

Orchestra of Square Chapel

Safeguarding Policy

Orchestra of Square Chapel is committed to protecting the well-being, health, and rights of everyone who participates in our activities. We believe everyone has the right to be safe from harm and to enjoy their musical experience in a secure, inclusive, and respectful environment. This policy outlines our commitment and the procedures we follow to fulfil our safeguarding responsibilities.

1. Scope and Purpose

This policy applies to all individuals involved with the orchestra, including committee members, musical directors, section leaders, volunteers, playing members, and visiting professionals – hereafter jointly referred to as “members”. This policy covers all activities organised or managed by the orchestra, including rehearsals, concerts, workshops, and social events.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide clear guidance on safeguarding responsibilities.
- Establish robust procedures for reporting and responding to concerns.
- Ensure a consistent and safe approach across all orchestra activities.

Orchestra of Square Chapel is an adult orchestra which does not currently involve players under 18 years of age. At our public concerts the presence of children or vulnerable adults in the audience is not considered to create a position of responsibility on behalf of Orchestra of Square Chapel.

2. Key Principles

2.1 Welfare of the Individual is Paramount

The welfare and best interests of children, young people, and adults at risk are the primary consideration in all decisions and actions.

2.2 Zero Tolerance of Abuse

We have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of abuse, neglect, bullying, or exploitation. All concerns will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

2.3 Empowerment and Inclusion

We support the rights of all individuals to be heard, respected, and involved in decisions that affect them. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment free from discrimination.

2.4 Prevention through Awareness

We proactively promote safeguarding through clear codes of conduct and safe working practices to prevent harm from occurring.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Orchestra Committee

The Committee has ultimate responsibility for ensuring this policy is implemented, reviewed, and adhered to. They will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Officer.

3.2 Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

The DSO is the first point of contact for all safeguarding concerns. Their duties include:

- Providing advice and support on safeguarding matters.
- Managing and recording reported concerns.
- Liaising with statutory agencies (e.g., Local Authority Children’s or Adult Social Care, Police) where necessary.

- Ensuring all members understand their responsibilities.

3.3 All Members

Everyone involved has a responsibility to:

- Read, understand, and follow this policy and associated codes of conduct.
- Promote a safe and positive environment.
- Report any concerns about the welfare of an individual immediately to the DSO.

4. Recognising and Responding to Concerns

4.1 Types of Abuse and Harm

All members should be aware of the potential signs of abuse, which can be physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, or financial. Harm can also arise from bullying, harassment, discrimination, or radicalisation.

4.2 Procedure for Reporting a Concern

If a anyone is in immediate danger, call the Police on 999.

For all other concerns, follow this procedure:

1. **Listen:** Allow the individual to speak without interruption. Do not promise confidentiality.
2. **Reassure:** Tell them they are right to speak up and that you will take their concern seriously.
3. **Record:** As soon as possible, write down what was said or observed, using the individual's own words. Note the date, time, location, and people present. Sign and date the record.
4. **Report:** Immediately report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Do not investigate the matter yourself.

4.3 Next Steps

In the case of any complaint relating to the behaviour of a member, the DSO will report to the committee who will investigate and take appropriate action, which may include termination of membership.

5. Recording and Confidentiality

Safeguarding concerns will be recorded accurately, stored securely, and shared only with those who need to know to ensure the individual's safety. Records will be kept in accordance with data protection law. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if withholding information could place an individual at risk.

6. Communication

This policy will be made available to all members and to the public via the Orchestra's website.

7. Code of Conduct for Members

- Treat all other members with dignity and respect regardless of age, disability, gender, or background.
- As far as possible do not be alone with an individual child or vulnerable adult.
- Be aware of your language, tone of voice and body language.
- Keep physical contact to a minimum, and only where strictly necessary.
- Avoid inappropriate or intrusive touching of any form.
- Do not be involved in scapegoating, ridiculing or rejecting.
- Do not let any child or vulnerable adult involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
- Do not give lifts to children or vulnerable adults on their own.
- Never work under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Do not smoke in any rehearsal or performance space.
- Report any concerns immediately to the DSO.

8. Policy Review and Compliance

This policy will be formally reviewed and approved by the Orchestra Committee on an annual basis, or sooner in response to changes in legislation, guidance, or following any significant incident. The review will ensure the policy remains effective and compliant with current UK safeguarding requirements and community best practices.

Policy Version: 1.0

Date Approved: 9/3/26

Next Review Date: 9/3/27

Approved By: Nick Barber - Committee Chair

Designated Safeguarding Officer: Alba Alonso