



C A M D E N
S Y M P H O N Y
O R C H E S T R A

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy **June 2019**

Background

Camden Symphony Orchestra (“CSO”) is an amateur orchestra based in north-west London. CSO is a registered charity, and run as a self-governing group on a not-for-profit basis. The orchestra is managed by a committee of members, elected annually, and works with professional musicians in the roles of Musical Director and Leader. We meet on a weekly basis during term-time and perform three orchestral concerts a year at venues in central and north-west London.

CSO has around 60 regular members who are keen amateur musicians from a variety of backgrounds. We do not formally audition members, but advertise vacancies on our website and invite prospective members to join us on a trial basis for 2-3 weeks. For our concerts we are usually joined by a handful of guest players who play parts we don’t cover through our regular membership (such as percussion and harp players) and fill in gaps within the orchestra. Our guest players are a mixture of professional musicians, music students and adult amateur musicians.

CSO is an orchestra for adult, amateur musicians and we do not actively seek members who are under 18 years of age. However, the orchestra is occasionally approached by prospective members who are under 18, and there may be circumstances in which players who are under 18 may join us as a guest player for a concert. While the orchestra doesn’t actively recruit children, it is the orchestra’s intention to welcome children into the orchestra should the occasion arise, and recognise that playing with the orchestra can be a valuable part of the child’s musical development.

This policy and guidance is written for those occasions when children play with the orchestra. For the purposes of this policy and guidance a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. It is not designed to provide advice concerning children attending CSO’s concerts. These are public events, and children in the audience would normally be accompanied by their parents. CSO has no control over who attends our concerts, and cannot be reasonably expected to monitor children in the audience who are not under parental supervision. However, in the event of an incident involving a child attending a concert, the orchestra would deal with the matter in the spirit of this policy.

The CSO committee is responsible for ensuring that this policy and guidance are observed by all CSO members, and the committee has responsibility for promoting best practice and the highest standard of conduct among its members in relation to the safety of children on any occasion in which children are playing with the orchestra. CSO is committed to practices which protect children from harm, and helping protect members from misunderstandings and erroneous allegations.

CSO Responsibilities

CSO's committee recognises that we have a particular responsibility to protect any children who play with the orchestra.

- We must be aware of the issues which can cause children harm.
- We must be aware of 'grooming' behaviour (the befriending of children as a precursor to abuse).
- We must immediately report any concerns, following our Reporting Procedures (detailed below).

The orchestra prides itself on its reputation for being friendly and relaxed and welcoming to all musicians who play with us. We will not tolerate inappropriate behaviour towards children, and will refer accusations of abuse to professional child protection agencies.

For the purposes of this policy, wherever appropriate, reference to 'members' should be deemed to include not only subscription-paying full member of the orchestra, but also the Musical Director, Leader, guest players, and anyone else participating in the orchestra's activities.

Our Policy

1. If a child is to play with the orchestra at any time, the CSO committee should be aware of this, and reminded of the orchestra's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy. All committee members accept responsibility for the welfare of children playing with the orchestra, and will report any concerns about a child or someone else's behaviour, using the procedures laid down in this policy. The Musical Director, Leader and any other members of the orchestra (such as the section fixer) who are likely to come into direct contact with the child will also be informed of the Policy.
2. The orchestra's Membership Secretary will act as the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) who will take action following any expression of concern. The chair of the orchestra and the DSP will be responsible for making any appropriate referrals to statutory child protection agencies.
3. As CSO does not regularly work with children, we do not carry out Disclosure and Barring Service checks on any of our members. However a number of our members work with children in their professional lives and so have current checks in place. As at June 2019, these include:
 - Jane Brett-Jones – Membership Secretary & Committee Member
 - Marion Fleming – Treasurer & Committee Member
 - David Robson – Secretary & Committee Member
 - John Crawford – Leader & Ex-Officio Committee Member
4. We will only allow children under the age of 16 to play with the orchestra with the express written permission of a parent or guardian. The parent or guardian would normally be expected to accompany the child to and from the rehearsal/ performance venue, or to make arrangements that the committee considers acceptable for safeguarding the child.
5. Where a child over the age of 16 plays with the orchestra, the orchestra should ensure that a parent or guardian is aware of this and has accurate information concerning rehearsal and concert details such as timing and venues. The parent or guardian should be given relevant contact details, such as for the chair, DSP and section fixer.

6. In the event of any allegation or disclosure concerning the welfare of a child playing with the orchestra, the chair and DSP must ensure that information is recorded as soon as possible. Information should normally be gathered within 48 hours, and appropriate action taken within 7 days of an allegation or disclosure. Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.

Our Code of Practice

1. Inappropriate physical contact with children must be avoided. Physical contact is only appropriate in very limited circumstances.
2. No adult member of the orchestra should be alone with a child (unless they are the parent or guardian) unless absolutely unavoidable. It is not good practice for members to take children alone in a car on journeys, however short, unless with the prior consent of the child's parent or guardian, and then only in exceptional circumstances.
3. Suggestive and inappropriate remarks should not be made to or about a child, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted. Inappropriate remarks include innuendo, swearing, and discussing their or your own intimate relationships.
4. For children under the age of 16, communication directly with children by email or text messages should be avoided, other than in exceptional circumstances. All communication should be directly with the parent or guardian.
5. For children over the age of 16, communication directly with children by email or text messages should be limited to practical details, such as venues and timing for rehearsals and concerts, and should be made in an appropriate and professional manner. Any communications should be copied to a/ another committee member (usually the chair or DSP), and the parent or guardian of the child. Other than in exceptional circumstances, knowledge of the contact details of the child should be limited to the chair, DSP and section fixer. The child should never be openly copied into orchestra-wide communications.
6. No communication should be made with children via Twitter, Facebook or other social media.
7. Any behaviour which could be construed as 'grooming' a child should be avoided at all times (for example giving a child money, presents or favours, or talking or behaving in an inappropriate or unprofessional manner towards children).
8. Any disclosure of abuse from a child will be taken seriously, and should be reported to the DSP. The orchestra recognises that it is important not to deter children from making a 'disclosure' of abuse through fear of not being believed, and to listen to what they have to say. Guidance on responding to an allegation of abuse is set out in the next section of this document. If the allegation gives rise to a child protection concern, it is important to follow the orchestra's procedure for reporting such concerns.
9. Any member of the orchestra with concerns regarding the conduct of another member in relation to children playing with the orchestra should report those concerns to the DSP.

Guidance on Responding to a Child Making an Allegation of Abuse

1. Stay calm. Listen carefully to what is said and show that you are taking it seriously.
2. Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
3. Tell the child that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it. Allow the child to continue at his/her own pace.
4. Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
5. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
6. Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared.
7. Make no judgement about what you have heard.
8. 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.
9. Remember that whilst you may have been the first person encountering an allegation of abuse, it is not your responsibility to decide whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the DSP.

Reporting Procedures

1. Any event of a child making an allegation of abuse, or a member of the orchestra reporting concerns regarding the conduct of another member of the orchestra towards children playing in the orchestra, should be referred to the DSP.
2. The DSP should inform the chair, and together they should decide an appropriate course of action. They will ensure that the committee is kept informed of events, although they may choose to withhold details, including the names of those accused, while the matter is being dealt with.
3. Any instances of inappropriate behaviour towards children playing with the orchestra will be taken extremely seriously. The DSP and chair will consider that those who abuse children can be of any age, gender, ethnic background or class, and they will not allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action being taken.
4. The DSP and chair will seek and, other than in exceptional circumstances, follow advice from professional child protection agencies concerning how the matter should be handled. They may refer the matter to the police or local authorities, decide to deal with the matter internally or decide not to take any further action.
5. The DSP and chair will make the utmost effort to treat the matter in confidence, including the identity of any member accused of abuse or inappropriate behaviour, until it is resolved. They will

recognise that an unfounded accusation that became public knowledge could be highly detrimental to the reputation of the member.

6. In the event of the allegation or concern involving the DSP or chair, the other should nominate one of the society's other elected officers (treasurer or secretary) and act in conjunction with them to decide the appropriate course of action.
7. In line with the orchestra's policy of zero tolerance of any abuse of, or inappropriate behaviour towards, children playing with the orchestra, the committee has the power to terminate membership of the orchestra for anyone found guilty of abuse or inappropriate behaviour in accordance with the procedures laid out in the orchestra's governing constitution. The orchestra's responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children who come into contact with the orchestra will always take precedence over the value of any member's contribution to the orchestra musical activities.

Resources

NSPCC

Advice on children protection issues can be sought from the NSPCC's free 24-hour Child Protection Helpline - 0808 800 5000.

www.nspcc.org.uk

Camden Safeguarding Children Board

www.cscb-new.co.uk

Charity Commission

Any serious incidents must be reported to the Charity Commission by the trustees of the charity (who are the elected members of the committee).

www.charitycommission.gov.uk

Making Music

This policy has been drawn up following advice from Making Music, the umbrella organisation for voluntary music in the UK. CSO is a member organisation of Making Music.

www.makingmusic.org.uk

Incorporated Society of Music

This policy has been derived from the ISM's own policy. The ISM website provides extensive advice on child protection issues.

www.ism.org

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Reviewed, updated and confirmed by the CSO Committee 13th June 2019.

To be next reviewed June 2021.