

# **Bedford Music Club Safeguarding Policy and Procedures**

## **1. Commitment to Safeguarding**

Bedford Music Club (BMC) is committed to ensuring that children, young people, and adults at risk never experience abuse of any kind. We acknowledge our responsibility to promote the welfare of these individuals and safeguard their well-being, whether they are members, volunteers, or attendees at BMC events. Our safeguarding culture prioritises a safe environment where vulnerable individuals can participate without fear of harm.

## **2. Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to all members, volunteers, and anyone working on behalf of BMC or participating in its activities. It outlines the overarching principles guiding our approach to safeguarding vulnerable individuals.

## **3. Recognising Vulnerable Individuals**

- Children: Up to the age of 16
- Young people: Aged 16-18
- Adults at risk: Over 18, as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, including those with learning or physical disabilities, mental illness, addiction, or reduced capacity. Risk can depend on the specific activity, not just personal characteristics.

## **4. Safeguarding Structure**

**Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO):** Dr Ian Rowlands.

The DSO has responsibility for handling all safeguarding issues and may delegate responsibility as necessary to ensure safeguarding concerns are appropriately addressed.

### **BMC Safeguarding Committee:**

The BMC Safeguarding Committee, reviews safeguarding policies and meets regularly to assess training needs and ensure a safe environment for all activities. The Committee shall be formed of the DSO, two trustees and the Curator.

## **5. Aims of the Policy**

- To protect children, young people, and adults at risk who are members, volunteers, or attendees at BMC events.
- To ensure all volunteers and staff working with vulnerable individuals are properly recruited, trained, DBS checked (or their contact with vulnerable individuals is properly risk assessed) and understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- To make safeguarding a priority in the planning and execution of all BMC events and activities.

## **6. Recruitment and DBS Checks**

BMC follows safer recruitment procedures. Volunteers and staff working with vulnerable individuals must undergo the appropriate level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, as determined by the BMC Safeguarding Committee. All checks are confidential, in line with BMC's equal opportunities policy. Staff and volunteers with unsupervised access to vulnerable individuals must have current enhanced DBS checks.

## **7. Training Requirements**

All volunteers and staff working with vulnerable people are required to complete safeguarding training every two years. The DSO is trained to Level 3 safeguarding standards. Training covers:

- Recognising signs of abuse or neglect
- Understanding BMC's safeguarding procedures
- Responding to concerns and reporting incidents

All new staff and volunteers will receive an induction that includes safeguarding policies and procedures. A safeguarding briefing will be provided before each BMC event, led by the DSO, ensuring staff understand their roles and responsibilities.

## **8. Ground Rules for Activities Involving Vulnerable People**

When BMC organises an event involving vulnerable people, we will:

- Plan activities with safeguarding as a priority and in line with established procedures.
- Ensure at least one enhanced DBS-checked adult is present. All other volunteers will be DBS-checked volunteers or properly risk assessed and supervised by DBS checked individuals.
- Maintain adult-to-child ratios according to Ofsted recommendations:
  - Age 0-2: 1 adult per 3 children
  - Age 2-3: 1 adult per 4 children
  - Age 4-8: 1 adult per 6 children
  - Age 9-12: 1 adult per 8 children
  - Age 12-18: 1 adult per 10 children
- Ensure that no vulnerable individual is left alone with an adult unless they are DBS-checked and carrying out regulated activity.
- Provide clear emergency contact protocols and ensure a safeguarding point of contact is established for all events.

- Maintain a gender balance among adults when activities involve vulnerable individuals of different genders.

## **9. Working with Parents/Guardians**

BMC will obtain written consent (email is acceptable) from parents or guardians before any vulnerable individual participates in BMC activities. This must include emergency contact details and pick-up arrangements.

## **10. Procedures for Reporting Safeguarding Concerns**

If any member, volunteer, or staff witnesses or suspects abuse, they must immediately report it to the DSO, Dr. Ian Rowlands. If the DSO is unavailable or implicated, the report should be made to one of the other designated trustees on the BMC Safeguarding Committee.

## **11. Procedures for Addressing Safeguarding Concerns**

The DSO (or their delegate) will:

1. Assess whether the vulnerable person is in immediate danger or needs medical attention and contact emergency services if necessary.
2. If the alleged abuser is currently working with vulnerable individuals, they will be removed from this role.
3. Record the concerns and consult with the BMC Safeguarding Committee, excluding anyone involved in the incident.
4. Decide on the next steps, which may include:
  - Reporting to the police for serious offences.
  - Requesting an assessment by the local authority.
  - Conducting an internal investigation for less serious incidents.
5. If an internal investigation is required, separate meetings will be held with both parties within 10 days. Written statements will be collected, and a resolution will be decided and communicated within 5 days.

## **12. Incident Reporting**

Safeguarding incidents must be reported immediately to the DSO.

- Incident Reporting Form: This form should be completed as soon as possible (within 12 hours) after an incident is identified, and includes:
  - Date and time of the incident
  - Details of the vulnerable person involved

- Nature of the concern
- Any action taken
- Confidentiality: All incident reports will be treated confidentially and shared only with relevant individuals involved in the safeguarding process.

### **13. Resolution and Disciplinary Action**

Any case of abuse found to have occurred will result in actions that prioritise the safety of the vulnerable person and maintain BMC's safeguarding culture. This may involve disciplinary measures, further investigation, or referrals to authorities as necessary.

### **14. E-Safety and Social Media**

Members, volunteers and staff are expected to maintain professional boundaries online and avoid interacting with vulnerable individuals through personal social media or private contact information. Any inappropriate contact must be reported to the DSO immediately.

### **15. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the BMC Safeguarding Committee or in response to changes in legislation or safeguarding practices.

### **Designated Safeguarding Officer: Dr Ian Rowlands**

All safeguarding concerns should be referred to him directly.

This document incorporates best practices from relevant safeguarding frameworks, ensuring a robust safeguarding environment at BMC.

*Last reviewed 9 December 2024*