



## Safeguarding Policy

### Introduction

With residential orchestral and ensemble courses at the core of its programme, the National Youth Wind Orchestra (NYWO) is fully committed to the wellbeing of all young people who participate in these activities. NYWO recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to ensure best practice and to protect children from harm and abuse.

### We are committed to practices which:

- Aim to protect young people from harm;
- Establish and maintain an environment in which the welfare of the young people in our care is paramount;
- Ensure that all concerns and allegations of abuse are taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

In creating this safeguarding policy we have referred to a range of guidance and legislation, along with best practices across the youth arts sector. This policy is applicable to all paid staff, volunteers, trustees, and anyone else working on behalf of the NYWO in a paid or unpaid capacity.

### Purpose

#### The purpose of this policy is:

- To set out how NYWO will safeguard young people through processes, procedures, and organisational culture;
- To ensure all staff and associated personnel are familiar with good practice in child protection, and to allow staff to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

### Safeguarding principles

At the heart of good practice in protecting children lies an understanding of their rights. There are four key principles derived from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). These four key principles, as follows, underpin NYWO's work with children and young people:

- The best interests of the children and young people must always be a primary consideration.
- All children and young people should be treated fairly and with dignity and respect.

- All children and young people have the right to protection from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- All children and young people have the right to express their views on matters that affect them.

### **We recognise that:**

- The welfare of children and young people is paramount.
- All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religious belief or lack thereof, sexual orientation, or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Working in partnership with children and young people, their parents/carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting children's welfare.
- All NYWO staff and volunteers accept responsibility for safeguarding the children and young people with whom they come into contact.

### **We seek to safeguard young people by:**

- Assigning clear roles and responsibilities to individuals who are accountable and responsible for safeguarding;
- Recruiting trustees, employees, and volunteers safely ensuring all necessary checks are made and that appropriate training is undertaken;
- Ensuring that trustees, employees, and volunteers are aware of the risks of harm to young people and that clear lines of communication and reporting underpin the response to any safeguarding concern;
- Assessing risk in relation to all our activities, focusing on prevention and minimising risk.

## **Oversight**

In line with the safeguarding principles, we are committed to the following practice to oversee, disseminate and review this policy.

### **We will:**

- Designate a senior person with responsibility for ensuring NYWO operates within legislative frameworks, co-ordinating action within the organisation, and liaising with other agencies in relation to safeguarding;
- Ensure that the CEO submits an annual report to the Board of Trustees in relation to the implementation and observance of this policy;
- Ensure that, before any trustee, employee, or volunteer commences their engagement with NYWO, appropriate checks regarding their suitability to work with young people have been carried out and are satisfactory;
  - For those working directly with young people, this will ordinarily involve an enhanced DBS check (with or without a children's barred list check, depending on the role).

Appropriate, equivalent checks will be carried out for staff based abroad and in the rest of the UK (i.e. via AccessNI or Disclosure Scotland etc.).

### **We will also:**

- Ensure that all NYWO trustees, employees, and volunteers sign an agreement which includes a commitment to reading and complying with the NYWO Safeguarding Policy;
- Provide parents/carers with access to this policy (on the website), and make them aware that its implementation may require that incidents or circumstances are referred to investigative agencies in the interest of the young person;
- Assume duty of care to the young person when signed into a NYWO activity, including administering emergency first aid and/or medical treatment if required;
- Assess risks for all situations, activities, buildings and trips to ensure all potential dangers have been identified and risk minimised;
- Ensure that all NYWO activities are adequately and properly supported with an appropriate level of staff resources and expertise.

### **Code of Practice**

#### **All adults working with the NYWO are expected to:**

- Treat all participants with respect;
- Try to ensure that their actions cannot be misunderstood or cause offence;
- Be aware that even caring physical contact with young person can be misinterpreted;
- Provide a good example of acceptable behaviour;
- Where possible, avoid working 1:1 with participants, or where this is not possible, ensure that other adults are within sight or hearing;
- Be available to listen to young people's concerns and refer them to other sources of help where appropriate;
- Encourage participants to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they do not like;
- Show understanding when dealing with sensitive issues and recognise that caution is required when discussing them.

#### **When working with young people, adults should also ask themselves:**

- Do my planned activities align with the best interests of the young people I am working with?
- How will the young people benefit from the proposed activity, and how can I maximise these benefits?
- Is my behaviour appropriate for the children I am working with just now?
- Do any of the children I am working with have specific needs which I need to take into account?

## Adults must not:

- Engage in inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children and/or young people;
- Make suggestive remarks or actions, even in jest;
- Deliberately place themselves or others in potentially compromising situations;
- Allow themselves to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour;
- Show favouritism to any individual;
- Exaggerate or trivialise any abuse-related issues;
- Permit abusive behaviour from others (for example: bullying, taunting, racism, etc...);
- Jump to conclusions about others without first checking facts;
- Believe “it could never happen to me”.

## Identifying types and indicators of abuse

In order to effectively protect children and young people against harm, all staff should be familiar with the various types and key signs of abuse. The Government’s *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2010) details four key types of abuse:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect

All staff are required to acquaint themselves with indicators of abuse (please see appendix 1).

## Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process by which individuals come to support terrorism or violent extremism. There is no typical profile for a person likely to become involved in extremism, or for a person who moves to adopt violence in support of their particular ideology. Although a number of possible behavioural indicators are listed below, staff should use their professional judgement and discuss with other colleagues if they have any concerns:

- Use of inappropriate language;
- Possession of violent extremist literature including digital material accessed via the internet and communication such as email and text messages;
- Behavioural changes;
- The expression of extremist views;
- Advocating violent actions and means;
- Association with known extremists;
- Seeking to recruit other to an extremist ideology.

If staff have any significant concerns about a child/young person beginning to support terrorism and/or violent extremism, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity.

## Female Genital Mutilation

It is illegal in the UK to subject a child to female genital mutilation (FGM) or to take a child abroad or aid or abet someone to take a child out of the country to undergo the procedure (Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003). Despite the harm it causes, FGM-practicing communities consider it acceptable to protect their cultural identity. The age at which girls are subject to FGM varies greatly from shortly after birth to any time up to adulthood. The average age is thought to be between 6 and 12 years but it is also thought that the age at which girls are mutilated is dropping. Although the age of the children and young people with whom the NYWO engages is such that they are not necessarily in the 'high risk' category for FGM, a child/young person may disclose that she is at risk of FGM, has suffered FGM, or that she has a sister or family member who is at risk of mutilation.

Staff should be alert to the following indicators:

- The family comes from a community known to practice FGM;
- A young person may talk about a long holiday to a country where the practice is prevalent;
- A young person may confide that they or a sister or other family member is to have a 'special procedure' or attend a 'special occasion';
- A young person may request help from a teacher or another adult.

Any girl/young person born to a woman who has suffered FGM or who has a sister or relative who has been subjected to the same must be considered to be at potential risk.

Any information or concern about a child/young person or member of their family being at risk of FGM must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency. This may be treated as an immediate child protection referral to the child/young person's home borough.

## What to do in the event of suspected abuse

If you have any reason to suspect that a young person at a NYWO event is being abused:

### **RECORD**

- As soon as possible, create a written record of all the facts known to you, including dates, times, place, persons present, and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour;

### **REMEMBER TO REPORT**

- Inform the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible;
- Give a copy of your written record to the designated safeguarding lead, ideally by emailing [safeguarding@nywo.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@nywo.org.uk).

If a young person at a NYWO event discloses abuse by a third party:

## RECEIVE

- Stay calm, do not appear shocked, try to act normally;
- Allow the individual to speak freely, without interruption;
- Do not question the individual or attempt to investigate the disclosure yourself.

## REASSURE

- Offer support and reassure the individual that you are taking what they say seriously;
- Tell them that they are not to blame and that they have done the right thing in speaking to you;
- **Never promise** that you will keep the disclosure a secret. Instead, explain that you will need to speak to another member of staff about it.

## REACT

- Take what the young person says seriously;
- Do not ask 'leading' questions, e.g. "What did they do next?" Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and that of the young person) in any later court proceedings.
- Explain what you have to do next and to whom you need to talk;
- Record and report as above.

## Allegations of misconduct or abuse by staff

In the event of allegations being made against a member of staff (employed or volunteer), the NYWO has a dual responsibility in respect of both the young person and staff member. The NYWO undertakes to ensure that the same person does not have responsibility for dealing with both welfare issues, and young people and staff employment issues.

Two separate procedures must be followed:

1. In respect of the young person: the designated safeguarding lead will carry out the process relating to the young person.
2. In respect of the staff member against whom the allegation is made, the designated safeguarding leader will carry out the process relating to the staff member.

In respect of (1), the designated safeguarding lead will contact police and/or make a referral to Social Services where necessary, and in all cases will keep a confidential record of the complaint. Where a decision is made not to make a referral, the NYWO will still be required to record details of why a referral was not made. This information may become relevant later on if further concerns emerge.

In respect of (2), the following process will be implemented:

- The NYWO will make formal contact with the local council who is responsible for providing instruction in the event of an allegation of abuse or suspicious behaviour made against a member of staff.

- The NYWO is legally obliged to alert the local authority designated officer (LADO) to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children and young people has:
  - Behaved in a way that has harmed/may have harmed a young person;
  - Possibly committed a criminal offence against a young person;
  - Behaved towards a young person in such a way that indicates they are unsuitable for such work.
- The LADO will instruct the NYWO on procedure and what information may be shared with the person who is the subject of the allegation(s). The NYWO and LADO will decide, in consultation with the police and/or other relevant agencies, what may be shared in situations which may possibly lead to a criminal investigation.
- Subject to advice from the LADO, and to any consequent restrictions on the information which can be shared, the NYWO will, as soon as possible, inform the accused person as to the nature of the allegation, how enquiries will be conducted, and the possible outcome.
- In all instances the NYWO will seek to ensure that any staff member is treated fairly and honestly and that they are supported in understanding the concerns expressed and the processes involved. They will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary or related process.

In all cases an incident must be referred to the designated safeguarding lead. Staff are reminded that it is not their role to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. Their role is to report the disclosure as it happened, without delay or prejudice. **Do not try to deal with any possible cases of abuse on your own.**

## Communication with young people

### via telephone

Staff should in no circumstances make or receive calls/messages to or from children and young people using their personal mobile phone numbers without the explicit consent, in writing, from the child/young person's parent or carer. On all courses a designated NYWO mobile phone will be available, and parents/carers and young people provided with its number for use in an emergency. This mobile phone should be pin-locked in order to protect any data held on it. Staff members who use the NYWO mobile phone should take/make any calls in an open environment where the conversation may be witnessed.

### via email

All email communications with participants under the age of 18 will be made using an official @nywo.org.uk address, and will take place via the parent/carers. If a member of NYWO staff receives an email directly from a young person, any response must have the designated safeguarding lead copied in ([safeguarding@nywo.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@nywo.org.uk)).

## Social media

The NYWO recognises that social media platforms can be a legitimate and effective way to communicate with young people. Applications frequently used by members include X, Facebook, TikTok and Instagram. Contact with young people through such fora should only take place through organisational accounts, currently X (@nywo\_gb) and Facebook.

No NYWO staff must do any of the following on their own personal social media accounts:

- Send or accept any 'friend' requests from NYWO student members on Facebook;
- 'Follow' or send 'friend' requests on other social media platforms;
- Join, accept invitations to or contribute to any groups (private or otherwise) relating to a NYWO course or activity, or member activity on social media;
- Send or respond to any private messages from a NYWO student member on social media.

The NYWO does not expect that its staff will protect their personal social media accounts (e.g. making their posts/content visible only to followers approved by the account holder); however, we do expect all staff to respect their association with the NYWO when using social media, and to behave accordingly.

## Photography, videography, and online safety

Written parental/carer consent for photography or video-recording of any young person is obtained prior to each course. Photographs and videos of course participants will be stored in a designated folder on the NYWO Google Drive, which is only accessible by designated NYWO staff and trustees.

Any camera used for the purpose of photographing/videoing course participants will have its memory wiped as soon as content has been transferred to the designated NYWO folder. The NYWO will ensure that any professional photographers or videographers engaged by the NYWO to take photos/make videos of course participants have an enhanced DBS check dated within the last three years, inclusive of their period of engagement. The NYWO will announce at all performances that video-recording and photography is not permitted during the performance.

## Residential and overnight activity

The NYWO will ensure that the following considerations are made when a course or other activity requires participants and staff to stay overnight:

- Staff members over the age of 25 will sleep in separate but nearby accommodation;
- Where bedroom, bathroom, and/or toilet facilities are shared, young people will be placed in accommodation with others of the same gender (where appropriate);
- Members of the pastoral staff are available on call overnight.

## Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the NYWO board of trustees and updated where appropriate. This will include the addition of contact details for Children's Services Teams in locations where NYWO activities will take place during the forthcoming year.

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## Appendix

### Definitions and signs of abuse

In order to effectively protect children and young people, staff should be familiar with the key signs and indicators of abuse, which are detailed below.

#### Physical abuse

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury or injury which results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child/young person. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury. A delay in seeking medical treatment for a child/young person when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern. Bruising may be more or less noticeable on children and young people with different skin tones or from different racial groups and specialist advice may need to be taken. Patterns of bruising that are suggestive of physical child abuse include:

- Bruises seen away from bony prominences;
- Bruises to the face, back, stomach, arms, buttocks, ears, and hands;
- Multiple bruises of uniform shape;
- Bruises carrying the imprint of an implement;
- Cigarette burns;
- Adult bite marks;
- Scalds.

Although bruising is the commonest injury in physical abuse, fatal non-accidental head injury and non-accidental fractures can occur without bruising. Any child/young person who has unexplained signs of pain or illness should be seen promptly by a doctor.

Behavioural changes can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents/carers being approached for explanation;
- Aggressive behaviour or severe outbursts of temper;
- Flinching when approached or touched;
- Reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather;
- Depression or withdrawn behaviour;
- Running away from home.

## Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse happens where there is a relationship between a carer and a child/young person and can manifest in the child/young person's behaviour or physical functioning. Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children, young people, and vulnerable adults who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down, or belittled. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children and young people not being allowed to mix/play with others. The physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- Failure to thrive or grow;
- Sudden speech disorders;
- Developmental delay, either physically or emotionally.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- Neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair-twisting, rocking;
- Being unable to play, or fear of making mistakes;
- Fear of parents/carers being approached regarding their behaviour;
- Self harm.

## Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves the use of a child/young person for gratification or sexual arousal by a person for themselves or others. Adults who use children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults to meet their own sexual needs abuse young people of all ages, including infants and toddlers. Usually in cases of sexual abuse it is the behaviour of children/young people/vulnerable adults which may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases children/young people/vulnerable adults who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The physical signs of sexual abuse include:

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal areas;
- Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas;
- Sexually-transmitted disease; vaginal discharge or infection;
- Stomach pains;
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down.

The following changes in behaviour may also indicate sexual abuse:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn);
- Fear of being left with a specific person/group of people;
- Sexual knowledge beyond their age/developmental level;
- Self-harm/mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts;
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money;
- Acting in a sexually-explicit way towards adults;

- Sexual drawings or language.

## Neglect

Neglect results in a child/young person suffering significant harm or impairment of development as a result of being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision, and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, or medical care. Neglect can be a very difficult form of abuse to recognise.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Hunger, sometimes stealing food from others;
- Poor personal hygiene;
- Losing weight, or being constantly underweight;
- Inappropriate dress for conditions/environment.

## Bullying

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else, e.g. name-calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening, or undermining someone. It is usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child/ young person both physically and emotionally. Bullying that happens online, using social networks, games and mobile phones, is often called cyberbullying. It is not always possible to see the signs of bullying, and no one sign indicates for certain that a child is being bullied. Signs to look out for include:

- Belongings being 'lost' or damaged;
  - Physical injuries such as unexplained bruises;
  - Being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school;
  - Underperforming at school;
  - Asking for or stealing money;
  - Nervousness, loss of confidence, becoming distressed or withdrawn;
  - Problems with eating or sleeping;
  - Bullying others.
-