



## **Child Protection Policy**

### **Based on the British Federation of Brass Bands' CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES; Recommended good practice in brass banding**

#### **Introduction**

The introduction of this Child Protection policy should be seen as a clear signal by the BRITISH FEDERATION OF BRASS BANDS (BFBB) that it is determined to ensure all necessary steps are taken to protect from harm, those children and young people who participate in brass playing at all levels.

The policy establishes BFBB position, role and responsibilities and, together with the procedures section clarifies what is expected of other organisations, brass bands and individuals involved in brass banding.

It very clearly highlights the importance placed by BFBB on the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It also safeguards and protects all personnel from the risk of false allegations of abuse or poor practice.

Everyone who participates in brass banding is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. To ensure this, BFBB has developed principles that all its personnel and member bands should follow.

These principles apply to all participants, but young people in particular are entitled to a higher duty of care and to be protected from poor practice or abuse. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the banding environment.

Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with children in order to harm them. The BFBB is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone in brass banding accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means following procedures to protect children and to report any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

Everyone working in brass banding either in a paid or a voluntary capacity, together with those working in affiliated organisations, has a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of children and preventing their abuse. Anyone who may have regular contact with children will be a very important link in identifying cases where a child needs protection. All policies and procedures discussed below refer to vulnerable adults as well as to children.

#### **Policy statement**

The BFBB is committed to the following:

- Making the welfare of young people paramount

- Ensuring opportunities for all young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in brass banding in a enjoyable and safe environment.
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect young people from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.
- Taking action swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse.
- Ensuring that all its member bands and affiliated organisations will similarly accept responsibility for the welfare of the young people in their care in accordance with the BFBB policies and procedures, and will incorporate this within their constitutions.

### **Terms and abbreviations**

The following terms and abbreviations are used in this document.

- Anyone under the age of 18 is considered to be a child/young person.
- ‘Parent’ is used as a generic term to include parents, carers and guardians.
- ‘Personnel’ includes employees of the BFBB as well as volunteers and all participants in the art of brass banding.
- ‘Welfare Officer’ is the individual within a band whose responsibilities are explained in section 3.4 below.
- BFBB: British Federation Of Brass Bands  
CPO: Child Protection Officer  
CRB: Criminal Records Bureau

### **Good Practice, Poor Practice and Abuse**

To provide young people with the best possible experience and opportunities in brass banding everyone must operate within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. Not only will this allow brass banding to make a positive contribution to the development of young people and safeguards their welfare, but it also protects all personnel from the risk of false allegations of abuse or poor practice.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse, whether intentional or accidental. It is not therefore the responsibility of employees or participants in brass bands to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is, however, their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and to act if they have concerns about the welfare of a child, as explained in section 4. This section (2) will help you identify what is meant by good practice, poor practice and abuse.

### **Good practice**

All personnel should adhere to the following principles and actions;

- Before undertaking any activities involving young people, conduct a risk assessment to identify possible sources of danger and take appropriate action to minimise these risks
- Make the experience of brass playing fun and enjoyable; promote fairness, confront and deal with bullying and do not condone rule violations or the use of prohibited or illegal substances. Insist on adherence to Child Protection procedures
- Treat all young people equally; this means giving both the more and less talented members of a group similar attention, time, respect and preserving their dignity
- Respect the developmental stage of each young person and do not risk sacrificing their welfare in a desire for personal achievements. This means ensuring that the practice intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional stage of the development of

the student. Concerts, band competitions, solo competitions etc. must be suited primarily to the needs and the interests of the child, not those of the parents, teacher or band

- Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect, in which young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making. Avoid situations where the teacher, conductor or any other member of the band uses their position and power to decide what the student should or should not do without consideration of the young person's needs and capabilities
- Always be publicly open when working with children. Avoid teaching sessions or meetings where a teacher and an individual student are completely unobserved
- Where children need to be supervised in the changing rooms, teachers and band helpers should work in pairs, and involve parents if possible. Maintain an appropriate and open environment, with no secrets.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of physical guidance is required in teaching technique, this should be provided openly and with the consent of the student. It is important to educate parents of what is and is not acceptable in the context of brass playing. Physical contact (touching) can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the student's permission has been given.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with students. It is inappropriate for teachers and others in positions of authority to have an intimate relationship with a young person, even if they are over 16, the normal age of legal consent. (This could also be a criminal offence 'abuse of trust' in certain circumstances defined by the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000)
- Maintain appropriate standards of behaviour at social events that young people attend
- Be an excellent role model, for example by not smoking or drinking alcohol while working with young people
- Communicate regularly with parents and involve them in decision-making. Gain their consent in writing to act in loco parentis to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises
- Be aware of any medical conditions, existing injuries and medicines being taken. Keep a written record of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given. Arrange that someone with knowledge of first aid is readily available
- Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements, especially if an overnight stay is involved

### **Poor practice**

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all personnel;

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Taking children alone in a car on journeys, however short
- Taking children to your home where they will be alone with you
- Sharing a room with a child
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form
- Allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reducing a child to tears as a form of control
- Letting allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon
- Doing things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves
- Having children stay at your home with you unsupervised

Where cases arise where it is impractical to avoid any of the situations mentioned in this section, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the organisation and the children's parents.

If, during your care of a child, you accidentally hurt them, the child seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a brief written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

#### **Procedures to implement CRB checks**

Band members who need to be vetted;

- All band personnel (including non-member helpers) who will have significant access to children should be checked. The band Welfare Officer should keep a record of all such people and ensure that they have been vetted through the CRB.

#### **How this policy impacts on the Medway Towns Band**

The Medway Towns Band does not operate a youth band. However, members of either band may be less than 18 years of age, particularly in the Medway Concert Brass band as this band supports players of developing ability and so is more likely to attract members of a younger age. In accordance with the above guidance, all members of the Medway Towns Bands have responsibility for the safety of any children or young people who are members of the organisation, and should therefore ensure that they follow the good practice outlined in this document.

Because there is no direct teaching of young people or children in the band, and no members have a specific responsibility for, or are likely to be working alone with any young person or child, the committee have judged that CRB checks are not required for any members of the organisation. The committee believes that all members have responsibility for the welfare of any young people/ children, and so a designated Welfare Officer is not appropriate.

If, in the future, the Medway Towns Band begins tuition for young people on an individual basis, or plans to start a youth band, this policy and practice will be reviewed.

#### **Conclusion**

The British Federation of Brass Bands and the Medway Towns Band, by accepting this policy document, has indicated its determination to ensure that children and young people can participate in all forms of brass banding activity, and do so, with their safety being of paramount importance.

It is essential that this document is representative of a process of continual improvement in the area of child protection within brass banding. It is for all adults engaged in brass banding activities to promote good practice and procedures, whilst being ever vigilant and aware of their responsibilities towards the children and young people in their care.

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