

B Sharp

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Systems, Procedures and Professional Conduct

Policy Statement

1. We believe that all children, young people and vulnerable adults (CYP), irrespective of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socioeconomic background have the right to be protected from abuse and that their welfare is of paramount importance.
2. We acknowledge our duty of care and undertake to engage in safeguarding and child protection procedures and protocols that are compliant with current legislation (Children Act 1989 & 2004) and best practice as set out in national guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013*.
3. We seek to build a protective culture that puts the interests of CYP first; helps them feel confident that if they have a concern, someone will listen to them and take them seriously.
4. Ultimate responsibility rests with the Chair and Director who will take all reasonable steps to ensure the effective operation of this policy. However, day-to-day responsibility for its implementation also lies with our staff by which term we include: our board of trustees, paid staff and volunteers, contracted and sessional workers and professional guests.

The purpose of this policy and accompanying notes is to promote good practice and equip our staff (especially our music leaders and young music leaders) to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding and child protection issues.



Designated Officer

The B Sharp designated officer responsible for Safeguarding and Child Protection is the Director Ruth Cohen - T: 07947 334138 E: ruthcohen@bsharp.uk.com

Policy Review

January 2020 (or in response to a change in legislation)

Systems and Procedures

Recruitment, Training and Supervision of Staff

B Sharp recognise that some people seek employment to gain access to CYP in order to abuse or ill treat them. The following procedures outline how we take all reasonable steps to ensure we recruit the right people and inform them of how they are required to assist us in remaining compliant with current legislation while developing their own good practice.

Recruitment

1. Potential staff and volunteers undergo an interview.
2. Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo) is required.
3. Two confidential references are sought.
4. References are followed up and qualifications are substantiated.
5. All staff working directly with CYP are required to be DBS certified.

Induction

6. Staff and volunteers receive formal or informal induction.
7. The job requirements and responsibilities are clarified.
8. Safeguarding and child protection is explained, and training needs identified.
9. Staff receive a copy of B Sharp's Code of Conduct (Staff Handbook).

Training

10. Staff and volunteers are required to attend at least one training workshop on safeguarding and child protection. This involves:
 - Working safely and effectively with children and young people - understanding B Sharp's Safeguarding policy and working practices.
 - Recognising their responsibilities and how to report concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
 - How to respond to disclosure - concerns expressed by a child, young person, vulnerable adult or a third party.
 - Analysing their own methods against established good practice.
 - Ensuring their own practice protects them from vulnerability and false allegations.
11. All staff will have annual Safeguarding training updates.

Supervision

12. Staff have regular line management meetings and an annual review meeting.

Contracted staff, guest musicians and sessional workers

13. Contracted staff, guest musicians and sessional workers are given a copy of our *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Statement* with their contract or agreement. They are required to sign receipt of this document, state they have read and understood it and agree to abide by the detail of the policy.



Health and Safety

B Sharp takes health and safety seriously and is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment in the work place or during an activity/event. ***See Health and Safety Policy.***

1. In addition to ensuring a healthy environment, our activity/event risk assessments take into account risks relating to the safe keeping and protection of children and young people.



Supervision of Children and Young People

1. All our projects, activities and events are properly supervised with the following ratio of responsible adults to children and young people:
 - Aged 11 - 18 years; 1 x responsible adult to 15 CYP
 - Aged 10 and under; 1 x responsible adult to 8 CYP
2. Our event/activity registration forms ask parents to inform us:
 - If their child is to be collected after an activity or is able to make their own way home.
 - If they are to be collected, by whom.
 - If their child has permission to leave the venue (older young people during a rehearsal/performance break, for example).



Confidentiality

1. All information given to us by individuals or members of their family are treated as confidential and securely stored.
2. All records of safeguarding concerns are detailed and accurate and securely stored.



Photographs and Videos

We like to document our progress and celebrate our successes, and this often involves producing photographs and videos of our work.

1. Our event/activity registration forms ask parents for permission to use photographs and videos of their children in our publicity materials.
2. In a school setting, permission for the use of photographs and videos is sought from the head teacher.
3. We do not publish CYPs' names alongside their photograph unless they have made an achievement or won a prize, for example, in which case permission is sought from their parents.
4. Photographs and videos are uploaded to various social media sites only with permission of individuals or their parents.



Taking Action

Our procedure for raising awareness and responding to suspicions or evidence of abuse or neglect has been taken from the NSPCC website.

Definitions

Safeguarding is defined as the actions taken to prevent harm/abuse happening to a child.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and refers to actions undertaken to protect specific children who are, or at risk of, suffering harm.

Child abuse is any action by another person - adult or child - that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event. And it is increasingly happening online.

Physical abuse is deliberately hurting a child causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or persuading a child to take part in sexual activities (which they may not understand or recognise as wrong). This may involve physical contact or happen online.

Child sexual exploitation is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status while sometimes believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship. This may involve trafficking.

Emotional abuse is the ongoing emotional maltreatment or neglect of a child and can involve deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate or ignore them or treating them as worthless.

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship and may include emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological abuse. It can be on-going after a relationship has ended. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse.

Grooming is the building of an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. This can take place around the family home or online. Many children do not recognise grooming or understand that it is abuse.

Bullying is behaviour such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

Cyber bullying happens online, using social networks and mobile phones.

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and is the most common form of child abuse. A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care.

Disclosure

Disclosure is the term we use to describe someone telling us something about themselves or a third party.

We may learn of actual or possible abuse or ill treatment in a variety of ways:

1. The young person may tell us directly.
2. A third party may tell us about their own concerns or of a conversation they had with a young person.
3. We may see signs of physical injury on a young person for which there is no believable explanation:
 - Cuts and bruises that are NOT likely to have been caused by normal, daily activities that might account for scraped elbows, knees and shins,
 - Clusters of uniform-shaped marks especially those that show the use of an implement,
 - Evidence of burns, bites, scalds and broken bones,
 - Evidence of self-harm or signs that a need for medical attention is not being met.

4. We may witness an unusual pattern of behaviour that might include:
 - Aggression, temper outbursts, withdrawal, flinching when approached, signs of fear when parents are approached, neurotic behaviours (sulking, hair twisting, rocking),
 - Extreme fear of making a mistake.
5. We may see two or more young people interacting inappropriately.

Procedure for responding to accidents

1. If the CYP is injured during a B Sharp activity or event (in a B Sharp venue or school or similar setting) we will (after having tended to the accident):
 - Make a record of the injury in the accident book.
 - Have the record countersigned by the teacher or another responsible adult in a school or similar setting.
2. If the CYP arrives at a B Sharp activity or event with signs of ill treatment or injury, we will:
 - Discuss it with the parent, or
 - Discuss it with the teacher, or
 - Raise a concern with a responsible adult, or
 - Raise a concern with the B Sharp Director. In all cases above, the Director must be informed.
3. We will make a full and complete record of the signs of injury and date and time observed which will be countersigned by a responsible adult. This will:
 - Protect us and our staff in case of false accusations in the future.
 - Provide evidence in the case of needing to inform the authorities.

Procedure for responding to disclosure

We will, and train our staff to:

1. Remain calm and in control - this will give the young person or informant confidence in our ability to handle the situation.
2. Listen carefully to what is said without interrupting. Allow the young person to tell the story at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification.
3. Ask questions in a way that does not lead to a particular answer.
4. Reassure the young person that they did the right thing in telling us.
5. Do not promise to 'keep it a secret'. Tell them as soon as possible that we will share this information with others who need to know and who will be able to help.
6. Tell the young person what we are going to do/what will happen next.
7. Tell the designated person immediately
 - In school, tell the head teacher (then the B Sharp Director) In a B Sharp environment, tell the B Sharp Director.
 - If a CYP makes a disclosure, staff should **not** discuss this with anyone other than the designated person.
8. Make a written note at the first opportunity, keeping a copy for our own reference, and include:
 - Date, time and place of the incident and/or the disclosure,
 - The name of the young person and anyone referred to,
 - A description using the young person's words where appropriate,
 - A counter signature if appropriate (in a school setting this would be the head or another teacher),
 - Your name, date and time.

IMPORTANT

We will take the stance that we are not responsible for deciding that abuse has taken place. This is for the professional child protection agencies to do after we have made a report. It is our responsibility to take action in the case of suspicions or evidence and not let things go unremarked.

Misconduct on the part of staff or professional guests/contracted workers

We always take concerns about safeguarding seriously and will fully support anyone who, in good faith, reports their concerns about another's inappropriate behaviour, be this a member of the B Sharp staff or a professional guest, contracted worker etc.

1. The incident will be dealt with by the B Sharp Director in the first instance. This will be done in the strictest confidence.
2. The Director will require a brief written report comprising:
 - Date, time and place of the incident or reason for suspicion,
 - The name of person/people involved, Name, date and time. A description of the incident,
3. In the case of an accusation against a member of staff, s/he will be suspended immediately. This does not imply guilt. It is a measure intended to protect and reassure staff, CYP and their parents. The accused will be presumed innocent until proved guilty.
4. The accused will be informed of their rights and may be accompanied at any following interview with the Director. This meeting will be minuted.
5. If the matter cannot be concluded at an interview with the Director, she will call on the Disciplinary Committee (comprising the Chair, the Director and one other Trustee). This meeting will also be minuted.
6. If there is evidence to substantiate the accusation, the individual's association with B Sharp will be terminated and the appropriate authorities informed.



Complaints

B Sharp encourages all its staff and participants to be open about their thoughts and feelings and often asks for genuine feedback, warts and all. In this way, we aim to avoid the necessity for our participants and their families or a member of the wider public to make a complaint. However, should there be cause, the following procedure is in place and is published on our website.

1. Contact Ruth in the first instance for an initial conversation - Ruth Cohen - T: 07947 334138 E: ruthcohen@bsharp.uk.com
2. If you would prefer to talk to Ruth directly, you can always be accompanied by a friend or a parent/guardian.
3. If you are not happy with the response you receive from Ruth, contact the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Hannah Lovegrove T:07971 434336 E: hannah@hannahlovegrove.co.uk

Professional Conduct

We supply the following notes to all our staff who work in schools or similar settings in order to support them in developing a professional approach, avoid false accusations of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour and create a relaxed and fun environment for our participants.

Working in Schools or Similar Settings

The following code of conduct illustrates how to create a positive culture and climate - and protect yourself from allegations of unprofessional or inappropriate behaviour. It is based on the Independent Theatre Council's report, *Working in Schools/Settings: A Practical Guide to Partnership* and Sport England's model *Safeguarding & Child Protection policy*.

Arrival (by car)

- Drive slowly on the school premises taking particular care when reversing.
- If you don't know where the school entrance is, park and investigate on foot rather than drive around the school grounds.
- Never obstruct fire exits when parking, even temporarily while searching where to unload.
- Switch off music on arrival.
- Keep the vehicle locked at all times.

Checking in

- Sign in at reception (the receptionist will clarify parking and unloading arrangements).
- Wear any visitor badge you are given.
- Listen to, or check on, school procedures and follow them.
- Use only the staff toilets - never the children's.
- Keep to your designated areas; avoid wandering around the school; avoid shouting, loud laughter and other noise; avoid slamming doors.
- Report any accidents or breakages immediately.
- Clear up after your activity and take your rubbish away with you.

General conduct

DO

- Treat all CYPs with respect.
- Give positive and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Project a caring attitude but remember that automatically laughing at something a CYP might say to you may be hurtful; they may not have intended it to be funny.
- Avoid being left alone with a single CYP.
- Sit beside CYPs; don't allow them to sit on your knee.
- Leave all disciplinary matters to the teachers.

- Leave all behavioural issues (i.e. breaking up a fight) to the teachers.
- Leave the administering of first aid to the teachers.
- Use the guidelines for responding to disclosure (page 22) if someone asks for help or discloses to you.
- Use the guidelines for reporting any suspicion you may have that a CYP is being abused (page 23)

General conduct

NEVER

- Smoke on or near the school premises, including in your vehicle.
 - Consume alcohol or recreational drugs before or during your school engagement.
 - Allow CYP to find prescribed drugs in your belongings, including your car.
 - Engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
 - Initiate any physical contact; it shouldn't be necessary. If the nature of the workshop requires physical contact this should be discussed with the teachers in advance.
 - If a CYP initiates physical contact (hugging for example) deflect them if possible.
 - Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative activities, including horseplay.
 - Make sexually suggestive comments, even in fun.
 - Allow inappropriate language to go unchallenged.
 - Work or perform without the presence of a teacher except by prior agreement where arrangements have been made.
 - Work alone with a CYP unless by prior arrangement and with the full knowledge of other adults. Leave a door open if appropriate.
 - Reprimand or shout at a CYP.
 - Reduce a CYP to tears as a form of control.
 - Allow allegations made by a child, young person or vulnerable adult go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
 - Do things of a personal nature for CYP that they are able to do for themselves.
 - Give a pupil a lift in your vehicle.
 - Go to a child or young person's home - keep a friendly but professional distance in your relationships.
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- Have any private direct contact with CYP via social media. Text or email CYP without copying in their parent/guardian or the office/CEO.

