

International Youth Orchestra Bridges

Safeguarding Policy

Autumn 2023

Review date: Autumn 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 About the project

International Youth Orchestra Bridges (IYOB) is a collaborative project between the Waverley Ensemble in Surrey, UK and the West Coast Youth Orchestra in South Africa. UK rehearsals will be delivered in Coventry and online.

The trustees of the Waverley Ensemble and the West Coast Youth Orchestra take seriously their responsibility under section 175/157 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure there are robust arrangements across the project to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm or are at risk of suffering harm.

As, by its nature, the project will operate across multiple locations, any safeguarding concerns will be reported to the most appropriate authority at the time they occur.

1.2 Purpose of the safeguarding policy

This Policy applies to anyone working on behalf of The Waverley Ensemble including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students. Its purpose is to protect and enhance the safety and well-being of all children and young people by actively promoting awareness, good practice and sound procedures.

We believe the safety and well-being of children and young people is of the utmost importance and that they have a fundamental and equal right to be protected from harm regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. We fully recognise our statutory responsibility for safeguarding: the safety, protection and well-being of all children and young people that The Waverley Ensemble supports and interacts with, is paramount and has priority over all other interests. This includes responding immediately and appropriately where there is a suspicion that any young person under the age of 18 years old may be a victim of bullying, harassment, abuse (including physical, sexual, emotional) or neglect.

'Young Person' means those under 18 years old including all of those up to their 18th birthday- as designated a 'child' within the terms of the Children's Act 1989.

The Waverley Ensemble encourages a culture of listening to and engaging in dialogue, with children seeking their views in ways that are appropriate to their age, culture and understanding.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England including the Children's Act 2004 and "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018". [Working together to safeguard children \(PDF\)](#) (DfE), 2018 provides the key statutory guidance for anyone working with children and young people. All procedures and policies pertaining to safeguarding should be regularly reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

This policy was last reviewed on:

Date:..

Signed:...

2. Safeguarding information

2.1 Definitions of harm

For the purpose of this policy, The Waverley Ensemble has defined harm as:

- Neglect - the persistent failure to meet the basic physical and physiological needs of the young person that results in serious impairment of their health and development, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter and failure to respond to basic emotional needs, such as being cared for when sick.
- Abandonment - leaving a child alone and unattended in circumstances that are inappropriate for their age and/ or level of ability.
- Emotional abuse – persistent, emotional ill treatment that has a severe adverse effect on the emotional development of children and young people. It may involve conveying to them that they are not wanted, not loved or worthless. It may involve inappropriate expectations (such as taking on the responsibility of an adult within the family) being placed on the young person leaving them frightened and unable to cope. It may also involve the threatening, exploitation or corruption of children and young people.
- Physical abuse – hitting, kicking, shaking, slapping, and throwing, scalding, burning, poisoning, drowning, suffocating, or other action intended to cause physical harm or ill health to the child or young person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer covers up the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child or young person within their care.
- Racial abuse – any type of verbal or physical abuse that is directed at an individual or group because of their racial or ethnic background.
- Witnessing ill treatment, including domestic abuse of another person- this may impact the health or development of a child or young person.
- Sexual abuse or sexual exploitation - forcing or enticing a child or young person to participate in sexual activities, whether or not the child or young person is aware or has knowledge of what is happening. It includes child prostitution, encouraging children or young people to watch or participate in the production of pornographic material, online grooming, encouraging children and young people to behave in sexual inappropriate ways. Sexual acts include penetrative (rape or buggery) and non-penetrative acts such as touching or stroking.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 defines 'consent' as '*if he agrees by choice and has the capacity to make that choice*'. The Act, removes the element of consent for many sexual offences for:

- Children/young people under 16 (including under 13).
- Children/ young people under 18 having sexual relations with a person of trust (for example: teachers, youth workers, foster carers, police officers).
- Children / young people under 18 involved with family members over 18.
- Persons with a mental disorder impeding choice or who are induced, threatened or deceived.
- Persons with a mental disorder who have sexual relations with care workers.

In relation to young people under the age of 13, consent is irrelevant. The law says 'a child under the age of 13 does not, under any circumstances, have the legal capacity to consent to any form of sexual activity'.

The Police must be informed immediately of any sexual activity involving a child under 13 years of age.

2.2. General safeguarding best practice

In the interests of maintaining a safe environment for children and young people working with the Waverley Ensemble, staff and volunteers will:

- not behave as a young people's friend. Instead, staff will always maintain a professional manner when working with them.
- not accept a young person as a friend on any social networking site.
- Always keep a record of any text or email exchanges with a young person (staff will use work telephones where available).
- Always be aware that comments or actions may be perceived differently than intended, and be sensitive to the situation.
- Not meet a young person alone. Where meeting alone is unavoidable, staff will use public spaces for one-to-one meetings if you are not meeting in The Waverley Ensemble office or premises.
- Avoid detailed discussions about personal experiences e.g. drugs, alcohol, sex.
- Never speak to the press about a child or young person without permission from The Waverley Ensemble.

3. ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Overview and training

The Waverley Ensemble trustees will be initially responsible for the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and has designated two member of staff, Ishani Bhool and Cathy Scott-Burt, to manage the Safeguarding Policy and its implementation.

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead/ Manager to take appropriate action following any expression of concern and make referrals to the appropriate agency.

The Waverley Ensemble trustees will ensure that the designated Safeguarding Lead/ Manager participates in regular safeguarding training on an annual basis so that they are aware of the procedures of identifying and reporting suspected cases of abuse and neglect and are up to date with any legal changes.

All staff/ volunteers are aware of this Safeguarding Policy and related relevant procedures as part of their induction and their contract of employment.

All staff/ volunteers are informed and have access to regular training as required to update their knowledge on safeguarding.

The Waverley Ensemble will work in accordance with guidance and good practice from the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership. More information can be found at: [Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership \(surreyscp.org.uk\)](http://surreyscp.org.uk)

3.2 Safeguarding Lead/ Manager Responsibilities

The Safeguarding Manager will ensure that all members of staff/ volunteers have timely and relevant safeguarding training.

The Safeguarding Manager will take appropriate action following any expression of concern, disclosure or reported incident and make referrals to the appropriate agency.

3.3 Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities

Any new member of staff or volunteer with direct contact with young people will be taken through this safeguarding policy as part of the induction process and offered training as soon as possible after commencing their post.

All staff and volunteers participate in timely and relevant training, including undergoing a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

All staff have a duty to ensure that any suspected incident, allegation or other manifestation relating to child protection is reported using the procedures detailed below in this policy.

If in any doubt about what action to take, employees must seek advice from one of the named Safeguarding Leads/ Managers or in their absence, the CEO or board of trustees.

4. Responding to a safeguarding incident, concern or disclosure

4.1 Confidentiality and accountability

Confidentiality will be assured in all instances, but when there is risk of harm to a child, then the Waverley Ensemble will share relevant information or concerns with appropriate agencies.

If the child or young person is not in immediate danger and does not require immediate medical attention, the member of staff responding to the incident will inform one of the people with responsibility for safeguarding (see Appendix A).

4.2 Reporting procedures

In all cases we take every action to safeguard the child, children or young person(s). We will take *immediate* action in the following situations;

- If emergency medical attention is required, we will phone the emergency services or take the child/ young person to the nearest Accident and Emergency department.
- If the child or young person is in immediate danger we will contact the police by calling 999 (112 in South Africa).
- Any suspicion, allegation or disclosure of abuse or harm is reported immediately or as soon as practicably possible on the day of the occurrence to the Safeguarding Lead/ Manager.
- Staff are all aware that disclosure or evidence for concern may occur in a number of ways including a comment made by a child, physical evidence such as bruising, a change in behaviour or inappropriate behaviour or knowledge.

- The Safeguarding Lead/ Manager, working with the staff member or volunteer, records the concern, using the appropriate Reporting Form. The Safeguarding Lead/ Manager is responsible for ensuring that a copy of the Incident Report or Request for Support referral form is immediately passed onto the most senior person responsible for safeguarding or Surrey Children's Services, C-SPA (details below). In the case of a concern during rehearsals in Coventry, the referral form should be passed to Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership. Both/either form must be kept strictly confidential and stored securely.
- It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Manager or in their absence the CEO/ person who has overall responsibility for safeguarding to deal with safeguarding matters. If further referral is necessary, it will either be through Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership, Surrey Children's services, Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership or the Police.

The Safeguarding Manager, CEO or chairperson of trustees is responsible for informing the employee who reported the disclosure of any action taken and any outcome, if this is appropriate.

The Safeguarding Manager, CEO or chairperson of trustees ensures any partner agencies involved with the young person are made aware of the disclosure and the action taken where relevant and where information sharing guidance permits this.

Information may have to be shared outside the Waverley Ensemble because often only when information held by a number of workers is put together, that a picture of child abuse emerges. All staff and volunteers adhere to the information-sharing protocol published by HM Government, adopted by the Children's Trust and endorsed by SSCP and CSCP. In addition to this, whilst respecting cultural differences, the basic requirement for children is that they are kept safe across social, ethnic and cultural boundaries.

Appendix A

International Youth Orchestra Bridges safeguarding team

Safeguarding manager

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CEO/ Senior lead for safeguarding and child protection

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