

Saffron Walden Orchestral Society and Saffron Walden Children's Orchestra

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

This policy was ratified at the SWOS Committee Meeting on 8th April 2018.

This policy was drawn up in accordance with Southend, Essex and Thurrock Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures 2015. This document is underpinned by Working Together to Safeguard Children HMSO March 2015.

Additional Information: Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) - Threshold documents can be accessed at: www.escb.co.uk

Purpose of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

To inform staff, parents, volunteers and committee members about the responsibilities for safeguarding children attending SWSO and SWCO.

To enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out.

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Safeguarding

SWCO has a responsibility to protect and promote the welfare of children, attending courses.

Course organisers, teachers, coaches and helpers ("staff") must be clear about what is required of them individually and collectively to discharge this responsibility.

This document sets out how SWCO will meet their responsibilities:

- Code of Conduct
- What actions adults working with SWCO will take if they suspect a SWCO child is being abused
- Ensuring that as far as possible all people working or helping with the SWCO are suitable
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Code of Conduct for adults working with SWCO

- Staff personally should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff will ensure their behaviour including their dress and use of language. remains professional at all times
- Physical contact between adults and children in the SWCO should be to limited to the minimum required. Younger children and disabled children may need more physical contact than older children. Adults should avoid any physical contact which could be misconstrued.
- All staff and volunteers must be aware of the need to maintain appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships and never anywhere or at any time engage in any sexual relationship with children in the SWCO.
- Staff and volunteers should at all times avoid working in one to one situations, and should ensure that there is always another adult present. Where a one to one situation is necessary, they should ensure there is visual access, and remote or secluded areas should be avoided.
- Staff will never allow or condone bullying, racism or other forms of physical or verbal abuse by adults or children.
- Adults should not transport SWCO children in their cars without the express agreement of parents except in cases of emergency.
- Adults should be careful not to entrust the supervision of children to those under the age of 18. Where helpers are under the age of 18, care should be taken to ensure that they are not left alone with children and that they are not included in the numbers of adults required to meet SWCO's guidelines on ratios of adults to children.
- Parents are asked to agree on registration forms to photographs being taken of their child for use in SWCO publicity materials, provided these are not attributed.
- SWCO's complaints procedure is that any complaints should be made to a Committee Member who will ensure that the complaint is followed up appropriately with the Chairman of the Committee.

In the event of an allegation being made against an adult working with SWCO, SWCO will consult with the Children and Families Team at Essex County Council and adhere to the relevant procedures.

SWCO Role in Safeguarding

SWCO staff have an important role to play in picking up indicators of possible abuse or neglect through their contact with children. It is important that all staff know what to do if they have any such concerns. To accord with this requirement, SWCO Committee members, tutors and helpers will:

- *Maintain an ethos* where children are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Always take any indications of abuse seriously.
- If they have any suspicion that a child is being abused, report this via a Committee Member to Essex County Council Children and Families Services or the Police or NSPCC. Note Appendix 1 for categories of abuse.

- If a Committee Member has any doubts about the appropriateness of a child protection referral they will take further advice from the Committee Member with responsibility for Child Protection or the Chairman of the SWCO Committee.
- Ensure that if a child discloses s/he has been abused, they do not promise to the child that this will be kept a secret.

What should you do?

- Listen to the child
- Take what the child says seriously
- Act fast
- Continue to offer the child support.

Don't:

- Put it off
- Press the child for explanations
- Leave it to someone else to help the child
- Be afraid to voice your concerns, the child may need urgent protection and help.

Parental consultation

Where practicable, concerns should be discussed with the parent and agreement sought for a referral to local authority children's social care unless seeking agreement is likely to:

- place the child at risk of significant harm through delay or the parent's actions or reactions;
- Lead to the risk of loss of evidential material

For example in circumstances where there are concerns or suspicions that a serious crime such as sexual abuse or induced illness has taken place.

- Where a professional decides not to seek parental permission before making a referral to local authority children's social care, the decision must be recorded with reasons, dated and signed and confirmed in the referral to local authority children's social care.
- A child protection referral from a professional cannot be treated as anonymous, so the parent will ultimately become aware of the identity of the referrer. Where the parent refuses to give permission for the referral, unless it would cause undue delay, further advice should be sought from a manager or the nominated child protection adviser and the outcome fully recorded.

If, having taken full account of the parents' wishes, it is still considered that there is a need for referral:

- The reason for proceeding without parental agreement must be recorded;
- The parent's withholding of permission must form part of the verbal and written referral to local authority children's social care;
- The parent should be contacted to inform them that, after considering their wishes, a referral has been made.

Confidentiality

Child Protection raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers.

- All staff working with children have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (CSF social care and the Police).
- If a child confides in a member of staff/volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff/volunteer tell the child sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the child's sake. Within that context, the child should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it.
- Staff/volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.

Preventing unsuitable people from working with children

SWCO will operate safe recruitment practices including requesting sight of and recording appropriate Criminal Record Bureau checks.

The principle of ensuring appropriate Criminal Record Bureau checks are in place and recorded for Committee members and parent helpers, who are volunteers, cannot reasonably be applied. The very nature of the Orchestra means that we welcome parental support and assistance offered on a relatively ad-hoc basis during our courses. We therefore do not insist on checks being in place. However, SWCO does encourage checks to be in place for those who envisage working regularly or for a lengthy period as part of the Committee or as parent helpers.

Useful contacts and further information

Southend, Essex and Thurrock Family and Children's Social Care
0345 603 7634 (from 8.30 am - 5pm Monday to Friday)

Emergency Duty Team - Southend, Essex and Thurrock Health and Social Care
0345 606 1212 (out of hours)

National Society for the Protection of Children:
0808 800 5000

Appendix 1

Definitions of child abuse and neglect

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another e.g. where there is domestic violence and abuse;
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, including online;
- Exploiting and corrupting children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, including online and with mobile phones, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

In addition; sexual abuse includes abuse of children through sexual exploitation.

Penetrative sex where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of similar age, consenting partners is not usual. However, where a child is under the age of 13 it is classified as rape under s5 Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may involve a failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
 - Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
 - Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Note: Abuse of Trust

The Sexual Offences Act 2003

It is an offence for a person over 18 (e.g. teacher, sports coach, youth worker) to have a sexual relationship with a young person under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that young person even if the relationship is consensual. This applies where the young person is in full-time education and the teacher/responsible adult works in the same establishment as the young person, even if he/she does not teach the young person.