

GCOS Child Protection Policy

Policy Statement:

GCOS is fully committed to safe-guarding the well-being of children. It is the policy of GCOS to ensure that every child who takes part in GCOS choral and orchestral activities shall be able to participate in a safe environment. Conductor(s) and Committee members should be fully aware of the organisation's Child Protection Policy. They should also show respect and understanding for their own rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of GCOS. The process of implementing the policy and undertaking an annual review is the responsibility of the Chairman of GCOS. The policy should be available publicly.

Key Principles:

- Anyone under the age of 18 years should be considered as a child for the purposes of this document
- The child's welfare is paramount
- All children whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/ or sexual identity have the right of protection from abuse
- All allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly.

Key Objectives:

In order to achieve the key principles of the policy, GCOS will:

- Create an environment where children feel secure and have their viewpoints listened to
- Continue to develop awareness amongst members of the GCOS the need for Child Protection and their responsibilities in identifying abuse
- Ensure that all Committee members and Conductor(s) are aware of the referral procedures.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION PERSON(S)

The designated persons for 2010-11 all have a current Guernsey CRB check and are as follows:
Choral rehearsals and concerts: Helen Grand (Conductor), Jill Sproule (Committee Member)
Orchestral Rehearsals: Charlie Cottam (Committee Member) Mervyn Grand (Head of Schools' Music Service).

To be effective in this role they must:

- Act as a source of advice, support and expertise within the organisation and be responsible for co-ordinating action regarding referrals, liaising with Social Services and other relevant agencies in cases of abuse and allegations of abuse, regarding both children and members of staff/volunteers
- Ensure Conductor(s) and Committee Members have access to, and are aware of the GCOS Child Protection Policy.
- Be able to keep accurate, detailed and secure written records of concerns and referrals.

MONITORING & RECORD KEEPING

- All incidents should, ideally, be written up within the hour. They must be recorded within 24 hours
- Reports should be signed with the name and designation printed clearly
- Reports and records should be passed to one of the Child Protection Persons designated person who in turn will take responsibility for the safe storage and processing of this information and where appropriate, contact the Social Services, Police or NSPCC.
- All information gathered should be treated with strict confidentiality.

Abuse Definition

Abuse recognises four main types of child abuse:

Physical Abuse – where adults physically hurt or injure children. It includes injury caused by hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting or by giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison. In an arts situation, physical abuse might occur when the nature and intensity of training disregard the capacity of a child's immature growing body.

Sexual Abuse - where adults, both male and female, who use children to meet their own sexual needs, abuse girls and boys. Abuse is defined as such irrespective of whether a child has reached the appropriate age of sexual consent. Showing children pornographic material is also a form of sexual abuse.

Emotional Abuse - where there is a persistent lack of love and affection, where a child may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the child very nervous and withdrawn. Emotional abuse in the arts might include situations where children are subject to unrealistic pressure by a parent or director, or bullied in order to consistently perform to high expectations.

Neglect - where adults fail to meet a child's basic needs like food or warm clothing. Children might also be constantly left alone or unsupervised. Adults may also fail to, or refuse to give children love and affection and this could be seen to be emotional neglect. Neglect in an arts situation could include a director or workshop leader not ensuring children are working in a safe environment or properly supervised during a performance.

INDICATORS OF ABUSE:

Indications that a child is being abused include:-

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- Someone else - a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of another child else
- Inappropriate sexual awareness

This list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators is of course not proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is stressed, however, that it is not the responsibility of the GCOS to actively investigate or prove that abuse is taking place, but it is their responsibility to act upon any concerns.

PROCEDURES :

If you suspect or are told that a young person is being abused:

- You **must** always refer to the designated persons at GCOS. Don't investigate yourself
- Listen to the child without interruption, and do not ask questions about what you may suspect
- Do not approach a suspected abuser yourself. Provide support to the child.
- Accept at face value what the child says

- Do not pass judgement on what is said, but do try to alleviate any fears or guilt which the child may have
- Do not promise to keep what they tell you a secret. Make it clear that you can offer support but that you **must** pass on the information

If you receive an allegation of child abuse by an adult:

- Contact a GCOS designated person. Any information, no matter how trivial it may appear, must be shared.

Members who hear an allegation of abuse against another member of the Society, or indeed themselves, should report the matter immediately to a designated GCOS Child Protection Officer. If the allegation is against the GCOS Officers, another senior figure within GCOS should be contacted.

CONTACT LIST

Please keep these numbers somewhere accessible at all times:

CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER(S) FOR YOUR ORGANISATION:

Name: Helen Grand	Tel: 242030
Jill Sproule	Tel: 243739
Charlie Cottam	Tel: 07781 109044
Mervyn Grand	Tel: 07781 101250

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:

<i>Initial Assessment and Social Work Team</i>	Tel: 01481 713444
<i>Lukis House</i>	
<i>The Grange</i>	
<i>St Peter Port</i>	
<i>GY1 2QG</i>	

DUTY OFFICER (outside office hours):	Tel: 01481 725241
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POLICE STATION:

<i>Police Headquarters</i>	Tel: 01481 725111
<i>Hospital Lane</i>	
<i>St Peter Port</i>	
<i>GY1 2QN</i>	

NSPCC:	Tel: 0800 8005000
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