



## **NYSO Child Protection Policy**

**Updated: 12/11/2019**

**Reviewed: 15/10/2020**

### **Policy Statement**

NYSO is a charitable company set up for the benefit of young people aged from 8 – 21 interested in furthering their musical education. Its core activity is the running of string chamber orchestra residencies and associated concerts and concert tours.

Throughout this document the word “child” refers to anyone under the age of 18. In general terms however the word “student” applies to any young person attending the residencies or playing in the concerts staged by NYSO.

NYSO's Child Protection Policy is fundamentally based on listening to the concerns of our students. Concerns are kept confidential and are taken very seriously. They will be dealt with in a timely manner involving only the necessary and appropriate parties.

For the purposes of this policy, NYSO team members includes the teachers and the pastoral care team. All team members who are likely to have unsupervised access to, or contact with, children are instructed on the subject of child protection and how to develop awareness as well as the documented “best practice” to adopt to avoid any danger of abuse to the students in the temporary care of NYSO.

NYSO undertakes to review its policies annually.

### **Procedure for each residency:**

1. A team member will be nominated in advance as the Nominated Child Protection Officer (NCPO) to be responsible for the Child Protection Policy for each residency and to whom any concerns should be reported. This will be the Pastoral Director but he or she could nominate some other person on the residency, if that is felt to be desirable. If this is the case, all students and team members on the residency will be clearly notified and it will be made public knowledge.
2. For each residency the student notice board will have on it the name of the NCPO for the residency and the name of a second person, normally not present on the residency, to whom students may have contact by telephone if they have concerns they do not wish to share with the team on the residency.
3. A public notice will be posted on the Open Access Notice Board at the beginning of each residency setting out the basic concepts for behaviour [see below] and the process for reporting potential abuse for students, team members, and parents to read. The full Child Protection Policy will be displayed on the NYSO website and a copy held by the NCPO on the residency.



4. A questionnaire will be given to all students at the end of each residency. Responses to this questionnaire will be completely confidential and anonymous.

### **Training**

NYSO will provide child protection training for the NCPO through the NSPCC Consultancy Services or equivalent.

### **Addressing Lack of information about what to do**

The Child Protection Policy containing all relevant contact information will be mentioned in the introductory meeting at the beginning of the residency as well as displayed on the notice board and on the website. It is important that all students, team members, parents, and carers know how to contact the NCPO with a concern.

### **NYSO Team Member Policy**

#### **Recruitment and Selection Procedures**

1. A clear definition of the role the candidate would play will be provided so that the most suitable appointee can be identified. At interview at least one representative from NYSO will discuss the Child Protection Policy of the organisation and explore the candidate's attitudes towards working with children.
2. NYSO will consider of a selection of possible candidates to ensure equal opportunities, bearing in mind that the requirements for the residencies are specific and this will often restrict choice from a wide field.
3. Two written references will be required for any prospective new member of the team.
4. There is a requirement for a current DBS check to be made available to, or requested and sought by, NYSO before the appointment is finalised.
5. A clear guarantee will be given that disclosed information will be treated in confidence.

### **Advice to NYSO team members to be included with the contract of engagement for each residency:**

1. Every activity should be as open as possible, and it is important that no more time should be spent alone with individual students than is necessary. If one-to-one teaching takes place it must always be in public rooms. Curtains or blinds must be open with doors unlocked and the lights switched on.
2. Unnecessary physical contact with students must be avoided. Examples of exceptional circumstances under which physical contact may be considered acceptable are providing assistance to an injured student, providing reassurance in distress, or adjusting a hand position in relation to playing a musical instrument, but only if the student is comfortable with this.



3. No member of the team should take a child alone in a car. If a journey is deemed essential the team member and the child must have a companion and permission from the Pastoral Director and the student's parents before the journey takes place. In case of an emergency the Pastoral Director may give sole permission for the journey to take place.
4. Children should never be prevented or discouraged from speaking of concerns they may have to any team member. However, it is essential it be made clear that it may not be possible to keep the discussion private and that if action is necessary it will be taken. It must also be made clear that this will only involve the necessary people.
5. Team members are advised to remember that teaching and learning are based on mutual respect and consideration for individual needs. Team members should never apply bullying tactics or make remarks, even in jest and which could be misconstrued, to obtain a desired response. Team members must never use abusive language or make suggestions which could cause loss of self respect. The student should treat the team with courtesy and respect.
6. Those who abuse children can be of any age (even other children), gender, ethnic background, or class. Personal preconceptions about people must never prevent appropriate action being taken.
7. When it is clear that there may be cause for alarm, a team member or student must never attempt to deal with it alone. The team member or the student should write a clear account detailing their concerns, and any reasons for them, as soon as appropriately possible. This must be signed and dated and given to the NCPO to be dealt with appropriately.

### **Appropriate response of team members:**

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 following a referral from the NCPO in the organisation.

### **If approached by a student with concerns the team member should:**

1. Remain calm and listen carefully to what is said and find the earliest appropriate opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared; but only with those who need to know about these concerns — ***do not promise to keep secrets.***
2. Allow the student to continue at their own pace; ask questions for clarification only and avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer. Reassure the student that they have done the right thing in telling you.
3. Record in writing what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible —note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given, and ensure that the record is signed and dated by you.

### **Reasons for reporting concerns not passed on by students**



Team members could have their suspicion or concern raised in a number of ways, some of which could be:

1. unusual conduct of another NYSO team member or another student;
2. bruising or evidence of physical hurt; which may or may not be accompanied by;
3. unusual behaviour by a child.

***No preconceptions should colour the investigation.***

It is important to remember that a child's demeanour may or may not provide clues and none of the above prove that abuse is occurring. In the case of NYSO holiday residencies, children may show evidence of homesickness which could confuse the team member.

Sometimes children tell another person of abuse directly, though not necessarily a professional. A child's message may not be clear. Children are inclined to give up if their messages are not well received. Sometimes children may try to communicate through actions rather than words (e.g. running away).

Children cannot be relied upon to challenge explanations offered by older people or parent figures especially when the latter are present. Direct, sympathetic but objective, communication with children is extremely important - but may be difficult when both have conflicting and fluctuating feelings.

Disbelief. All team members must be aware that their own reluctance to believe, record, or report an allegation made against a colleague could put a child at risk.

**Definitions of Abuse:**

**Physical Abuse** - causing actual physical harm.

**Emotional Abuse** – usually verbal insults or implications of inability of the victim to achieve in some way.

**Sexual Abuse** – usually insinuation but may lead to actual physical sexual abuse.

**Neglect**- in the context of the residencies when young people are in the temporary care of NYSO, team members should ensure that students are appropriately fed and that they eat normally. Normal sleep patterns are to be catered for to prevent students suffering from undue disturbance or insomnia. Anxiety can also be a problem in a competitive environment.

**Role and Responsibilities of the Nominated Child Protection Officer (NCPO).**

The role of the designated person(s) is to:



1. receive information from students, team members, parents/carers and volunteers who have child protection concerns and to record it appropriately, safely and confidentially;
2. assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate;
3. know which outside child protection agency to contact in the event of a child protection concern. To liaise with outside agencies to review the policies and advise the Director and/or the trustees of appropriate actions to take;
4. provide information and advice on child protection within the organisation;
5. ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing under confidential cover