

POLICY ON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

- 1 Great Bowden Recital Trust (“the Trust”) accepts that the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount and that they have a responsibility to safeguard children within the legal framework of the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and other relevant legislation. Under the terms of the 2004 Act, anyone under the age of 19 is considered to be a child/young person.
- 2 The Trust adheres to the principle that all children and vulnerable adults, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs. All concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by the trustees and volunteers and responded to quickly and appropriately.
- 3 This policy is approved and endorsed by the Trustees. It consists of the Policy and Appendices I – IV (Incident Reporting Form, Defining Child Abuse, The Signs and Indicators of Abuse and The Child Safe Code). The purpose of the policy is to protect children and young people who receive GBRT services and to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.
- 4 This policy applies to the Trustees of the Trust and to volunteers working with the Trustees, all of whom have a responsibility to report concerns. This policy relates to children and to young persons and also to those vulnerable adults (of any age) who are identified to the organisers prior to their arrival at any Trust activity. This should be done by contacting the Chairman (or in his absence any of the other trustees) whose details are available on our website, www.gbrecitaltrust.co.uk. It is intended that this policy will be made available (where requested) to the legal guardians of the children and young persons with whom we are working and a copy can be found on our website.
- 5 It is recognised that an important element of good practice begins with recruitment and selection of personnel. The Trust will endeavour to apply the highest standards in relation to selection of Trustees and voluntary helpers. In selecting new Trustees, this will include carrying out appropriate “statutory” checks including a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service, and taking references (where appropriate). Before agreeing to accept help from a Volunteer, the Trust will either require the personal recommendation of that person by a current trustee of the Trust, or where the volunteer is not known personally to one of the trustees, they will require confirmation from two independent trusted people that the volunteer is a suitable person to work with children and young people. If there are any doubts concerning suitability, then the Trust may utilise the disclosure service provided by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). It is illegal for a charity to employ a barred person (either paid or voluntary).
- 6 In the case of Volunteers who will have substantial contact with young people, we will ensure that a DBS check is carried out before they commence responsibilities. Until the result of the DBS check has been received by the Trustees, any such volunteer will be overseen by an appropriately checked Trustee or other Volunteer.
- 7 Volunteers will be DBS checked every three years and Trustees every 5 years.
- 8 As the Trust and therefore all its activities is run entirely by volunteers, the Trustees welcome the support of parents/guardians/carers and teachers and seek to inform and involve them in its processes and activities with a view to forming a working partnership with them thereby ensuring, as far as reasonably practicable, a safe environment for the enjoyment of music.
 - 8.1 To assist with this, at events and activities where children are the focus, such as the Youth Choir, Trustees and volunteers will wear a conspicuous badge or Trust-liveried clothing.
 - 8.2 Instances of any suspected child abuse should be reported without delay to the Chairman or one of the other Trustees who will act on it quickly and appropriately and make a record. It is acknowledged that reporting concerns regarding the possibility of abuse can be difficult but doing or saying nothing is not an option. All records of incidents will be stored securely and kept.
- 9 This policy will be reviewed every five years or earlier in the event of major changes in the law.

10 PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

- 10.1 Where parents/guardians/carers are not attending an event or activity run by the Trust with their child or children, then it is expected that they will ensure that they are satisfied that their child or children will be accompanied to the activity or event and adequately supervised by a responsible adult acting on their behalf.
- 10.2 Where the activity or event being run by the Trust or in which the Trust is participating requires children taking part to change clothes, separate male and female toilet facilities will be provided and clearly marked. Children will not be allowed nor indeed required to change in public areas. However, the Trust will not supervise toilets or other changing areas. Where practice rooms have been made available, these will not be supervised by the Trust (nor will the Trust take any responsibility for any items left in those rooms)
- 10.3 The Trust actively seeks publicity for its work and events and photographs may be taken for this purpose. Where parents/guardians/carers do not wish their child or children to be photographed then it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians/carers or other responsible adult attending with that child or children to ensure that they are not included in any such photograph.
- 10.4 Unauthorised photography, video and audio recording in any form and by any means are prohibited during any performance and this will be strictly enforced.

10.5 If a child tells you they are being abused

- 10.5.1 Children will occasionally disclose abuse to an adult they have come to feel they can trust. This happens for many reasons, but the important thing to remember is that if they do tell you they are doing so in the hope that you will act to stop it happening, even if they ask you not to do anything with the information. Tell them that you will have to inform the designated person and that the statutory childcare authorities will also have to be informed.
- 10.5.2 They may feel as if they are betraying someone they are close to and whom they love. It is not unusual for a child to love the abuser but want the abuse to stop, especially when that person is a parent or carer. Equally it may be someone they fear, e.g. an adult whom they perceive to be able to influence decisions concerning their future. Either way, it takes great courage for a child to talk to an adult about abuse and your response can be crucial.
- 10.5.3 If a child discloses abuse to you in the course of your work it is important to react appropriately.

DO

- Remain calm and receptive
- Listen without interrupting; only ask questions of clarification if you are unclear what the child is saying
- Make it clear that you take them seriously
- Acknowledge their courage in telling you
- Tell them that they are not responsible for the abuse
- Let them know you will do what you can to help them

DO NOT

- Allow your shock or distaste to show
- Probe for more information /ask other questions
- Make assumptions or speculate
- Make negative comments about the abuser
- Make promises you cannot keep
- Agree to keep the information secret.

- 10.5.4 Remember that it can be more difficult for some children to tell than others, children with a disability may have to overcome additional barriers as could those who have experienced racial discrimination.
- 10.6 If a child tells you that they are being or have been abused you must:
 - 10.6.1 Make an immediate record of what the child has said, if possible using their own words. Use the incident report form attached to this policy in Appendix I.

- 10.6.2 Report the incident immediately to the Chairman and hand him the incident report
- 10.7 If an accusation of abuse by a Trustee or volunteer is made then you must report it immediately to the Chairman (or in his absence one of the other Trustees). In the absence of the Chairman and the other trustees, and if the incident is serious contact should be made with Social Services.
- 10.8 In most situations it will be important to talk to parents or carers to help clarify any initial concerns – for example, if a child seems withdrawn, there may be a reasonable explanation. He/she may have experienced an upset in the family, such as parental separation, divorce or bereavement. There are, however, circumstances in which a young person might be placed at even greater risk if concerns are shared (e.g. where a parent/carers may be responsible for the abuse or may not be 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 the Chairman as soon as possible and recorded.

10.9 Procedure to be followed following a report to the Chairman

- 10.9.1 The Chairman (or other person to whom the incident has been reported) will consult with NSPCC, Social Services/Police to form a view about whether the matter will be investigated by the statutory agencies as possible abuse.
- 10.9.2 The written record will be sent to Social Services within 48 hours by the Chairman (if advised to do so)
- 10.9.3 When an immediate referral to Social Services is not indicated, the Chairman will seek expert advice in order to establish an appropriate response. Expert advice can be obtained from NSPCC, Social Services or the Police.
- 10.9.4 All information will be stored separately from other records by the Chairman. Access to these records will be limited to on a need to know basis only
- 10.9.5 Confidentiality is a key issue in Child Protection work. Whilst information should not be shared freely, it must be shared with the appropriate agencies to ensure that a child is not left unprotected. The Chairman should take decisions on who needs to be informed after discussions with Social Services.
- 10.9.6 Remember that Trustees and Volunteers are not child protection experts and it is not their responsibility to determine whether abuse has taken place. All suspicions and allegations must be shared with professional agencies that are responsible for child protection**
- 10.9.7 Social services have a legal responsibility under The Children Act 1989 to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the child and making enquiries jointly with the police
- 10.9.8 NB – if there is any doubt, you must report the incident: it may be just one of a series of other incidences which together cause concern.**

APPENDIX I: Incident Reporting Form

Have you:

- Reassured the child
- Been honest and not made promises you cannot keep
- Explained why you may have to tell other people in order to stop what's happening
- Avoided close questions and ask as few questions as possible to encourage the child to use their own words

Your Name: _____

Your Position: _____

Your Address: _____

Your Contact Tel No. _____

Child's Name: _____

Child's Address: _____

Child's Date Of Birth: _____

Ethnicity: _____

Disability: YES / NO

Parents/Carers Names: _____

Parents/Carers Address (if different from above):

Date, time and circumstances of suspected/alleged incident(s):

Your observations:

To be completed by Chairman:

External Agencies Contacted: _____

Police: Yes/ No

Details of Advice Received: _____

Name And Contact Number: _____

Action Agreed: _____

Incident Report Number
(if provided): _____

Social Services: Yes/ No

Details of Advice Received: _____

Name And Contact Number: _____

Action Agreed: _____

Incident Report Number
(if provided): _____

Other Agency (e.g. NSPCC): Yes/ No

Details of Advice Received: _____

Have the parents been informed that contact is going to be made with Social Services or Police? Yes/ No

NB – Parents should always be informed except in cases where doing so could place the child at risk of further harm. If in doubt seek advice of Social Services/Police

Sign: _____

Date: _____

Remember to maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss with anyone other than those that need to know.

APPENDIX II: Defining Child Abuse

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm, it commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

The main forms of abuse:

➤ Physical Abuse

- Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or the threat of physical abuse.
- Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. Physical abuse as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act or protect

➤ Emotional Abuse

- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

➤ Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of or consents to what is happening
- Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of pornographic material, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people, and by people from all different walks of life.

➤ Neglect

- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, leaving a young child home alone or failure to ensure a child gets appropriate medical treatment. It may also include neglect of or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

APPENDIX III: The Signs And Indicators Of Abuse

Recognising signs of abuse is not easy and it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at risk. You do, however, have a responsibility to act if you have a concern in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect a child. It must be recognised that you are not an expert or professional in the areas of child protection or social work. It is important that you do not assume this role.

The following information will help you be more alert to the signs of possible abuse.

➤ Physical abuse

- Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily life. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of their body, like elbows, knees and shins.
- However, some children will have bruising which can almost only have been caused non-accidentally. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern.

➤ Emotional abuse.

- Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure and often children who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix/play with other children.

➤ Sexual abuse

- Adults, who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers.
- Usually in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour which may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who tell of sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important therefore that they are listened to and taken seriously.

➤ Neglect

- Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children. Physical signs of neglect can include inappropriate dress for the conditions, changes in behaviour which indicate neglect can be mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised.

APPENDIX IV: Guidance For Trustees And Volunteers

The Child-Safe Code for staff and volunteers

Do

- ❖ Treat all children and young people with respect and take notice of their reactions to your tone of voice and manner
- ❖ Always seek the parents' and child's consent if he/she is very young or disabled and needs help to go to the toilet
- ❖ Remember that it is okay to touch children in a way which isn't intrusive or disturbing to him/her or to observers
- ❖ Make sure that any allegations or suspicions are recorded and acted upon

Do not

- ❖ Engage in rough physical games including horseplay
- ❖ Touch a child in an intrusive or sexual manner
- ❖ Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even as a joke
- ❖ Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as helping them to go to the toilet or changing clothes
- ❖ Ignore a colleague's behaviour if it causes concern, talk to someone about