

RCBS Policy on Online Teaching

The **Rathfarnham Concert Band Society (RCBS)** is committed to a child-centred approach in all its work with children. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience, where the welfare of the child is paramount.

This policy extends the Child Protection Policy of the Rathfarnham Concert Band Society.

There is some practical guidance for online tuition for both tutors and students in a document which follows this statement – ‘Safeguarding During Online Music Lessons – practical steps’.

Musical tuition via the Internet

In facilitating access to instrumental tuition for our students, RCBS extends the opportunity to take lessons online. In providing these opportunities, we will adhere to the following best practices in the interest of safeguarding both students and tutors.

Child Protection Concerns Related to Internet Tuition

Tutoring students online raises the following concerns in relation to child protection:

- The situation introduces the student to the idea of communicating with an adult that is not part of their family group over the internet. This is not a practice that should come to be considered normal by the student and it should be emphasised by parents that communicating in this manner is something that requires permission and supervision.
- This method of teaching invites the tutor into the student’s home, and vice versa, without being physically present and, therefore, possibly unknown to other members of either household. There should be an awareness on behalf of all involved that there is someone virtually present in their home and that everyone’s actions need to be reflected in this. Insofar as is possible, the teaching situation should closely reflect that of teaching in a music school.
- RCBS tutors undertake as part of our Child Protection Policy to report any concerns over child welfare to the designated person with RCBS for child welfare matters. This relates not only to the student but to the welfare of

any child in the location in which they are working, physically or virtually.

Parental Consent

Email parental [for 'parent' in these notes, please read 'guardian' if appropriate] consent shall be sought for the purposes of:

- Engaging with the young person in their home via live video calls

Location and Supervision of Lessons

- All lessons should be held in an area of the home that is open and accessible to the parents of the student. Lessons should not, for instance, take place in a bedroom with a closed door.
- Lessons will, however, need to be held in an area where student and tutor can concentrate on the lesson and not be unnecessarily interrupted. This may be hard to balance with younger children in the house and may take a few lessons to establish a good routine. All concerned need to show some patience in forming a routine and be willing to discuss ways to improve concentration during lessons.
- A parent/guardian or other responsible adult should be available to drop in and out of the teaching space throughout the duration of the lesson.

Email Addresses (for Zoom classes)

- All lessons and student-teacher interaction on the student's part must take place using parent/guardian email addresses unless the student is over 18.
- All lessons and student-tutor interaction on the student's part must take place using an email that is certified by the Musical Director as being the email address of the named teacher for that instrument.

Alternative Contact Methods

- All arrangements / re-arrangements for lessons must be made through a parent.
- Student and tutor are not to communicate via alternative video / electronic methods other than specifically agreed with the parent.
- Any and all communications between student and tutor must be fully

controlled by or accessible to parents.

Grounds for Concern

The grounds for concern laid out in the RCBS Child Protection Policy shall apply in all lessons given over the internet and shall apply to all children in the student's home. This includes things that happen in the background or off-camera.

If a parent has any concerns about the process or relationship between student and tutor, they should contact the chairman to discuss the situation. RCBS undertakes to investigate all complaints or concerns regarding its teaching staff in line with our Child Protection Policy.

Raising Concerns

Concerns for the welfare of students will be dealt with in line with the RCBS Child Protection Policy.

Continuing Review

Please note – the RCBS Policy on Online Teaching is under active development in response to the COVID-19 restrictions and may be further reviewed.