
- If a vulnerable person has a carer, the carer should remain with the individual at all times during tower activities.
- Vulnerable individuals should be encouraged to disclose any relevant medical conditions that might affect their participation, allowing for any necessary accommodations to be made.
- All members are encouraged to assist any individual who requests help, ensuring that the individual's dignity and autonomy are respected.

4. Safeguarding Us as a Society

As a community, the safeguarding of everyone involved in our society - whether ringers, learners, volunteers, or visitors - is paramount. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do. The following practices are in place to maintain a safe and inclusive environment for all members and to protect against any form of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

4.1 Safety within the Tower

The bell tower can present certain physical risks, particularly when there are young or vulnerable individuals involved. To ensure everyone's safety:

- **Supervision:** There must always be at least two adults present when children or vulnerable adults are engaged in bell ringing or other tower activities. This provides both safety and accountability, ensuring that individuals are not left in isolated situations.
- **Inclusion of Vulnerable Adults:** Special consideration should be given to the physical and mental needs of vulnerable adults attending ringing events. Adjustments should be made as necessary to ensure their full participation while keeping them safe.

4.2 Non-Ringers / Learners

The society recognizes that many non-ringers and learners, including those who are new to the activity, may require additional support and guidance. To ensure their safety and well-being:

- **Orientation and Training:** All new learners, regardless of age, should undergo a basic orientation to the tower and its equipment, including a review of safety procedures and appropriate behaviour expectations. This will also include a review of safeguarding practices to ensure learners understand how to report concerns.
- **Buddy System:** New learners should be paired with an experienced ringer for the first few sessions, providing them with a mentor who can guide them through the process and ensure they feel comfortable and safe.
- **Clear Boundaries:** The society will ensure that clear boundaries are set, particularly around physical contact. Any physical assistance with learners (e.g., helping with bell ropes) should be minimal, purposeful, and appropriate. Unnecessary physical contact should be avoided.

4.3 Work and Upkeep of the Tower

The ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the bell tower are essential to ensuring a safe environment for all members and visitors. As such, all work carried out within the tower must be approached with appropriate care, planning, and regard for safeguarding:

- **Supervised Maintenance Activities:** All maintenance or repair work must be carried out with at least two people present at all times. This ensures safety, accountability, and support, particularly when work is being undertaken at height or in confined areas. Work should only be undertaken by competent individuals.
- **Restricted Access:** During maintenance or inspection work, access to certain areas of the tower may need to be limited. Clear communication should be given to all members regarding restricted zones to prevent accidents or unsafe situations.
- **Use of Equipment:** All tools and equipment must be used safely and stored securely after use. Hazardous materials or specialist equipment should only be handled by those with appropriate knowledge or training.
- **Risk Assessments:** Before undertaking any significant work, a basic risk assessment should be conducted to identify potential hazards and mitigate risks, particularly where young people or vulnerable adults may be present.
- **Safe Environment:** Efforts should be made to ensure that the tower remains clean, well-lit, and free from hazards such as loose flooring, trailing ropes, or obstructed walkways. Regular inspections should be carried out to maintain a safe environment.

4.4 General Safeguarding Considerations

In addition to the specific practices mentioned above, the society recognizes the importance of fostering an overall culture of safety, respect, and inclusivity. This includes:

- **Anti-Bullying and Discrimination:** The society has a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying, discrimination, or harassment of any kind. All members, regardless of age or ability, should feel safe and supported within the society. Discriminatory behaviour will not be tolerated, and appropriate action will be taken against anyone who engages in bullying or discriminatory actions.
- **Reporting Mechanisms:** A clear, transparent, and confidential reporting mechanism should be in place for all members to raise concerns related to safeguarding, including

incidents of abuse or neglect. This includes ensuring that members know who the Safeguarding Officer is and how to contact them.

- **Regular Safeguarding Training:** All members, including volunteers, committee members, and Tower Captains, will undergo regular safeguarding training. This training will cover the identification of abuse, reporting procedures, and best practices for keeping young people and vulnerable adults safe.
- **Inclusive and Supportive Environment:** The society aims to be inclusive and supportive of all its members. Special accommodations may be required to support individuals with disabilities, mental health conditions, or those who may feel marginalized. All members are encouraged to speak up and advocate for themselves or others if they feel something is wrong.

DRAFT

5. The Role of the Committee in Safeguarding

The safeguarding of children, young people, and vulnerable adults is an integral part of the society's mission, and the committee plays a vital role in ensuring safeguarding practices are adhered to effectively. The committee's responsibilities include:

5.1 Oversight and Governance

The committee is responsible for overseeing the implementation of safeguarding policies and ensuring that safeguarding procedures are followed. Key tasks include:

- Reviewing and updating the safeguarding policy to ensure compliance with current legislation and best practices.
- Approving safeguarding measures, including risk assessments, and safeguarding action plans.
- Ensuring the appointment of a designated Safeguarding Officer and supporting them in their role.

5.2 Safeguarding Officer Support

The committee provides essential support to the Safeguarding Officer(s), ensuring they have the resources and authority to perform their duties effectively. This includes:

- Regularly receiving updates and reports from the Safeguarding Officer regarding safeguarding concerns and incidents.
- Supporting the Safeguarding Officer's training and professional development.

5.3 Risk Management

The committee is responsible for identifying and mitigating any safeguarding risks associated with the society's activities. This includes:

- Regularly reviewing activities to identify potential risks to children and vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring appropriate supervision levels are in place for all events involving minors or vulnerable adults.

5.4 Ensuring Accountability

The committee is committed to a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

This includes:

- Investigating any safeguarding concerns or allegations and cooperating with relevant authorities when necessary.
- Ensuring that all safeguarding information is handled confidentially and shared only with those who need to know.

5.5 Promoting a Safe Culture

The committee fosters a culture of safeguarding by:

- Raising awareness of safeguarding issues within the society.
- Ensuring that all members, including volunteers and committee members, receive regular safeguarding training.
- Encouraging feedback from members, especially children and vulnerable adults, to ensure their voices are heard in safeguarding decisions.

5.6 Compliance with Legislation and Standards

The committee ensures that the society is fully compliant with safeguarding laws, regulations, and guidelines. This includes:

- Conducting annual reviews of safeguarding practices to ensure they meet legislative requirements.
- Adhering to local and national safeguarding frameworks and statutory requirements.

5.7 Support for Those Affected

The committee recognizes the importance of offering support to individuals affected by safeguarding issues. This includes:

- Providing access to appropriate support services for those who have experienced harm.
- Ensuring that those affected by safeguarding concerns are treated with dignity and respect and are supported throughout the investigation process.

6. Useful Links

<https://cccbr.org.uk/safeguarding/>

<https://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/department/safeguarding>

<https://liverpoolcofe.org/diocese-safeguarding/>

<https://www.lacr.uk/>

DRAFT