

Bedford Music Club Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Legislative context

The primary legislation in England that forms a backdrop to BMC's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures is the Care Act 2014 (protecting adults) and the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017 (protecting young people). Detailed guidance around the child protection system may be found at <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/england> and for adults at risk at <https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/charities/>.

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 five 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:

07401 119776 (voice, SMS or WhatsApp)

01234 405974

ian.rowlands@ntlworld.com



Dr Ian Rowlands, BMC Chair and Designated Safeguarding Officer

10 May 2025

This document was last reviewed and approved in Committee on 9 December 2024 with further minor amendments by Chair's action on 10 May 2025