

# Nottingham Youth Orchestra

## Safeguarding Policy Document

### Safeguarding Policy Statement

Nottingham Youth Orchestra is committed to practice which protects children from harm.

Staff and Volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children and young adults harm.

The welfare of each orchestra member is the primary consideration of the organisation and its staff. We want each member to achieve his/her full potential within the musical and social development which is provided by the organisation.

We recognise that we have a special duty of care towards all our members. We want to provide them with a safe, supportive and listening environment in which they can thrive. In particular:

- to establish and maintain an environment in which the welfare of the young person\* is paramount
- to ensure that policies and procedures protect young people from harm
- to ensure that all concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately

The purposes of this policy are:

- To set out how the NYO will safeguard and protect young people
- To give guidance to staff, volunteers and trustees about the procedures they should adopt
  - a) in order to keep members safe
  - b) when they suspect that a young person may be experiencing or is at risk of harm

\* A child is defined in the Children Act (1989) as a person under the age of 18. In this document, the term "young person" includes all members of NYO, whether or not they are under the age of 18.

### Safeguarding principles

We will endeavour to safeguard young people by:

- Treating them with respect and celebrating their achievements
- Adopting policy guidelines through a code of practice for staff and volunteers
- Sharing information and communicating information about safeguarding with parents, members, staff and volunteers
- Reporting information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involve parents and members appropriately
- Recruiting employees and volunteers safely ensuring all necessary checks are in place and providing appropriate support through supervision and training
- Assessing risk in relation to all its activities, focusing on prevention and minimising risks
- Reviewing our policy and practice periodically

## **Our responsibilities towards our members**

We value the welfare of our members and accept that we have responsibilities:

- To protect them from sexual, emotional and physical abuse.
- To screen anyone coming into regular contact with them.
- To support their parents and carers.
- To treat them with dignity and respect at all times

Particularly we will:

- Take any allegations or suspicions of abuse seriously and respond to them swiftly and appropriately
- Seek to provide pastoral care where appropriate to all those who may be affected by such an allegation.

## **Our responsibilities towards all staff and volunteers**

We support them by:

- Equipping them through training to protect both children and themselves by encouraging good practice and good relationships with children.
- Providing them with clear guidelines on preventing situations where child abuse could arise and what to do if such abuse is disclosed or suspected.
- Giving them pastoral support in their work and defined lines of supervision and accountability.
- Outlining their specific roles.

Signed  
(Chair of Directors)

Review Date

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

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The NYO is responsible for all young people whilst in the organisation's care. We will ensure that appropriate procedures are adopted in the screening and appointment of employees and volunteer workers. Individuals who have committed offences against children and/or young people will not be appointed.

NYO will ensure that all appointments will be subject to a probationary period. Employees and volunteer workers will have access to supervision, support and appropriate training. NYO Management committee will review the children and young policies and procedures annually. They will also ensure that there is a current insurance policy in force.

### **The Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator**

NYO will appoint one management committee member to:

- Receive information from staff, volunteers or members who have safeguarding concerns, and record it
- Assess information promptly and carefully
- Be available for support and advice if disclosure, suspicion or allegation of abuse is reported.
- Be responsible for a confidential record system for forms, references and related files.
- Liaise and consult, where necessary, with local statutory safeguarding agencies
- Liaise with the Management committee chairman on areas of concern.

### **The Management Committee Chair**

The Chair will work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Person and will be aware of the screening and appointments made. He/she will be informed of allegations of abuse regarding members of the NYO, and co-ordinate appropriate support for all parties, including liaison with local authority safeguarding agencies. When a disclosure is made, the Chair's core actions will be to protect the young person concerned.

### **Other Committee members**

Other members must act, where appropriate, in close consultation with the Chair and safeguarding co-ordinator. When consulted, he/she will provide support and guidance to those involved. Information about concerns, disclosures or allegations relating to an individual will, in the first instance, be shared only by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the Chair, and the staff member who reported the concerns. Other staff will be involved only if it is necessary for the support and protection of the young person.

### **Employees**

"Employees" in this context are taken to be all paid staff whether self-employed or payroll.

These persons will have a clearly-defined role, including aims and objectives of the post and a job description. In addition they will be aware, and receive copies of, relevant sections of the Safeguarding Policy. They will also receive guidelines to be followed in the event of disclosure or if suspicious of abuse.

### **Volunteers - formal and occasional**

"Formal volunteers" are taken to be any person who has a clearly-defined role, e.g. orchestra administrator, librarian etc. All these posts will have gone through the screening procedures. Formal volunteers will be aware of and receive copies of the Safeguarding Policy. They will also receive guidelines to be followed in the event of disclosure or if suspicious of abuse.

"Occasional volunteers" are people who help out irregularly or on a one-off basis. These people may come into close contact with young people for a limited period but should always work under the supervision of a formal volunteer or an employee.

The NYO will ensure that all trustees, committee members, employees and formal volunteers have undergone recent checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), either through applying for a formal check or through the Update Service if the person involved has already had a DBS check.

## **Code of Behaviour for staff**

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Nottingham Youth Orchestra seeks to embrace the good practice outlined in the Children Act (1989) and recent safeguarding legislation, and will work towards meeting these recommendations.

### **Code of behaviour and guidance for staff and volunteers**

- Treat all young people with respect and dignity befitting their age.
- Provide an example of good conduct that you wish them to follow
- Watch your own language, tone of voice, body language and dress. Young people can easily misinterpret adults' behaviour.
- Foster an environment which encourages young people and adults to feel comfortable and confident in challenging attitudes of behaviour which they feel to be discriminatory, abusive or inappropriate in any way, and to deal with these situations in a restorative manner.
- In a situation with a young person where privacy and confidentiality are important, ensure that this meeting does not take place totally in private — doors should be left open and at least one other adult who is in the building should be made aware of the situation and the young person made aware of their presence.
- Where possible, make sure that another adult is present if, for example, a young person needs medical attention. If available the parent/guardian should be called for.
- Keep to NSPCC suggested guidelines for staff/young persons ratios during NYO tours/residentials/visits – ideally 1 staff member to 14 young people (under the age of 16).

### **Staff and volunteers should NOT**

1. Permit, accept, encourage or ignore abusive or discriminatory behaviour by another person or group of people
2. Allow allegations made by an NYO musician to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
3. Trivialise the feelings, concerns or beliefs expressed by a young person, which may include suspicion of abuse or discrimination
4. Engage in any of the following:-
  - a. scape-goating, intimidating, ridiculing, or rejecting a young person.
  - b. inappropriate and intrusive touching of any form
  - c. participation in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
5. Make suggestive comments or innuendos, including jokes, to or about a young person, even in “fun”.
6. Let young people involve you in excessive attention-seeking behaviour, especially that which is overtly sexual or physical in nature, or use inappropriate language unchallenged. If you are worried that a young person may be developing a “crush” on you, ask the safeguarding co-ordinator for advice rather than dealing with it on your own.
7. Form a “special” relationship or engage in sexual activity with any NYO member

8. Show favouritism in anyway/undermine in any way
9. Confide personal details to young people and be party to gossip about staff and NYO musicians, including criticism of either group
10. Reduce an NYO musician to tears as a form of control
11. Promote a particular belief, religion or political standing
12. Call, text or exchange email addresses with an NYO musician for personal purposes which are not directly related to NYO activities, or contact an NYO musician over Facebook or any other social media network. Members of the senior orchestra have their own Members' Facebook group through which all communications can be made and photographs shared. This is administered and monitored by the NYO administrator and the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
13. Invade the privacy of children and young people, particularly on residential courses
14. Meet young persons outside organised activities, unless with knowledge and consent of parent or person in charge of the organisation
15. Invite a young person to your home alone.
16. Run groups in your home on your own.
17. Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children
18. Give lifts to young people on their own unless absolutely necessary. Take steps when giving lifts to drop two children off at the last point, involving parents if necessary. Where it is unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parent or someone in charge of the organisation. If a young person is alone with you in a car, it is good practice to ask them to sit in the back.

## **Physical contact — keeping yourself safe**

Remember that physically touching a child or young person has the potential to be misconstrued. In such cases staff may put themselves at risk of allegations of abuse being made against them. In order to avoid this, the best possible practice is to refrain from touching a young person in all but the most urgent situations (e.g. a medical emergency). If you need to demonstrate technique, adjust posture or change a bow hold, for example, always ask the NYO musician's permission and explain in advance what you are going to do and why.

One-to-one meetings between staff and NYO members should take place in public or semi-public areas such as classrooms or common rooms.. Leave the door partly open and try to ensure that the safeguarding co-ordinator or orchestral administrator knows that the meeting is taking place.

Outward displays of affection are only appropriate in the case of comforting a young person and should normally occur only when another adult is present, or in a public area.

We encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all staff and volunteers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour. If you see another member of staff acting in ways which seem inappropriate or might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them or to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator about your concerns.

## Personal contact and Social Media Code of Conduct

NYO recognises that due to the nature of the classical music sector, tutors and students will often cross paths with one another, whether it is in a peripatetic setting at school; in the local/county youth orchestra or other musical setting. However, if tutors develop a relationship with a player as a result of NYO they are asked not to further develop their relationship through any forum including all social networking sites or phone/email exchange. Tutors are asked not to accept Facebook friend requests and not to give out or accept any personal contact information. This is in place to protect tutors from conduct that may be deemed as inappropriate from any side.

## Reasonable force

Reasonable force may be used to restrain a young person in self defence or because of imminent risk of injury. Before intervening tell the young person to stop, and what will happen if they do not stop. Make it clear physical contact may be necessary. Keep communicating about what is happening.

## Accommodation

Depending on the venue, during residential activities young people will be allocated a shared bedroom and shared bathroom. Shared bedrooms are same sex only and members of the opposite sex are not permitted to enter one another's bedrooms. Where possible NYO will seek to allocate shared bedrooms based on friendship groups. Shared bedrooms may consist of young people above and below the age of 18.

## The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

The Designated Safeguarding Officer for NYO is the woodwind tutor Wendy McDonald - 07838 427548 – [wendy.oboe@googlemail.com](mailto:wendy.oboe@googlemail.com). The Chair of Directors Jane Harwood – 07857 707831 – [jane.harwood@ntlworld.com](mailto:jane.harwood@ntlworld.com) carries ultimate responsibility for decision making around safeguarding.

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## **Procedures and guidelines to follow in the event of suspicion or disclosure of child abuse**

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### **What is child abuse?**

Child abuse encompasses:

#### **Physical abuse**

Physical chastisement, deliberate or malicious injuries, inappropriate restraint, lack of supervision which results in accidents causing harm

#### **Neglect**

Persistent failure to meet a young person's physical and psychological needs. Includes the failure to protect them from exposure to any kind of danger resulting in the significant impairment of their health or development

#### **Emotional abuse**

Persistent ridicule; rejection; humiliation in an atmosphere of fear and intimidation; bullying and scapegoating; excessive criticism of a personal nature

#### **Sexual abuse**

Involving a young person in adult sexual activities; giving them access to pornographic materials; touching or talking to them in a sexually explicit way; talking to them about sex in ways that inappropriate for that young person; engaging in any sexual activity or relationship with a young person, even if consent appears to have been given

### **Suspicion of abuse**

This is when you have growing concerns based on a number of signs and symptoms that a child could be being abused. These possible 'indicators' however should be regarded as a guide.

There may also be occasions when a young person will disclose historic abuse (of any of the above categories) which occurred in their childhood or in the more recent past. This information should be treated in exactly the same way as suspicion of current abuse since the abuser may still represent a risk to young people now. Remember that abusers can be both adults and other young adults.

Staff and volunteers should be concerned about a young person if they

- show significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude
- become uncharacteristically withdrawn
- have regular injuries which are not satisfactorily explained
- disclose an experience in which they may have been harmed or put at risk

If you have concerns or suspicions about a young person in NYO:

1. Do not attempt to follow up these concerns on your own — share them with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
2. Along with seeking advice it is important to record your suspicions. This should include your observations and anything the young person says. Sign and date this record and give to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
3. Having discussed your concerns, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will ensure that the situation continues to be observed and any further concerns recorded. They may also ask for advice from the local authority safeguarding agency or the NSPCC Adult Helpline (call 0808 800 5000 or text 88858). Depending on the outcome of these discussion, there may be a formal report of suspicion of abuse to local authority safeguarding authorities.

## **Incidents that must be reported**

If any of the following occur it must be reported immediately to the NYO Designated Safeguarding Officer.

- If you have had to restrain a young person
- If you accidentally hurt a young person
- If they seem distressed in any manner
- If a young person appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- If a young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done
- Dealing with a disclosure
- If there is a serious and immediate threat to a young person

## **Disclosure of abuse**

This is when a young person tells another person about a situation which indicates that abuse may have taken place. This information could also be given by a friend of the young person. This is something you should be prepared for and must handle carefully.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will support you throughout. For the safety and well-being of the young person it is vital that anyone implicated in the abuse is not involved in any way. You must not attempt to confront or challenge any named adult.

It is vital that you maintain confidentiality and follow the correct procedure.

## **What should I do following a disclosure of abuse by a young person?**

If a young person has disclosed to you that they may be being abused then you must reassure them and take what they say seriously. Remember that children very rarely lie about abuse. If he/she has disclosed to you, then some form of abuse is likely to have occurred.

- Remain calm and in control but don't delay acting.
- Listen carefully to what is said. Allow the person to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. **DO NOT ASK QUESTIONS WHICH SUGGEST A PARTICULAR ANSWER.**
- **DON'T PROMISE TO KEEP IT A SECRET.** Use the first opportunity you have to say that you will need to share the information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
- Reassure the young person that they did the right thing in telling you.
- Speak immediately to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. It is his/her responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities.



- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the young person's own words. Note the date, time, and any names that were mentioned, and to whom you gave the information. Make sure that you sign and date your record, and that you have it witnessed.

## **Extreme circumstances**

A child may or may not be in immediate danger due to extreme circumstances. To help you decide what are "extreme circumstances"; you may find this helpful. Childline describes "extreme circumstances" as:

- an individual so physically damaged that immediate medical treatment is necessary;
- the next time the individual meets the abuser there is real danger of severe physical damage or death;
- the individual is so desperate that they will possibly:-
  - take their own life;
  - take on major new risk (e.g. run away);
  - make a call from a highly unsafe environment (e.g. late at night from a call box, or where there is danger of interruption).
- If the Safeguarding Co-ordinator is not available and the young person is in immediate danger due to extreme circumstances, call Nottinghamshire Children's Social Care on 0300 500 8080 or, outside office hours, 0300 456 4546.

## **Self-harm**

Self-harm by children and young people is not unusual. The term is used to describe a wide range of things that people do to themselves which appear to be harmful but usually do not kill them. These include:

- Cutting or burning themselves
- Hitting themselves
- Hitting walls or other hard objects
- Taking overdoses

People who self-harm may do so because they are anxious, depressed, being bullied or abused, or in the middle of a family breakdown. It is a way of trying to cope with problems rather than an attempt at suicide. It can continue over a long period without becoming life-threatening, but it needs to be taken very seriously and it is important to respond to it in a calm and helpful way.

## **How to help someone who has self-harmed**

- Make sure they are safe. Treat the injury or seek help to do so.
- Listen and try to understand why the person is acting in this way. Don't make judgements or accuse them of attention-seeking.
- Contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and discuss the situation with them.

If the incident occurs when the young person is away from home, for example on tour or on a residential, you will need to take further steps to protect them.

Think about what the triggers might be for self-harming and discuss with the person what else they could do to relieve the stress or anger when it builds up. Encourage them not to hide themselves away but to remain near to where they can be treated if they do cut themselves again. Ensure that they are not left alone for long periods.

Remember that self-harm is basically a way of coping, so stopping the self-harm is not necessarily the best thing to aim for immediately. Safety and understanding are more important in the short term. In the long term, it is clearly important to help the person find professional help.

For more information on self-harm look at these websites;

<http://m.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=32688&p=0>

<http://www.thesite.org/mental-health/self-harm>

## Allegations involving NYO staff

Any such allegations must be taken seriously. The person to whom the allegation is made must take it seriously and immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer or if the allegation concerns them the Chair of Directors.

If you have reason to believe that a tutor, employee or volunteer may have abused a young person at NYO or elsewhere, you must inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately. You should record your concerns, including a note of anyone else who witnessed/has information about the alleged incident.

If a referral is made, the member of staff against whom the allegation has been made should not be informed of the allegation until action has been agreed. Action may include suspension until the matter has been investigated and internal disciplinary action may be taken following the conclusion of the investigation.

A young person's parents would be informed of a false allegation as this may be an indicator of problems elsewhere.

## Procedure Guidelines

### When a Child discloses abuse to you

#### Do

- Listen
- Take time
- Take it seriously
- Reassure the child that he/she is right to tell you
- Explain to the child what will happen next
- Consult and get support from the Child protection Co-ordinator
- Write down immediately what the child has said, *in the child's own words*. Have your record and signature witnessed and dated

#### Don't

- Show shock
- Try to silence
- Ask leading questions which suggest particular answers
- Jump to conclusions
- Keep the secret, do explain what your boundaries are in relation to confidentiality
- Make promises you can't keep

### How do I respond – what do I say?

#### Try to avoid asking:

- What, why, how, when, where, who?
- Are you sure?
- Why didn't you say so before

#### Or saying:

- I can't believe it
- I'm shocked

#### Try to say:

- I believe you
- I'm glad you came to me
- I'm sorry this has happened
- This is NOT your fault
- I'm going to get help so that this stops happening
- You have been very brave to tell me

## Recording allegations or suspicions of abuse

In any case where an allegation is made, or someone in your organisation has concerns, a record should be made. It is good practice to draw up a checklist of details to note, and questions you should ask yourself in making such a record.

This could include, for example

Name of child.

Age

Any special factors

Parents' or carers' name(s)

Home address (and phone number, if available)

Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of somebody else?

If so, record details.

What has prompted the concerns?

Include dates and times of any specific incidents.

Any physical signs?

Behavioural signs?

Indirect signs?

Has the child been spoken to?

If so, what was said?

Have the parents been contacted?

If so, what was said?

Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser?

If so, record details.

Has anyone else been consulted?

Record all details carefully, quoting accurately, as far as possible, the actual words which were said to you by the young person and/or adults.

# **Useful contact information with external agencies**

## **SOCIAL SERVICES**

### **Nottingham City Social Services (children)**

Tel: 0115 876 4800

### **Nottinghamshire Children's Social Care**

Tel: 0300 500 8080

Emergency Tel: 0300 456 4546

### **Nottinghamshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

Tel: 0300 500 8090

### **Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board**

Tel: 01629 533190

**When a child or young person is at risk of imminent harm, ring the police on 999 or 101 for a non-emergency situation.**

## **VOLUNTARY SECTOR**

### **NSPCC**

National helpline 0808 800 5000

[nspcc.org.uk/reportconcern](https://nspcc.org.uk/reportconcern)

### **Childline**

National helpline 0800 1111