

# **Brunel Brass & Brunel Brass Academy**

## **Child Protection Policy and Procedures**

***Issue No.4 Reviewed February 2020***

### **1. Introduction**

This policy has been adopted by **Brunel Brass** from a policy originally created by Brass Bands England (*formally British Federation of Brass Bands*), as being most appropriate for our work. It establishes our roles, responsibilities, and procedures and both highlights the importance of the protection of children and young people and safeguards all personnel from the risk of false allegations of abuse or poor practice.

**Brunel Brass** believes that everyone who participates in brass banding is entitled to do so in a welcoming, enjoyable and safe environment. To ensure this, we have adopted the following principles that all its personnel should follow. This policy applies to everybody who works in a paid or voluntary capacity for or on behalf of Brunel Brass, including playing members, musical directors, teachers/tutors and committee members.

The band states that it is **always** unacceptable for a child, young person or vulnerable adult to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children, young people or vulnerable adults by a commitment to ensure these policies and procedures are followed.

### **Policy Statement**

**Brunel Brass** is committed to the following:

1. Making the welfare of the child/young person/vulnerable adult paramount by adopting a "it could happen here" attitude.
2. Ensuring all young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
3. Ensuring all young people are able to participate in brass banding in an enjoyable and safe environment.
4. Taking all reasonable steps to protect young people from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.
5. Taking action swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions and allegations of poor practice.
6. Ensuring the safety of the children/young people by undertaking DBS checks for tutors, committee members and anyone working closely within the band.

### **Terms and Abbreviations**

- Anyone under the age of 18 is considered to be a child/young person.
- 'Parent' is used as a generic term to include parents, carers and guardians.
- 'Personnel' includes volunteers of Brunel Brass as well as employees.
- 'Welfare Officer' is the individual within the band with the overall responsibility for this policy.

## **2. Code of Practice**

To provide young people with the best possible experience and opportunities in brass banding everyone must operate within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. This will allow brass banding to make a positive contribution to the development of young people and safeguards their welfare, while also protecting personnel from the risk of false allegations.

Everyone connected with the band is required to:

- Recognise and accept their responsibilities.
- Develop awareness of the issues which can cause children harm.
- Report concerns following procedures.

### **2.1 Good practice**

All personnel should adhere to the following principles and actions:

- Before undertaking any activities involving young people, information will be provided on the level of supervision during the activity.
- Make the experience of brass playing fun and enjoyable; promote fairness and confront and deal with bullying.
- Treat all young people equally; this means giving both the more and less talented members of a group similar attention, time, respect and preserving their dignity.
- Respect the developmental stage of each young person - this means ensuring that the practice intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional stage of the development of the student. Concerts, band competitions, solo competitions etc must be suited primarily to the needs and the interests of the child, not those of the parents, teacher or band.
- Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect, in which young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making.
- Always be publicly open when working with children. Be aware of teaching sessions or meetings where a teacher and an individual student are completely unobserved. Inform the parent about the format of the teaching session or meeting.
- Where children need to be supervised in the changing rooms, teachers and band helpers should work in pairs, and involve parents if possible. Maintain an appropriate and open environment, with no secrets.
- 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.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with students. It is inappropriate for teachers and others in positions of authority to have an intimate relationship with a young person, even if they are over 16, the normal age of legal consent.
- Maintain appropriate standards of behaviour at social events that young people attend.
- Be an excellent role model while working with young people.
- 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.

- 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.
- Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements, especially if an overnight stay is involved.

## **2.2 Safeguarding Practice**

Brunel Brass seeks to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child protection and safeguarding guidelines through policies and procedures
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made (see Appendix C)
- sharing information about child protection, safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents, carers and children/young people/vulnerable adults appropriately
- providing effective support for staff and volunteers through training, support and contact with appropriate local organisations.

## **2.3 Poor practice**

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all personnel:

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with children, taking them alone on car journeys, taking them to your home or sharing a room with a child.
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay, or allowing/engaging in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reducing a child to tears as a form of control.
- Letting allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- Doing things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.

Where cases arise where it is impractical to avoid any of the situations mentioned above, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the organisation and the children's parents.

If during your care of a child you accidentally hurt them, the child seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a brief written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

## **3. Abuse**

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated, they may follow an individual into adulthood.

Children with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation, and a powerlessness to protect themselves, or

adequately to communicate that abuse has occurred. Children from ethnic minorities, who may also be experiencing racial discrimination, may be, or feel, doubly powerless in these respects.

Abuse may take a number of forms – see classifications in Appendix A.

#### **4. Procedure for Reporting & Recording Concerns**

Abuse can and does occur in the family setting as well as other situations, which may include brass banding or other social activities, and is rarely a one-off event when it occurs within such a setting. It is crucial that those involved in banding are aware of this possibility and that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action taken.

Any concern about the welfare of a child should be reported immediately to the Welfare Office, or person in charge, following the procedures as set out in Appendix D and by completing the appropriate form, see Appendix E. All reports should be followed up to check and ensure that the appropriate action has been taken.

#### **5. Conclusion**

Brunel Brass, by accepting this policy document, is determination to ensure that children and young people can participate in all forms of brass banding activity, and do so, with their safety being of paramount importance.

Brunel Brass are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Signature (Chairperson): .....

Adopted On: .....

Review Date: .....

***This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:***

- *Children Act 1989*
- *Data Protection Act 1998*
- *Children Act 2002*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015*
- *United Convention of the Right of the Child 1991*
- *Relevant Government Guidance on Safeguarding Children*

**DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE & OTHER SAFEGUARDING ISSUES**

Abuse may take a number of forms, and may be classified under the following headings:

**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.

Neglect in a banding situation 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. Showing children pornographic material is also a form of sexual abuse.

In banding activities which might involve physical contact with children could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Also the power of the teacher over young students if misused, may lead to abusive situations developing.

**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. It may involve the child being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the child very nervous and withdrawn. It may also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. Emotional abuse also occurs when there is constant overprotection, which prevents children from socialising.

Emotional abuse in banding might include situations where children are subjected by a parent or teacher to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying, racism or unrealistic pressure in order to perform to high expectations.

**Bullying**

This may be bullying of a child by an adult or another child. 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 may be physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling, graffiti, abusive text messages (sexting) transmitted by phone or on the internet), emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

In banding, bullying may arise when a parent pushes a child too hard to succeed, a teacher adopts a win-at-all-costs philosophy, or an official at a contest/ festival uses bullying behaviour.

**Peer on Peer Abuse**

Safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include but is not limited to bullying, gender-based violence, sexual assaults and sexting. This form of abuse should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up".

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status.

It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults.

In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status.

Legally consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them.

CSE does not always involve physical contact and can happen online.

A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, car and education at some point.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM comprises of procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long lasting harmful consequences.

### **Preventing Radicalisation**

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the band's wider safeguarding responsibility and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm or abuse.

During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.

Any cases of suspected radicalisation must be reported.

**INDICATORS OF ABUSE**

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Most people involved in brass banding are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a child is being abused may include:

- 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
- An injury for which an 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 a child
- Unexplained changes in a child's behaviour – e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper - or behaviour changing over time
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour in games
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- Difficulty in making friends
- Being prevented from socialising with other children
- Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
- Losing weight for no apparent reason
- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt

It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is not the responsibility of those working in banding to decide that child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.

Signs of bullying may include:

- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctant to go to band rehearsals or to competitions.
- An unexplained drop-off in standard of performance.
- Physical signs such as stomach-aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed-wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes and bingeing on food, cigarettes or alcohol.
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

**RECRUITING AND SELECTING PROCEDURES****Introduction**

It is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children. This applies equally to volunteers as well as paid staff. The fundamental principle is that those in charge of activities involving young people must take all reasonable steps to satisfy themselves as to the suitability of those who are given access to the children in their care.

**Controlling access to children**

Applicants for positions that involve significant access to young people (for example junior band conductor) should complete procedures designed to elicit information about their past career, and to disclose any criminal record or other matter that has a bearing on their suitability to work with children.

Consent should be obtained from applicants for checks to be conducted to determine whether the Criminal Records Bureau holds any relevant information on them.

**Vetting**

All personnel who will have significant access to young people must first be vetted by obtaining a Disclosure about the individual from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

It is important to emphasise that the absence of any relevant disclosure emerging from this vetting process does not guarantee that the individual is safe to work with children, so it should not be relied on excessively. It is only one of a number of factors in the initial assessment of the person's suitability for such responsibilities.

**The Welfare Officer within the band**

A Welfare Officer will be appointed from the Committee to advise the band committee on compliance with the procedures in this protection policy and act as a focal point for reporting any concerns. This person will also act as Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) and has the primary responsibility to check that everyone who has significant access to young people within the band is suitable for that role and has been vetted as described above. In the absence of the Welfare Officer, the Minutes Secretary (or designated person) will take responsibility.

**Training**

The effectiveness of the policies depends on everyone who is involved being aware of what is good practice and Brunel Brass will ensure there is awareness on the committee and particularly with those working directly with young people.



**RESPONDING TO & REPORTING SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS**

Abuse can and does occur in the family setting as well as other situations, which may include brass banding or other social activities, and is rarely a one-off event when it occurs within such a setting. It is crucial that those involved in banding are aware of this possibility and that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action taken.

It is not the responsibility of anyone in a brass band whether paid or voluntary, to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. However, there is a responsibility to inform appropriate agencies of possible abuse so that they can then make inquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child. This applies both to suspicions of abuse occurring within the context of banding activities and to allegations that abuse is taking place elsewhere.

**Receiving evidence of possible abuse**

We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. We may see it happening ourselves; we may suspect that it is occurring because of signs such as those listed above; it may be reported to us by someone else, or directly by the child affected.

In the last of these cases, it is particularly important to respond appropriately. If a child says or indicates that he or she is being abused, or information is obtained which gives you concern that a child is being abused, you should:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child
- Tell the child they are not to blame and that it was right to tell
- Take what the child says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child who has a speech disability and/or differences in language
- Keep questions to the absolute minimum necessary so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said, and be careful not to ask leading questions
- Reassure the child, but do not promise to keep the matter secret – explain that to resolve the problem it will be necessary to inform other people as appropriate.

**Recording information (see form - Appendix E)**

As with other forms of information arising in relation to child protection, information of this kind is highly sensitive and confidential. Accordingly, it should be held under secure conditions and only made available to those who have a definite need for it.

You should make a note as soon as possible of whatever information you obtain, both for your own future reference and possibly for passing on to others, appropriate agencies such as the social services department or the police. In writing such a note, you should confine yourself to the facts, and distinguish between what is your own personal knowledge and what you have been told by other people. You should not include your own opinions on the matter, to avoid the possibility of libel. Information should include the following:

- The nature of the allegation, in as much detail as possible, including times, dates, locations and other relevant information
- Details of the child involved, including name, age, address and other contact details, and identifying who has parental responsibility for the child
- Details of the person against whom the allegation is made, including name, relationship with the child, age and contact details (if known)
- The identity and contact details of any informants or other witnesses

- The child's account, if he or she can give one, of what has happened
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- Details of who else has been informed of the alleged incident
- Any other relevant information

### **Reporting the concern**

Any concern about the welfare of a child should be reported immediately with the person in charge, and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken.

Within a band: You should inform the Welfare Officer or the person in charge of the band.

With students away from home: If you are working with students away from home (for example on band training camps or at contests), then you should inform the person in charge of the band or the Welfare Officer/designated person.

Circumstances in which other people might then need to be informed are:

Parents or carers: In most situations, it would be important to talk to parents or carers to help clarify any initial concerns. For example, if a child seems withdrawn, they may have experienced bereavement in the family. However, there are circumstances in which a child might be placed at even greater risk were such concerns to be shared, e.g. where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately. In these situations, or where concerns still exist, any suspicion, allegation, or incident of abuse must be reported to appropriate agencies as soon as possible.

The NSPCC or other agencies: The first consideration is to minimise the danger of further abuse to the child or to other children. The person in charge should seek advice from the local police or social services department or the NSPCC. The allegation should be referred to the police and social services department in any case involving physical or sexual abuse or where the child's safety is otherwise at risk. If the person in charge is not available, or the concern is about the person in charge, the person in receipt of the information or with the concern should contact these agencies direct. Reporting the matter to the police or social services department should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information.

Social Services: When a child protection referral is made its staff have a legal responsibility to investigate. This may involve talking to the child and family and gathering information from other people who know the child. Wherever possible, referrals telephoned to the social services department will be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. A record will also be made of the name and designation of the social services member of staff to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed.

Police: Where the apparent abuse is of a criminal nature; it will be appropriate to inform the police. A record should be made of the crime reference number provided by the police, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed. The police and social services department may also carry out a joint enquiry.

### **Disciplinary procedures**

For both volunteers and paid staff, if the abuse is alleged to have occurred within the context of brass banding it may also require disciplinary action by the band.

If the matter is being investigated by the police and/or social services, the band may decide to await the outcome of these investigations, which may well influence a disciplinary investigation, although not necessarily so. In appropriate cases, the band will suspend the individual concerned while an investigation is taking place. This is not intended to prejudge the outcome of the investigation, but simply to remove the individual from contact with children until the investigation is concluded. The disciplinary sanctions available include:

- Suspension or exclusion from membership of the individual concerned, and such other sanctions which are provided for within the band's constitution

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality for all concerned, and consideration will be given to what support may be appropriate to children, parents, members of staff and volunteers.

### **Allegations of previous abuse**

Allegations of abuse are sometimes made some time after the event, for example, by an adult who was abused as a child by a member of staff who is still working with children. Where such an allegation is made, the procedures given above will be followed. This is because other children, either within banding or outside it, may be at risk from this person.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**FORM FOR REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS**

This form should be used to report information or concerns about any member of Brunel Brass or it's workforce.

Where a referral is made, the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) will ensure appropriate outside agencies are contacted or made aware of the situation. This form will be kept as written confirmation of the referral, with a copy retained by the DSP.

**Name of Child:** .....

**Age/Date of Birth:** .....

**Date/Time of Incident:** .....

**Venue:** .....

**Name/Role of person completing form:** .....

**Details of disclosure by child / incident / concern? Please be specific and include dates and times of any incidents.**

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**Was there any physical or behavioural signs? Any other causes for concern?**

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**Have you spoken to the child? If so, what was said?**

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**Have you spoken to the child's parents/carers? If so, what was said?**

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**Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, give details.**

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**Please give your name and contact details**

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**Signature:** ..... **Date:** .....

***This form must be completed and given immediately, or sent in a sealed envelope marked "Private & Confidential" to Brunel Brass's Designated Safeguarding Person***

Claire Foulds  
Welfare Officer – Brunel Brass  
c/o Pegasus Hall  
Stratton, Swindon

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**Details of any actions / outcomes**

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