



Rathfarnham Concert Band Society

Child Protection Policy

January 2017

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1 Aims of the RCBS

The Rathfarnham Concert Band Society comprises three concert bands; Junior, Intermediate and Senior as well as a group of beginners awaiting places in the Junior Band. They form a Tyro Band for the second half of the year.

This Child Protection Policy applies to the Beginners' group, the Junior Band and the Intermediate Band, all of whose members are for the most part, under 18 years of age. It also applies to those employed or volunteering in a supervisory capacity, in the context of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

The society aims to provide a safe environment in which young people can develop into mature adults, educated for leisure and with committed community interests through the teaching and playing of music. Those goals are;

- (a) To develop in a love and appreciation of music in players.
- (b) To develop in each player proficiency to an adequate standard to ensure affiliation to appropriate music associations.
- (c) To use the musical proficiency of the band to further community harmony and development by playing music at suitable festivals, competitions and other musical activities as determined by the Executive committee in association with the Musical Director.

2 Scope

This document sets out the Child Protection Policy of the Rathfarnham Concert Band Society. It supersedes all previous Child Protection Policies and it takes into account the provisions of the following legislation;

- (a) The Data Protection Act 1988
- (b) The Education Act 1998
- (c) Freedom of Information Act 1997
- (d) The Education Welfare Act 2000
- (e) The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012

3 References

This policy sets refers to the following documents;

- Children First - National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children
 - http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/child_welfare_protection/ChildrenFirst.pdf
- Code of Good Practice: Child Protection for Youth Work Sector
 - http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/youthaffairs/youth_cpyws.pdf
- Guidelines for the protection and welfare of children and young people in the arts sector
 - <http://www.artscouncil.ie/Publications/ChildGuidelinesEnglish.pdf>

4 Workings of the Society

4.1 Location and Premises

Rathfarnham Concert Band Society currently¹ uses St. Mary's Boys' National School, Rathfarnham as its premises on weekday evenings and at weekends. Apart from these regular sessions, the society may schedule additional rehearsals in advance of major performances. It is normal to perform at many venues and events both throughout the country and occasionally abroad.

4.1.1 Lessons and Practices

The society's musical training is provided at various levels

- (a) Instrument Lessons - where one teacher may instruct from one to three children at a time.
- (b) Theory Lessons - where one teacher may instruct a group from three to fifteen children.
- (c) Sectional Practice - where a conductor takes a group of approximately twenty children.
- (d) Full Band Practice - where the entire band is massed for practice. This may be up to, but limited to sixty members, some of which are adults and the rest are children.

4.1.2 Adult Involvement

A large staff is involved in the weekly schedule of the band. This consists of conductors, teachers of instruments, and teachers of theory. All teachers are employed by the society and many others involved are adult volunteers. The volunteers are parents of current (or in some cases past) band members. Occasionally others may be approached for specific purposes as the need arises.

The society has an Annual General Meeting at which members are elected² to the society's committee.

Parental involvement is actively sought and parents are encouraged to get involved. The society often requires additional help with supervision of children and transportation of percussion and other awkward instruments or equipment when performing away from the society's base.

During the course of the year, the band may have social outings or "Away Trips". These trips are carefully planned with an appropriate level of adult supervision.

The society has Band Officers, i.e. At least one parent for each band; Tyro, Junior and Intermediate. These officers have a high level of involvement with their respective band and look after their specific needs including setting up of rosters for duties, uniforms, supervision and organising trips and concerts.

Other parents are involved in many ways, including;

- (a) Fund raising
- (b) Sponsorship
- (c) Concert organisation
- (d) Supervision of music theory exams
- (e) Supervision of children who have a free period between sessions
- (f) The financial running of the society

¹ While RCBS currently uses St Mary's BNS, this policy will apply to wherever the society operates.

² Or co-opted, as the need arises.

- (g) Helping out with outings and trips away

5 Code of Behaviour for Band Members

5.1 Rules of Membership

- (a) All places in the bands are reviewed annually and places are assigned by the Musical Director on the basis of ability to play at the standard required by the repertoire of each band and the general suitability of the student. The Musical Director's decision in this matter is final.
- (b) Players must commit to the full year programme of rehearsals, concerts, lessons and practice.
- (c) Regular attendance at rehearsals is essential. All absences must be notified to Band Officers. A phone call or SMS is sufficient.
- (d) Poor attendance at rehearsals may result in loss of membership.
- (e) Players must arrive punctually³ and will be expected to assist in organising the room before and after rehearsals.
- (f) Players are not allowed to leave the premises during rehearsals without prior agreement from the Band Officer and Conductor.
- (g) When not engaged in musical activity (e.g. While waiting for lessons or theory) members must remain in their assigned room.
- (h) RCBS operates a strict Green Policy. Players are obliged to remove all waste materials such as wrappers, bottles etc. No chewing gum is allowed on the premises. This policy applies to both St Mary's BNS and any other venue used by the band.
- (i) All players perform in public at the Conductors' discretion. Where players are not up to an acceptable standard through poor attendance or lack of commitment, the conductors' decision as to whether they perform is final.
- (j) Players participate at their own risk.
- (k) Players must commit to the study of music theory and practice including grade exams as required by the Musical Director.
- (l) Players, their parents and guardians must ensure that all instruments are adequately insured and that all instruments, cases, books and stands etc brought to rehearsals are tagged or marked for easy identification.
- (m) Membership, tuition and other fees and charges are usually levied in two or three installments throughout the academic year and must be paid within the timeframe stated.
- (n) The society may use photographs, audio or video recordings of individuals or ensembles for public relations, promotions, exhibitions or record keeping purposes. Photographs may be posted on its website or the website of its affiliates. These will be of an appropriate content for promotion of the band as a safe and caring environment in which the children and young adults play music and socialise together. Parental permission for the above will normally be sought when a member joins the band.
- (o) Members will respect the dignity and privacy of teachers, volunteers and other students by not publishing any electronic recordings without the knowledge and informed consent of all those recorded. This applies to all forms of distribution media including email,

³ Usually ten minutes before the start of practice

mobile applications, news feeds, social media and other online storage.

5.2 Misconduct of Students / Members / Players

Should a complaint be lodged with the Executive Committee that the conduct of any member or player is found to be detrimental to the interests of the Society, the executive committee shall have the right to summon such member to answer the charge. The committee shall have the right to impose an appropriate penalty for the misconduct.

In the case of players under 18 years of age, their parents or guardians shall be formally notified and requested to attend an interview before any disciplinary action is taken. Subsequent to this meeting or in the event of the parents or guardians not attending this interview, the committee shall have the right to impose an appropriate penalty.

Penalties may include;

- (a) Fine
- (b) Suspension
- (c) A request for resignation
- (d) Expulsion

6 Code of Behaviour for Volunteers and Teachers

In accordance with the aims and workings of the society, a Code of Behaviour has been drawn up which outlines the steps we take to reduce everyday risk of harm, particularly accidental harm to children, young people and staff. These actions come under the following headings;

6.1 Child Centred Approach

All staff working or volunteering with the society are encouraged to -

- (a) Treat all children and young people equally.
- (b) Listen to and respect children and young people.
- (c) Involve children and young people in decision making, as appropriate.
- (d) Provide encouragement, support and praise – regardless of ability.
- (e) Use appropriate language, both physically and verbally.
- (f) Encourage fun and a positive atmosphere.
- (g) Offer constructive criticism when needed.
- (h) Treat all children and young people as individuals.
- (i) Respect a child's or young person's personal space.
- (j) Lead by example.
- (k) Be aware of a child's or young person's other commitments (e.g. School, exams, sport) when scheduling rehearsals or other activities.
- (l) Be cognisant of a child's or young person's limitations due to a medical condition or other factors.
- (m) Create an atmosphere of trust.
- (n) Respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race and sexual orientation.
- (o) Encourage children and young people to report any bullying, harassment, concerns or

other worries.

6.2 Good Practice

In accordance with good practice, the society;

- (a) Will registers each child or young person, recording their name, address, contact information, special requirements and emergency contact(s).
- (b) Makes parents, guardians, visitors and facilitators aware of our Child Protection Policy and procedures.
- (c) Has emergency procedures in place and makes all staff aware of these procedures.
- (d) Is inclusive of children and young people with special needs.
- (e) Reports any concerns to the chairperson and follows reporting procedures.
- (f) Provides appropriate training for staff and volunteers.
- (g) Reports and records any incidents and accidents.
- (h) Updates and reviews policies and procedures regularly.
- (i) Keeps parents and guardians informed of any issues that concern their children.
- (j) Will ensure proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved.
- (k) Will observe appropriate staff gender balance for trips away.

6.3 Inappropriate Behaviour

The following are non-exhaustive guidelines;

- (a) Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children or young people.
- (b) Don't use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language.
- (c) Don't single out a particular child or young person for unfair favoritism, criticism, ridicule or unwelcome focus of attention.
- (d) Don't allow or engage in inappropriate touching in any form.
- (e) Don't strike or physically chastise children or young people.
- (f) Don't verbally abuse a child or young person when correcting or instructing them.
- (g) Don't socialise inappropriately with children or young people (e.g. Outside of structured organised activities)

6.4 Physical Contact

- (a) Seek the consent of a child or young person in relation to physical contact (e.g. In the demonstration of instrument technique)⁴
- (b) Avoid horseplay or inappropriate touching.

6.5 Health and Safety

The following rules apply to all adults involved in the Society;

- (a) Don't leave children unattended or unsupervised.
- (b) Provide a safe environment in which the junior members can learn, including the due

⁴ Except in an emergency or the avoidance of danger

- cognisance of the facilities and building in use.
- (c) Be aware of accident procedures and follow them accordingly.
- (d) Inform all persons of the Fire Drill procedures and plan a Fire Drill in each academic year.

7 Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse

7.1 Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

The Chairperson of the society will act as DLP and another named member of the executive committee shall act as Deputy DLP and Child Protection Officer (CPO). The DLP has ultimate responsibility for Child Protection and will represent the society in all dealings with the Health Services Executive, an Garda Síochána and other parties in connection with allegations of abuse. He or she may deputise such functions in this matter to the DDPL/CPO as both see fit. All matters pertaining to the processing or investigation of child abuse should be processed through the DLP in the first instance.

Further information on the responsibilities of the DLP is included in reference (ii) Section 6.3 in "Code of Good Practice: Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector.

7.2 Dealing with Disclosure

The following advice is offered to all band personnel to whom a child makes a disclosure of abuse;

- (a) Listen to the child
- (b) Take all disclosures seriously
- (c) Do not ask leading questions or make suggestions to the child
- (d) Offer reassurance, but do not make promises (e.g. Not to tell anyone else)
- (e) Do not stop a child recalling significant events
- (f) Do not over-react
- (g) Explain that further help may have to be sought
- (h) Record the discussion accurately and retain this record
- (i) Maintain the confines of confidentiality (e.g. Only those who need to know should know)
See "Guidelines for the Protection and welfare of children and young people in the arts sector", Section 4 Confidentiality statement.
- (j) Report the disclosure to the DLP or Child Protection Officer.

If the reporting person and the DLP are satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion or allegation, the procedures for reporting as laid out in; "*Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and welfare of Children*", Section 4.4 Standard Reporting Procedure shall be adhered to.

The "*Standard form for reporting child protection and/or welfare concerns to the Health Board*" will be used, See Appendix 4, of "*Children First; National Guidelines for the protection and welfare of Children*"

7.3 Confidentiality

All information regarding the concerns of possible child abuse should only be shared on a need to know basis in the interest of the child. They should not be discussed with parties unrelated to

the child. Information should be stored in a secure place with access limited to the designated personnel.

Giving information to those who need to have that information for the protection of a child who may have been or has been abused, is not a breach of confidentiality.

The DLP who is submitting a report to the health board or an Garda Síochána should inform a parent or guardian unless doing so is likely to endanger the child or place that child at further risk. When in doubt, the DLP shall seek the advice of the Health Board and/or an Garda Síochána regarding informing the parents or guardians of any allegation made. A decision not to inform a parent or guardian should be recorded together with the reasons not to do so.

7.4 Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse “reasonably and in good faith” to designated officers of Health Boards or any member of an Garda Síochána.

This means that even if a reported suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that the reporter had not acted reasonably and in good faith making their report.

Reports made to Health Boards may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1997

7.5 Allegations or Suspicions Regarding Employees or Volunteers

The most important consideration for the DLP/CPO is the safety and protection of the child. However, employees or volunteers also have a right to protection against claims which are false or malicious.

When an allegation of abuse is made against an employee or volunteer, the DLP should immediately act in accordance with the procedures outlined in “Code of Good Practice: Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector”, Section 8

A written statement of the allegation should be sought from the person or agency making the report. The DLP should always inform the sub-committee.

The DLP should privately make the person against whom an allegation has been made aware that;

- (a) an allegation has been made against them
- (b) the nature of the allegation
- (c) Whether the Health Board or an Garda Síochána have / will be / must be informed

The employee or volunteer should be given a copy of the written allegation and any other relevant documentation. The employee or volunteer should be requested to respond to the allegation in writing to the DLP within a specified period and told that this may be passed on to the Gardaí, Health Board and legal advisors. However, the decision to proceed may be based on the allegation and not dependant on their response.

The priority in all cases is that no child should be exposed to unnecessary risk. Therefore, as a matter of urgency, the DLP should take any necessary protective measures. These measures should be in proportion to the level of risk and should not unreasonably penalise the employee or volunteer in any way unless to protect the child in question.

If the nature of the allegations warrants immediate action in the DLP's opinion, the sub-committee should be convened to consider that matter. Legal advice should be sought on procedures or protocols. The sub-committee may direct that the employee or volunteer absent him/herself from the band while the allegation is being investigated. See “Guidelines for the protection and welfare of Children and young people in the Arts Sector”, Section 8

If required, the sub-committee shall be appointed by the chairperson and ratified by the Child

Protection Officer. For gender balance, at least one of the members shall be female and one shall be male.

7.6 The Child Protection Sub-committee

By default, the sub-committee is constituted thus;

- (a) Designated Liaison Person (DLP) / Chairperson
- (b) Deputy Designated Liaison Person (D/DLP) / Child Protection Officer
- (c) One of the Band Officers

8 Vetting

The RCBS is committed to compliance with best practices for all dealings with children as well as adherence to all applicable laws and regulations.

With respect to the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 the RCBS will comply with the following procedures;

8.1 Registration of Volunteers and Employees

In order for the RCBS to employ a teacher or accept the involvement of a volunteer, that individual must allow themselves to be vetted by the GUV and approved by the CPO and or the executive committee.

The prospective worker or volunteer which is seeking engagement with the society will provide the required documentation in order to validate their identity as per NYCI syndicate procedures. Currently, that requirement is;

- Production of a passport or other form of photo identification
- Production of proof of current address (formal bill etc)

In the event of a GUV return providing specified information, the RCBS will take steps to ensure the details remain confidential.

The committee's decision on the matter of engagement, whether or not the return from the GUV is either positive or negative, remains final.

8.2 Scope of vetting

All persons in close contact to or who work in a supervisory capacity shall be subject to vetting. This includes;

- Teachers
- Volunteers who accompany students on weekend or international trip
- Examiners
- Others who the committee deem to fall into this classification as circumstances dictate.

8.3 Delegation of Duties

Teachers or other vetted individuals working in a supervisory capacity may not delegate their duties to other personnel without the permission of the Musical Director in the case of teaching or Chairperson in the case of supervision. It is strictly forbidden for any person to engage any third party who has not been vetted and approved by the RCBS for any purpose whatsoever.

8.4 Data Protection Act

The RCBS will take all appropriate steps to comply with the Data Protection Act 1988. All personal data supplied for the purposes of GUV clearances will be managed by the serving Child Protection Officer who will act as it's custodian.

8.5 Renewal of Vetting Approvals

The RCBS reserves the right to seek the periodic re-vetting of employees or volunteers. This is in addition to any future requirements of the relevant Acts.

Selection of individuals for re-vetting may be either specific or random.

9 Document history

Date	Detail	Approved by
September 2013	Draft	Eugene Gargan
December 2013	Changes to document	Eugene Gargan
September 2014	Review	Eugene Gargan
September 2015	Review and specific changes	Eugene Gargan
January 2017	Review and changes to scope of vetting	Eugene Gargan

- End -