



# Britten Sinfonia

## **BRITTEN SINFONIA SAFEGUARDING POLICY (Incorporating Child Protection Policy)**

Britten Sinfonia (BS) works with children and vulnerable adults in schools and community settings, and in venues in which the Orchestra performs. Britten Sinfonia is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and vulnerable adults with whom we work. This Policy Statement sets out Good Practice Guidelines for all Britten Sinfonia staff, including freelance musicians and workshop leaders working with the organisation.

### **1. Terminology used in this document**

BS uses the word “child” to refer to anyone under the age of 18, as defined by the Children Act 1989.

In this context, “vulnerable adult” refers to anyone who is aged 18 or over who:

- is living in residential care or sheltered housing or is receiving care in their own home
- is receiving any form of healthcare
- is detained in prison, remand centre, young offender institution, secure training centre, attendance centre or under the powers of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- is under the supervision of the probation services
- is receiving a specified welfare service i.e. support, assistance or advice by any person the purpose of which is to develop an individuals’ capacity to live independently or support their capacity to do so
- is receiving a service or participating in an activity for people who have particular needs because of their age or who have any form of disability
- is an expectant or nursing mother living in residential care
- is receiving direct payments from a local authority or health and social care trust in lieu of social services
- requires assistance in the conduct of their own affairs

Definition of a “Regulated Activity Provider”

- responsible for management or control of regulated activity, paid or unpaid
- makes arrangements for people who work in that activity

Definition of “Regulated Activity”

- contact with children or vulnerable adults
- care, education, training, supervision, treatment or transport
- takes place in e.g. school, care home
- activity takes place “frequently” or “intensively”

Definition of “frequently”

- where work takes place once a week or more with the same group of children/vulnerable adults

Definition of “intensively”

- where work takes place on 4 days in one month or more or overnight with the same group children/ vulnerable adults.

“BS staff” applies to any freelance musician or workshop leader working on a BS project regardless of duration, as well as permanent members of staff and board members.

## **2. Principles**

On all BS projects in educational and community settings, children and adults have the right to be safe from harm or abuse.

We respect the rights and dignity of every child and adult with whom we work.

All children and vulnerable adults will be treated with equal respect, regardless of age, gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

All members of BS staff working with children and vulnerable adults have a responsibility to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of these people, and to take seriously and act upon any allegations or suspicions of abuse or neglect.

The feelings and concerns of any child or vulnerable adult, and / or their parent or carer, will be listened to and acted upon.

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

The designated Safeguarding Officer at Britten Sinfonia is **Rachel Wilkinson**, Creative Learning Manager, 01223 608893 or email [rachel.wilkinson@britten-sinfonia.com](mailto:rachel.wilkinson@britten-sinfonia.com).

All other members of staff working for Britten Sinfonia should report any concerns to the Safeguarding Officer immediately.

Any schools or other groups working with Britten Sinfonia should report any concerns about Britten Sinfonia staff to the Safeguarding Officer immediately. The Safeguarding Officer will hand over information to the police, social services or other bodies as appropriate.

## **4. Processes**

### **BS STAFF**

All members of BS Creative Learning staff will have an enhanced Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) check and recruitment of new staff members will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) check.

When recruiting a new member of Creative Learning staff, reference to the Safeguarding Procedure will be noted on job descriptions, application forms and at interview.

## **BS FREELANCE MUSICIANS AND WORKSHOP LEADERS**

All freelance workshop leaders employed by BS to work with children or vulnerable adults either in regulated activity or in circumstances where they will be in sole charge of children or vulnerable adults will be subject to an enhanced DBS check.

The majority of BS musicians are enhanced DBS checked through their freelance work elsewhere. Where they are working on Regulated Activity, or if required by the school or other organisation, BS will carry out new DBS checks on musicians. However, this is not always possible for shorter projects, where musicians are booked only a few weeks in advance of a project. For one-off visits or short projects, we will therefore ensure that musicians are never left alone with children without another member of DBS-checked staff being present.

Workshop leaders, BS staff and musicians will receive a verbal 'safeguarding' introduction prior to each project, in addition to receiving a copy of the Safeguarding Policy. The Safeguarding Policy will be included in all freelance contracts for Creative Learning work. Upon signing and returning their contract, freelancers confirm they have read and understood the policy and will adhere to the guidelines therein.

## **PERFORMANCE LICENSING FOR CHILDREN**

For any child under school leaving age (any child aged 16 or under on the last Friday in June) engaged in a performance, BS will either apply for an individual licence for that child or obtain a Child Performers Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) for the relevant event.

## **RISK ASSESSMENTS**

BS will liaise with venues to ensure that proper risk assessments have been carried out for activities involving children and vulnerable adults, or undertake to carry out risk assessments itself where appropriate.

## **PHOTO / VIDEO PERMISSION**

BS will seek consent from parents or carers (or from the organisation who hold these consents e.g. school office) before using any images of children or vulnerable adults in press or publicity material.

BS musicians expect the presence of a member of staff from the Regulated Activity Provider throughout projects with children and vulnerable adults. Where BS is the Regulated Activity Provider, the Safeguarding Officer will ensure that the Policy and Procedures are adhered to at all times.

Further information on the implementation of this policy is available in the attached Safeguarding Policy in Practice section.

This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed every 3 years or whenever there is a major change in the organisation or relevant legislation.

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY IN PRACTICE**

The following is intended as guidance for Britten Sinfonia staff and musicians and workshop leaders working with Britten Sinfonia.

### **1. Why this guidance is needed**

It is important that all members of staff are aware of safe and appropriate working practices. Even if you are not leading a workshop, your presence in a school or other setting over a number of days or weeks will mean that children and / or vulnerable adults may grow to trust you. The purpose of this guidance is to advise you on appropriate behaviour with children or vulnerable adults, firstly so that you know what to do if an individual reports concerns to you, or you observe suspicious or worrying behaviour; and secondly so that you can protect yourself against unfounded suspicions or allegations. Although it is unlikely that you will ever have to use the guidance given here, it is good practice to be aware of it and know where you can go for further information and advice.

### **2. Good practice**

All personnel should adhere to the following basic principles:

- Always work in an open environment, i.e. avoiding private or unobserved situations. This does not mean that you should not work alone with small groups of children or vulnerable adults simply that you should maintain an open atmosphere whilst doing so.
- Good practice includes valuing and respecting children and vulnerable adults as individuals; this will always exclude bullying, shouting, racism, sectarianism or sexism.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where you do need to make physical contact (e.g. to show them how to use an instrument), always do so openly and ask for their consent first.
- Be an excellent role model; this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people and using appropriate language at all times.

The following are examples of poor practice and to be avoided:

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time with young people away from others.
- Taking young people alone in a car on journeys.
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Using inappropriate language.
- Making sexually suggestive comments or jokes in the presence of young people.
- Allowing allegations made by a young person or vulnerable adult to go unchallenged unrecorded or not acted upon.

### **3. Definitions and signs of abuse**

In your work with children and vulnerable adults, you may find yourself concerned about an individual. Abuse can be any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment, or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. Indications that an individual is being abused may include one or more of the following (this list is not exhaustive):

- Direct description of abuse by the individual
- Expression of concern by another connected individual
- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns
- Unexplained changes in an individual's behaviour or performance
- Difficulty in socialising or being prevented from socialising
- Becoming dirty or unkempt

It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not abuse is occurring, or to investigate in any way, but simply to report concerns to the Safeguarding Officer.

#### **4. Responding appropriately to safeguarding issues**

If a child or vulnerable adult reports allegations of abuse to you, you should follow these steps:

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is said.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- If it is a child making the disclosure tell them the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it.
- Allow the person making the disclosure to continue at their own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared.
- Record in writing what was said, using the person's own words, as soon as possible – note the date, time, any names mentioned and to whom the information was given. Then sign and date the record.
- It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies.

#### **5. Reporting concerns**

All suspicions and allegations must be reported to the Safeguarding Officer at Britten Sinfonia, Rachel Wilkinson, on 01223 608893 or email [rachel.wilkinson@brittensinfonia.com](mailto:rachel.wilkinson@brittensinfonia.com).

The following action may then be taken:

- Discussion with Safeguarding Officer at the school or other formal setting in which the suspicion or allegation arose
- Referral to Social Services
- Referral to Police

Do not confront the alleged abuser in any way.

#### **6. Allegations against staff**

Any concerns about Britten Sinfonia staff should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer Rachel Wilkinson, or, if for any reason you feel this is inappropriate, to the Chief Executive, Meurig Bowen, on 07946 887106 or [meurig.bowen@brittensinfonia.com](mailto:meurig.bowen@brittensinfonia.com).

The Safeguarding Officer or Chief Executive will then consider the matter and decide whether to report to the authorities as above or, after taking appropriate advice (which may include discussing the circumstances on a confidential basis with professional advisers), to deal with the matter internally or not to take any further action. The Safeguarding Officer and / or Chief Executive have the right to suspend from duties with immediate effect the member of staff against whom the allegation has been made.