

Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra

Child Protection Policy

Introduction

Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra is an amateur community orchestra. It is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), registered charity no 1166140. Its members are mainly adults. However from time to time, young people (under the age of 18 years) become involved in the activities of the orchestra, usually as players. The orchestra welcomes and actively encourages the involvement of such young people, to foster their musical development and as a way of encouraging future membership. However we need to ensure their safety and well-being whilst they are in our care.

Under the law, voluntary groups have a responsibility to contribute to the safeguarding of the children with whom they work, to act on any concerns that a child is at risk of abuse and to make sure that the way they work does not place children at unacceptable risk of harm.

Aims of this Policy

- To put in place measures that help maintain the safety of and protect from harm, any child that is entrusted to the care of the orchestra.
- To create a basic code of behaviour and safeguarding procedures so that everyone knows what is expected of them.
- To protect the position of the orchestra in event of any allegations of misconduct towards such children.

Definitions

- **Orchestra** - Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra
- **Activity** - any rehearsal, concert or associated activity officially arranged by the orchestra
- **Child** - any person under the age of 18 years taking part in an orchestra activity
- **Committee** - the committee of the orchestra (some of whom are also the trustees of the charity)
- **Child Protection Officers (CPOs)** - designated members of the orchestra who have been approved by the committee to look after the interests of children involved in its activities and who have been checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Child protection officers (CPOs) - roles and responsibilities

- The role of the CPOs is to have overall responsibility for the welfare of children whilst they are in care of the orchestra.
- The CPOs will annually review the orchestra's child protection policy.
- In partnership with the Chairperson and committee, the CPOs will address any concerns that are raised.
- The CPOs will perform and document risks assessments for any new situation or venue associated with the orchestra's activities.
- Our Child protection officers are Ros Rayner and Sarah Tulley.

Child Protection Provision:

- Before a child / young person who is under 18 years old can be left in the care of the orchestra, written authorisation must be given by his/her parents / guardians, who will have been given a copy of this policy.
- This written authorisation will contain a paragraph requesting the consent of the parent or guardian for the child:
 - To be given transport home (or to hospital) with a member of the orchestra in an emergency.
 - To be given transport to and/or from the orchestra with appropriate parental consent.
- The committee will appoint two CPOs.
- The appointment of CPOs will only be made after satisfactory checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (D.B.S.).
- In line with recommendations from Making Music, the Conductor / Musical Director will be required to also undergo enhanced checks with the D.B.S.
- On their first arrival at the orchestra, a child will be introduced to the section leader, who will arrange their seating and deal with any musical matters. The child will then be introduced to the CPOs who will be the first points of contact for the child should any problems arise from orchestra activities.
- The CPOs will keep a discreet watch on children in the orchestra and ensure their general well-being.
- In the event of an allegation being raised, the CPOs have a duty to write and record as much relevant and accurate detail as possible, while retaining absolute impartiality.

Committee

- The members of the committee are all the trustees of the charity plus other members.
- The committee will be responsible for the assessment, interview and appointment of the CPOs.
- The committee will be responsible for addressing any child protection issues reported to it by the Chairperson, a CPO or any other orchestra member.
- The committee will be responsible for the D.B.S. checks of all named CPOs.
- If an allegation of abuse is raised it is not the responsibility of anyone working in the orchestra, paid or unpaid, to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility for the committee to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities, so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the young person. In such situations the committee will be obliged to share all suspicions and allegations with the appropriate professional agencies that are responsible for child protection.

Members of the orchestra

It is always unacceptable for children, young people and vulnerable adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual identity to experience abuse of any kind and they have the right to protection from all types of harm.

- Intimidating and bullying behaviour by adults to young people will not be tolerated.
- There is to be no inappropriate touching between members and any child under the care of the orchestra during any activity.
- If members of the orchestra want to use any photographs or videos for publicity or on the internet, permission must be sought from the parents / guardians of all children pictured, before they are made public.

Our policy is that all members of the orchestra should be encouraged to participate in child protection:

- The members should be made aware of who is a child.
- The members should be encouraged to keep a discrete watch on children.
- It is the duty of all members and officers of the orchestra to prevent abuse and dangerous practice and they should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

The participation of orchestral members in child protection is facilitated by child protection guidance notes (Appendix A of this document).

Our insurance cover for abuse

Unfortunately, despite safeguards being in place, abuse and allegations of abuse or neglect still sometimes happen. Making Music Insurance Services provide cover for such situations if four criteria are met. These four elements are extracted from the first two standards of the 'Safe Network' recommendations.

Any indemnity will be conditional upon the compliance of the following guidelines:

1. Two written references to be obtained detailing any previous work carried out by persons involved with children or vulnerable adults - this we apply to the CPOs.
2. A formal interview to be conducted to assess the commitment of such persons mentioned in 1 above to maintaining the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults
3. Undertaking a disclosure check of such persons mentioned in 1 above with the Disclosure and Barring Service.
4. Having and adhering to a written abuse policy incorporating roles responsibilities and procedures which includes appropriate risk assessments being undertaken and guidelines to be followed.

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APPENDIX A - Guidance for members

We have two child protection officers with special responsibility for child protection. However, it is the responsibility of all members to participate in the safeguarding of children in orchestral activities.

If you see or are made aware of any inappropriate activity, then you must inform one of the child protection officers as soon as possible.

If a child comes to you with a child protection issue then you must:

- Listen sympathetically
- Encourage the child to discuss the issue with a child protection officer.
- Discuss the issue between the child protection officer and yourself.
- You should NOT attempt to resolve the issue yourself.
- Keep everything confidential.