

Safeguarding Policy



Blue Light Symphony Orchestra – overview

Commitment to safeguarding: The Blue Light Symphony Orchestra (hereafter referred to as 'The BLSO') believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind. We recognise that we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults. We are committed to safeguarding the well-being of all children, young people and vulnerable adults we come into contact with and to protecting them from harm.

About this policy

- This policy applies to; all trustees, staff (whether employees or freelancers), volunteers and anyone working on behalf of the BLSO or taking part in the BLSO activities.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide trustees, staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to the protection of vulnerable people
- This policy recognises vulnerable people as:
 - Children up to the age of 16 or young people aged 16-18.
 - Adults aged over 18 defined as vulnerable by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006; this might include adults with a learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs, or reduced physical or mental capacity.
- This policy aims to:
 - Protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who are; members of, receive services from, or volunteer for, the BLSO.
 - Ensure members, staff and volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are carefully recruited and understand and accept responsibility for the safeguarding of those vulnerable individuals they are interacting with.
 - Ensure that safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is a primary consideration when the BLSO undertakes any activity, event or project.

How the BLSO might work with vulnerable people: participation is open to those over 18 years of age and they may bring children to events. We run regular workshops and rehearsals for beneficiaries and put on concerts for the general public. The BLSO encourages participation by Emergency service personnel in music making to improve mental wellbeing and reduce stress. Emergency service workers are at increased risk of stress and mental health conditions such as PTSD due to the nature of the work they do. As such our involvement with vulnerable people might include, but is not limited to:

- Those who attend rehearsals and concerts
- Relatives and friends of members who attend rehearsals and concerts in a volunteering capacity
- Audience members at public concerts

Named safeguarding person: Sebastian Valentine has responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to Sebastian Valentine in the first instance.

Any projects, events or other activities that will involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of Sebastian Valentine and in line with established procedures and ground rules (see below).

Procedures and ground rules: A further document – ‘Ground rules, ways of working and procedures’ is available and forms part of this policy.

Policy review: This policy will be reviewed and amended (if necessary) every two years by the Board of Trustees. It will also be reviewed in response to changes in relevant legislation, good practice, or in response to an identified failing in its effectiveness.

Safeguarding policy – Blue Light Symphony Orchestra - Ground rules, ways of working and procedures

This document forms part of the BLSO Safeguarding policy

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This document includes:

- Recruitment practices around safeguarding
- Ground rules and ways of working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people
- Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse
- Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse

Recruitment practices around safeguarding

If an existing or potential new trustee, staff member or volunteer will be working with vulnerable people as part of the BLSO activities the appropriate level of DBS will be requested before that work is undertaken.

The level of DBS check required will be decided by the committee and in line with DBS rules regarding regulated activity. The results of any check to inform a decision will be used confidentially and in line with the BLSO equal opportunities policy.

Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people

When the BLSO organises an activity or event where they will be responsible for vulnerable adults they will ensure:

- Planning is carried out in line with this policy and procedures.
- The event is attended by an appropriate number of DBS checked adults – this will be a minimum of one but more when practically possible.
- Where practically possible the total number of adults in attendance (not necessarily DBS checked) compared with the total number of children will be in line with the ratio table below - as per Ofsted recommendations.
- There is a main contact for safeguarding on the day - this will be an individual who has been DBS checked.
- The main contact has access to emergency contact details and other relevant details (e.g. information about picking up arrangements for vulnerable people).
- That if vulnerable people of different gender will be taking part in activities adults of different gender will be in attendance too.

- A vulnerable person is not to be left alone with an adult, unless that adult is DBS checked and carrying out regulated activity.
- Two adults (one DBS checked) should be the last to leave a venue once the activity has finished and will be responsible for ensuring vulnerable people get home safely.

Child to adult ratio table

Childs age	Number of adults	Number of children
0-2	1	3
2-3	1	4
4-8	1	6
9-12	1	8
12-18	1	10

Working with parents/guardians: If a person under 18 wishes to take part in BLSO activities, written permission (email is fine) should be obtained from parents/guardians where appropriate, and before the activity takes place. Written permission should include: emergency contact details of any relevant pick-up arrangements – including permission for another adult to pick up the vulnerable person after the activity has finished. This does not apply if the parent/guardian is also taking part in the activity and will be with the person all the time.

Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse

- If any trustee, staff member or volunteer in the BLSO witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they should immediately report it to the named safeguarding officer; Sebastian Valentine.
- If the named person is not available, or is involved in or connected to, the abuse, it should be reported to the group chair Ruiko Asaba or a DBS checked adult.
- If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the named safeguarding officer or an individual they trust.

Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse

The Named person (or person reported in their absence) will first make a decision based on the immediacy of the concern and the following two factors:

1. If the vulnerable person is in immediate danger or needs emergency medical attention – call the police and/or ambulance service.
2. If the person at the centre of the allegation is working with vulnerable persons at the current time – remove them, in a sensitive manner, from direct contact with vulnerable people and follow the procedures below.

If none of the above applies the named person will:

- Make a note of the concerns reported to them.
- Speak with committee members to decide how to handle the reported abuse. Excluding any committee members who of involved in the incident.
- Escalate the report by either:
 - Raising concerns with the police – for serious or possible criminal offences.
 - Requesting an assessment by the local authority social care department about whether a vulnerable person is in need of protection.

- An internal investigation – for less serious incidents where they feel internal mediation will be successful.
- Where cases are escalated the committee will cooperate with the police or local authority in dealing with the reported incident.
- Where an internal investigation takes place the committee will:
 - Inform all parties involved of the reported abuse as soon as possible.
 - Inform the family/guardians of the person reported as being abused of the incident.
 - Arrange separate meetings with both parties within 10 days of the reported incident. A joint meeting may be arranged if appropriate.
 - Both parties should be given the chance to bring a friend or representative to the meeting.
 - Meetings will be attended by the named safeguarding officer and at least one other committee member.
 - All parties will also be invited to submit a written statement in advance of the meeting.
 - The meeting may take place virtually if more practicable
 - Once meetings have taken place the committee will decide on next steps and communicate them to all parties in writing within 5 days. They will be either:
 - Escalate the incident to the relevant authority.
 - Further investigation – with established procedures and timelines to work towards a resolution.
 - A decision or resolution.

Resolution and disciplinary action

- If abuse is found to have taken place any final resolution or decision will be taken in the best interest of the person who has suffered the abuse and the best interests the BLSO.
- Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with the BLSO constitution.

