



## **Safeguarding Policy**

**Updated: November 2025**

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### **Confidentiality Statement**

All information concerning children, parents, members or volunteers shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed to or discussed with anyone other than those authorised to receive such information, unless disclosure is authorised by law. However, if there are situations in which it is felt that an individual is at risk of harm, then outside agencies will be consulted and informed in the interest of safety to the individuals and others.

# Introduction

This document replaces all previous versions of the Oxted Band Safeguarding Policy or Oxted Band Safeguarding Children Policy.

The purpose of this document is:

- To protect both members of the band and those connected to the band in some other way, be they children, young people or adults, and provide care and support.
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults within the Band is the responsibility of all members of the band. Oxted Band believes that a child, young person or adult with care and support needs should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and adults at risk and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

The terms 'young people' or 'children' refer to anybody under the age of eighteen years.

This document will be reviewed and updated when prompted by changes in process or legislation or by the needs of the organisation. It will be reviewed at a minimum of every two years.

## Use of this Policy

This policy will help Oxted Band to make a positive contribution to the development of young people and to safeguard their welfare, but also protect all personnel from the risk of false allegations of abuse or poor practice.

This policy should be used as a guideline for Oxted Band personnel in dealing with children and vulnerable adults. As such, it should be reviewed and agreed by members of the band and parents of children involved. Furthermore, it should be made openly available to anybody who requests it.

Please Note: This is a working document and any changes in legislation that occur after the version date on the front cover will supersede this policy.

This document has been informed by the Children's Act 1989 .

The Children's Act 1989 provides a comprehensive framework for the care and protection of children. It centres on the welfare of children up to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. It defines parental responsibility and encourages partnership working with parents.

## Safeguarding Officer

The band will appoint, at the AGM each year, a Safeguarding Officer, who will:

- Advise the committee on best practice
- Act as a single point of contact for reporting any concerns
- Be responsible for ensuring that those involved in teaching or conducting young people are suitable for the role and have up-to-date vetting.

The Safeguarding Officer should be a member of the band and should be identifiable to all members and their parents, but should not be actively involved in conducting or teaching. Please see the end of this document for the details of the current Safeguarding Officer.

## **Supervision and Chaperones**

### **Young people and those with care and support needs attending concerts, contests and events outside the band room**

There will be times throughout the year where the band are away from their rehearsal space, either performing at concerts, contests or even social activities. During this time, young players' needs and those of players with care and support issues, should be considered and a position of responsibility agreed between the band and the parent/carer/adult with care and support needs.

**In the case of a young person under 18, if the young player's parent is not present at the event, the band has a Duty of Care to act *in loco parentis* for the duration of the event.**

#### **In this instance the following should be considered;**

- Children should be supervised throughout the duration of the event. The person or persons responsible for supervision should be safely recruited for this role (including a DBS check and other appropriate safeguards) and be made aware of any specific needs (including dietary) or medical conditions of the young people.
- The person supervising a child must be able to see them at all times – they can be a player in the band provided that they can see them at all times when playing (e.g. the child doesn't sit behind them in the band)
- Supervision must be on a ratio of at least one supervising adult per 12 children, and should have sufficient leeway to maintain this ratio at all times during the event.
- The band should consider appropriate environments for young players during social times during the event (for example after playing and before receiving the results at a contest).
- It may be required to gain parental permission for the child to attend the event, if it is outside the normal activities agreed to on the membership form.
- Group transport should conform to the legal requirements including, rest times, number capacity of the vehicle and seat belts. Considerations should also be taken in relation to breakdown and recovery.
- Pick up and drop off points should be agreed and emergency contact information held.
- Provision of information to the young player and their parent/carer prior to the event.

## **Child Performance Licensing**

The band is responsible for ensuring a Child Performance Licence is in place whenever the band performs at an event covered by the legislation, where the members performing include any children who have not yet reached the end of the July in their final year of compulsory schooling.

It is the responsibility of the event organisers to hold such licence, and where the organiser is the band, this can be put in place via the Brass Bands England national BOPA.

## **Training & Recruitment**

For this policy to be effective, everybody involved in any form of responsibility within the Band and Training Band needs to understand what constitutes good practice, and at a minimum should be given a copy of this policy.

At least two members of the band (including the Safeguarding Officer) will undertake a BandSafe course every two years.

When new members apply to join the band, they will be asked to declare any previous issues of a safeguarding nature. In addition, the band will carry out checks as necessary to confirm identity and seek any previous concerns, which may include seeking references and carrying out social media searches. New members will be made aware of this on the membership form.

## **Responding to Suspicions and Allegations**

If an allegation is made against a member of Oxted Band, this must be reported to the appropriate authorities. It is the responsibility of members to ensure that appropriate agencies are informed of any suspected abuse, whether in the context of banding activities or taking place elsewhere. The allegation should be passed immediately to the Safeguarding Officer who will know which authorities to contact.

If a member has a concern that an individual is at risk, or a disclosure is made to them, they should make notes of concerns and discuss with the named Safeguarding Officer.

When discussing with the individual concerned, the member should:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the individual
- Take them seriously, be patient and take into account any difficulties they may be having in communicating
- Keep questions to a minimum, so that there is a clear understanding of what they have said. Avoid leading questions at all cost.
- Reassure the individual, but do NOT promise to keep it a secret. Explain that to solve the problem it may be necessary to inform appropriate people.
- Inform the Safeguarding Officer of any allegations as a matter of urgency.

If a disclosure is made and there is the potential for immediate risk, action must be taken immediately. The individual should be kept informed of the progress of any action that is being taken, so far as that is possible.

The notes that should be taken should be restricted to facts, only what is known by the note-taker, not what others have told them. The following should be included:

- The nature of the allegation, including time, dates and locations
- Details of the child, including name, age, address, contact details and the person who has parental responsibility
- Details of the person against whom the allegation was made including name, age, contact details and the relationship with the child
- The identity and contact details of any informants or witnesses
- The child's account, if they have given one
- A description of any visible injuries
- A list of people (if any) who have also been informed of the alleged incident

## **Informing Parents**

If the concern is about a child, then the parents or carers should be consulted by the Safeguarding Officer, unless:

- A family member could be responsible for abusing the child
- Someone may be put in danger by the family being informed
- Informing the family might interfere with criminal investigation

If any of the above circumstances apply, discussion with the family should only take place after this has been agreed with the local authority children's social care department.

## **Action**

If the concern is about a child:

- If after initial discussion there is still uncertainty about the concerns, the Safeguarding Officer can discuss with children's social care department or the NSPCC advice line without disclosing the identity of the child/family
- If after reviewing the matter the Safeguarding Officer remains concerned, the matter is referred to the local authority children's social care department and confirmed in writing within 48 hours
- Otherwise, no further child protection action is needed. The Safeguarding Officer decides whether to discuss the initial concerns with other services to ensure their needs are met elsewhere.

If the concern is about an adult:

- If after initial discussion there is still uncertainty about the concerns, or about questions such as consent or mental capacity, the Safeguarding Officer can discuss with adult social care department without disclosing the identity of the adult or their family.
- If after reviewing the matter the Safeguarding Officer remains concerned, and the adult, who has mental capacity consents, the matter is referred to the local authority adult social care department and confirmed in writing within 48 hours
- If after reviewing the matter the Safeguarding Officer remains concerned, but the adult, who has mental capacity does not consent, or cannot consent, the Safeguarding Officers seeks guidance from the local authority adult social care department without initially disclosing the identity of the adult.
- Otherwise, no further action is needed. The Safeguarding Officer decides whether to discuss the initial concerns with other services to ensure their needs are met elsewhere.

## **Disciplinary Procedures**

As well as any investigation by social services or the police, it may be necessary for the Band to take its own action. It may be appropriate to suspend the individual during the investigation, to ensure they are not in contact with the individual concerned.

## **Bullying**

### **We all have a role to play in preventing bullying and putting a stop to bullying.**

We will seek to prevent bullying by developing a code of behaviour that sets out the 'dos and don'ts' in terms of how everyone involved in the Band is expected to behave, both in face-to-face contact and online. This can be found in our rules.

We will also provide support and training for all Officers and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racial, sexist, homophobic and sexual bullying, when requested to do so.

#### **When bullying occurs, we will respond to it by:**

- Addressing the issue from the point of view of the person being bullied, the bully, any bystanders and the band as a whole;
- Reviewing the plan developed to address the bullying, to ensure that the problem has been resolved;
- Avoiding any punishments that make the individuals concerned seem small, or look or feel foolish in front of others.

## **Social Media**

It is recognised that the internet provides unique opportunities to promote the band including vacancies and performances using a wide variety of social media, such as but not limited to Facebook, X and YouTube. These guidelines aim to protect individuals within the band and to encourage them to take responsibility for what they write, exercise good judgment and common sense. Inappropriate use of social media can pose risks to the band's reputation, and can jeopardise compliance with legal obligations.

#### **Band Websites and Social Media pages**

- Permission should be sought when posting images of band members on websites and social media pages. This permission can be obtained through the membership form.
- Personal details such as phone numbers and email addresses should not be posted on the internet without the permission of the individual.
- It is important to consider the age range of band members when posting images, and comments on pages and ensure that these are appropriate and in keeping with the band ethos.
- Social media sites have different levels of security in relation to openness to the public and setting restrictions that do not allow posts to be shown without approval. The committee should agree to what extent postings are visible publicly, under guidance from the Safeguarding Officer
- The band's social media sites should be monitored, with a very limited number of people being able to post in the band's name.
- Where other individuals are able to post on a band page, such as Facebook, these should be set such that posts have to be approved by the band administrator before they are visible.

#### **Individuals within the Band**

It is best practice that adult members of the band are not social media friends with children who are members of the band. This is particularly important with social media forms that allow individual private communication. These members can still communicate with each other through social media in a group setting such as the band's social media page or website. However, children should not be members of any smaller groups, such as WhatsApp groups set up by individual members.

Any content which raises a safeguarding concern should be reported to the Band Safeguarding Officer.

## **Guidelines for E-Safety**

Whilst the Oxted Band understands that most children will use mobile phones and computers, communication should not be made directly with children via their phones or any online platforms. Any communication regarding the band should be made direct to parents.

## **Photography**

Photographs of children and vulnerable adults should ideally be only taken with consent of parents sought before the event, and only by individuals who have been approved prior to the event. Whilst we cannot control audience members taking photographs at outdoor events, it is important that committee members are vigilant and inform the safeguarding lead or chairman if there are any concerns.

If parents wish to take photos of their own children they may do so, but they must ensure no photographs of others are shared in any online or public forum. Surnames should not be attached to photographs in any circumstances, and if photographs are to be shared with first names on, then parental permission should be sought prior to the photograph being released. If parents or other members of the audience are intending to photograph or video an event they should be made aware of the organisation's policy.

## Contact Details

If you think that a child is in immediate danger you should call 999.

**Oxted Band Safeguarding Officer:**

**Stephie Onley**

07845 554592

[secretary@oxtedband.co.uk](mailto:secretary@oxtedband.co.uk)

or in her absence:

**Ben Hicks**

07971 402608

[chairman@oxtedband.co.uk](mailto:chairman@oxtedband.co.uk)

**Surrey Social Services:**

Children's Single Point of Access:

0300 470 9100 or [cspa@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:cspa@surreycc.gov.uk)

Monday to Friday 9am-5pm

Adult social care:

0300 200 1005 or [asc.infoandadvice@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:asc.infoandadvice@surreycc.gov.uk)

Out of Hours emergency duty team (Children or Adults)

01483 517898 or [edt.ssd@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:edt.ssd@surreycc.gov.uk)

**Surrey Police Non-Emergency Number (24hr): 101**

**NSPCC Helpline:**

0808 800 5000 or [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

**Brass Band England Welfare Officer:** 01226 771015 or [safeguarding@bbe.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@bbe.org.uk)

## **Appendix 1 – Best and worst practice guidance**

## Good Practice

Good practice in supervising young people and children include:

1. Any personnel who may be a lone supervisor for children should obtain a Disclosure Barring Service Check (DBS).
2. Circumstances where a supervisor is with an individual child unobserved should be avoided, in the interests of all parties.
3. Before undertaking any activities involving young people, conduct a risk assessment to identify possible sources of danger and take appropriate action to minimise risks.
4. Treat all young people equally; this means giving all members of a group similar attention, time, respect and preserving their dignity.
5. Respect the developmental stage of each young person and do not risk sacrificing their welfare in a desire for personal achievements. This means ensuring that the practice intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional developmental stage of the student, bearing in mind that the chronological age may differ from the social or emotional age.
6. Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect, in which young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making. There should never be a situation where the teacher, conductor or any other member of the band uses their position and power to decide what the student should or should not do without consideration of the young person's needs and capabilities.
7. Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of physical guidance is required in teaching technique, this should be provided openly and with the consent of the student. It is important to educate parents of what is and is not acceptable in the context of brass playing. Physical contact (touching) can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the student's permission has been given.
8. Communicate regularly with parents and involve them in decision-making. Gain their consent in writing to act in loco parentis to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises.
9. Be aware of any medical conditions, existing injuries and medicines being taken. Keep a written record of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given. Arrange that someone with knowledge of first aid is readily available.
10. All members should maintain appropriate standards of behaviour when around young people, including not consuming alcohol. All members shall ensure careful use of language at all times. Suggestive remarks, gestures, innuendoes, and swearing are unacceptable at all times.
11. All of those involved in activities must be appropriately dressed, and action taken to rectify this when necessary.
12. Being aware of the signs of Child Sexual Exploitation (see: Appendix 2)

## **Poor Practice**

Bad practice in supervising young people and children include:

1. Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
2. Taking children to your home, or alone on journeys in a car.
3. Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
4. Allowing a child to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
5. Making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
6. Taking advantage of any sort of power imbalance and asserting control in an inappropriate way.
7. Letting allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
8. Doing things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves or are not necessary for the safety of that child.
9. Not having open communication.

## **Best Practice for Supporting Young People and Adults at Risk**

Having young players as members of the band is extremely rewarding. These guidelines, in addition to the other supporting documents, allow bands to ensure that young people under 18 (henceforth referred to as young players), and adults at risk (henceforth referred to as players with care and support needs) are protected and that measures are in place to clarify positions of responsibility both within the band and with parents/carers.

### **Transporting young people and vulnerable adults to rehearsals and concerts**

It is common practice for members of bands to share lifts to both rehearsals and concerts. When this involves a young player or players with care and support needs, the band may wish to consider these best practice guidelines:

- Explain, either within the membership form or welcome information that transport to rehearsals and concerts is the responsibility of the parent or carer, unless group transport has been arranged by the band.
- If a young player, or player with care and support needs, is needing help with transport, this should be arranged directly between the parent/carer/player and band member offering the lift and not through a third party or the committee. It should be made clear to the parent/carer that this is a personal arrangement and the band does not hold any responsibility for this arrangement.
- Band members should be made aware of best practice when providing lifts to young people and, in some cases, those with care and support needs. This should include but is not limited to;
  - Where possible, avoid travelling with the young person alone
  - Agreeing pick up and drop off arrangements with parents
  - Asking the young person to sit in the rear of the car, particularly if you are alone
  - Having a contact number for the parent
  - Driving within the law
- Despite the band not holding responsibility for the arrangement of lifts, there is still a duty of care if there are any concerns raised regarding transporting young people or those with care and support needs to the band. Any issues raised should be dealt with in line with the band's safeguarding and whistle blowing policy and, if necessary, appropriate referrals made to statutory authorities

## **Appendix 2 – Types of abuse and indicators of abuse**

## Classifying Abuse

It is important that adults can identify potential signs of children who are subjected to abuse. Abuse can take a number of forms, including:

**Neglect**- this is where adults fail to meet a child's basic needs like food, shelter, warm clothing or medical care, or to protect them from physical harm. Children might also be constantly left alone or unsupervised. In a brass band, this could include a conductor or band manager not keeping children safe, or exposing them to unnecessary risk of injury.

**Physical Abuse**- This is where someone physically hurts or injures children, for example by hitting, shaking, throwing, squeezing, burning, suffocating and biting or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Giving children alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute physical abuse.

**Sexual Abuse**- Girls and boys can be abused by adults or other children, both male and female, who use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, or fondling. Showing children pornographic material is also a form of sexual abuse. This could also include inappropriate language or gestures.

**Emotional Abuse**- Persistent lack of love and affection, where children may be led to believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Emotional abuse in banding might include situations where children are subjected, by a parent, teacher or another student, to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying, racism or unrealistic pressure in order to perform to high expectations.

**Bullying**- Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can be physical, verbal, sexual or emotional. In banding, bullying may arise when a parent pushes a child too hard to succeed, or when a teacher adopts a win-at-all-costs philosophy.

## Indicators of Abuse

This list is designed to help personnel identify potential indicators of abuse, but is not exhaustive. Members of Oxted Band are not expected to be experts in recognising signs of abuse, but these indicators should be used as a guide:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- Any injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- A child describes what appears to be an abusive act that has involved them.
- Unexplained changes in a child's behaviour.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness, or sexually explicit behaviour.
- Distrust of adults.
- Difficulty making friends, or being prevented from socialising with other children.
- Losing weight for no apparent reason.

Otherwise, no further action is needed. The Safeguarding Officer decides whether to discuss the initial concerns with other services to ensure their needs are met elsewhere.

Signs of Child Sexual Exploitation may include:

- unexplained gifts
- changes in mood
- going missing
- staying out late
- being secretive about where they are going
- lack of interest in activities and hobbies
- missing school or band activities

**Please Note:** It is not the responsibility of band members to decide that child abuse is occurring, but it is their duty to act on any concerns, where appropriate reporting them to the relevant authority.

## **Appendix 3 – Bullying**

## **We recognise that:**

Bullying is behaviour, ‘usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group of individuals, physically or emotionally’.

One person or a group can bully others;

Bullying can occur either face to face between individuals or groups or online, using information technology, such as computers or mobile phones;

## **Bullying can include (but is not limited to):**

- verbal teasing or making fun of someone;
- excluding members from activities and conversations;
- pressurising other members not to be friends with the person who is being bullied;
- spreading hurtful rumours or passing round inappropriate photographs/images/drawings;
- shouting at or verbally abusing someone;
- stealing or damaging someone’s belongings;
- making threats;
- forcing someone to do something embarrassing, harmful or dangerous;
- harassment based on race, gender, sexuality or disability;
- physical or sexual assault (although all sexual incidents and all but very minor physical incidents constitute abuse and must be dealt with in accordance with child protection and adult safeguarding procedures).

Signs of Bullying may include:

- Behavioural changes, such as becoming withdrawn, clingy, tearful or reluctance to attend rehearsals.
- An unexplained drop-off in the standard of performance.
- Physical symptoms such as headaches, stomach pains and difficulty sleeping.