

The Robert Bouffler Music Trust child protection policy Safeguarding the Welfare of Children and Young People

The *Robert Bouffler Music Trust (RBMT)* recognises the unique status of children and young people, and seeks to ensure that they are treated respectfully as individuals.

It is the *RBMT's* objective to maintain the highest standards of care towards children and young people in all of its activities, and all of the volunteers and workers of the Trust must accept that the welfare of the child or young person is paramount. It is the duty of everyone who works with children and young people to prevent abuse and unsafe situations from occurring. Therefore, all volunteers and workers for *RBMT* are required to report any abuse disclosed to them, discovered or suspected by them, to the Trustees in line with the following guidelines. *RBMT* will collaborate fully with the statutory and voluntary authorities such as the Police, Social Services and NSPCC who are charged with the responsibility of investigating any alleged abuse.

RBMT are committed to ensuring that the following good practice guidelines are adhered to:

- No child abuse issues will be trivialised or exaggerated and the correct procedures for investigation will be followed.
- To bring to the awareness of all volunteers and workers the importance of how words and actions are open to misinterpretation, and therefore that they should use the utmost care to avoid situations where such misinterpretation could occur.
- A worker or volunteer should avoid where at all possible being on their own with a child or young person.
- A worker or volunteer should never meet with a child or young person outside the organised activity without another volunteer or worker being present and a Trustee being informed.
- A worker or volunteer is responsible for ensuring that abusive peer activities (such as bullying etc.) do not occur.
- A worker or volunteer should take any necessary steps to ensure that the site is safe for children and young people. Any concerns that cannot be directly addressed should be reported to a Trustee.
- To use matrons/chaperones for the supervision of young people under compulsory school age in accordance with Surrey County Council guidelines for the protection of children and the relevant legislation in relation to child employment.

Dealing with allegations of abuse

Allegations of abuse may come directly from a child or young person, or from another volunteer, worker or Trustee. Such allegations may refer to a family member or to someone outside the family

such as a teacher or youth leader. No groups of people are exempt from being abusers or from being abused. If an allegation is made to a worker or volunteer of the *RBMT*, it is important to take that allegation seriously and to consider the continuing safety and welfare of the child or young person so that the abuse is stopped. Such considerations must always outweigh the best interests of the *RBMT* or the abuser.

Abuse can be defined in the following categories:

Physical injury: any injury to a child or young person caused by a parent or family member, or another person who is responsible for their care, or in loco parentis.

Neglect: a failure to meet a child or young person's basic needs for food, warmth, protection and care.

Emotional abuse: the persistent, severe emotional ill treatment or rejection that severely affects the emotional and/or behavioural development of a child or young person.

Sexual abuse: the use of a child or young person to meet an adult's sexual needs.

If a child or young person begins to tell a volunteer or worker about abuse then it is vital that the worker or volunteer does the following:

- Does not promise not to tell anyone or say that they will keep a secret.
- Listens carefully but does not ask questions (a trained professional will do this in due course).
- Reassure the child or young person that by disclosing the abuse they have acted correctly.
- Report the child or young person's disclosure to a Trustee immediately.
- As soon as possible, write down what you were told by the child or young person, using their own words to describe the abuse, and pass this report to the Trustees.

The Trustees will jointly deal with any incidents that occur and the appointed Trustee for child protection issues will report the allegation to the relevant statutory or voluntary authorities that are charged with investigating the allegation. The first person to be told of the abuse may be asked to give a statement to the Police. It is important to realise that such disclosures are confidential, and should only be shared with others on a need-to-know basis.

TRUSTEES

Child Protection Officer: Barbara Barnes 01883 343363

Please see our website for details of all our current trustees at: rbmt.org.uk