SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Safeguarding Policy – Dorset Sinfonia – overview

Commitment to safeguarding: Dorset Sinfonia believes that a child, young person or adult at risk should never experience abuse of any kind. We recognise that we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk. We are committed to safeguarding the well-being of all children, young people and adults at risk we come into contact with and to protecting them from harm.

About this policy

- This policy applies to; all members, staff (whether employees or freelances), volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Dorset Sinfonia or taking part in Dorset Sinfonia activities.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide members, staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to the protection of all vulnerable people
- This policy recognises vulnerable people as:
    - Children up to the age of 16 or young people aged 16-18.
    - Adults aged over 18 at risk as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. This might include adults with a learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs, or reduced physical or mental capacity. This policy also recognises risk is determined by the activity an adult is taking part in and not solely on the personal characteristics or circumstances of the adult, as such any adult can be at risk, and the risk can be temporary.
- This policy aims to:
    - Protect children, young people and adults at risk who are; members of, receive services from, or volunteer for, Dorset Sinfonia.
    - Ensure members, staff and volunteers working with children, young people and adults at risk are carefully recruited and understand and accept responsibility for the safeguarding of those vulnerable individuals they are interacting with.
    - Ensure that safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk is a primary consideration when Dorset Sinfonia undertakes any activity, event or project.

How Dorset Sinfonia might work with vulnerable people: membership is open to people of any age. We run regular rehearsals for members and put on concerts for the general public. As such our involvement with vulnerable people might include, but is not limited to:

- Members of the group who attend rehearsals and concerts
- Relatives and friends of members who attend concerts in a volunteering capacity
- Audience members at public concerts

Named safeguarding persons: Jo Rowe and Kat Dixon have responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to Jo Rowe or Kat Dixon in the first instance.

Any projects, events or other activities that will involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of Jo Rowe or Kat Dixon and in line with established procedures and ground rules (see below).

Procedures and ground rules: 'Ground rules, ways of working and procedures' are set out below.

Policy review: This policy will be reviewed and amended (if necessary) on a two-yearly basis by Dorset Sinfonia committee members. It will also be reviewed in response to changes in relevant legislation, good practice, or in response to an identified failing in its effectiveness.

Safeguarding policy – Dorset Sinfonia - Ground rules, ways of working and procedures

This policy includes:

- Recruitment practices around safeguarding
- Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people
- Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse
- Procedures for dealing with concerns and incident of abuse

Recruitment practices around safeguarding

If an existing or potential new member, staff member or volunteer will be working with vulnerable people as part of the Dorset Sinfonia activities the appropriate level of DBS will be requested before that work is undertaken.

The level of DBS check required will be decided by the committee and in line with DBS rules regarding regulated activity. The results of any check to inform a decision will be used confidentially and in line with the Dorset Sinfonia equal opportunities policy.

Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people

All people working with Dorset Sinfonia are encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations.

When Dorset Sinfonia organises an activity or event where they will be responsible for vulnerable people they will ensure that:

- Planning and prior risk assessment is carried out in line with this policy and procedures.
- The event is attended by an appropriate number of DBS checked adults – this will be a minimum of one but more when practically possible.
- There is a main contact for safeguarding on the day - this will be an individual who has been DBS checked – who has access to emergency contact details and other relevant details (e.g. information about picking up arrangements for vulnerable people).
- There is always more than one adult present during activities.

- Adults are aware that physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted, and there should be no meeting with any such child outside such activities or away from the normal meeting places of the DS, without parental knowledge and approval.
- Adults recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.
- Two adults (one DBS checked) should be the last to leave a venue once the activity has finished and will be responsible for ensuring vulnerable people get home safely.

Working with parents/guardians: If a vulnerable person wishes to take part in Dorset Sinfonia activities written permission (email is fine) should be obtained from parents/guardians where appropriate, and before the activity takes place. Written permission should include: emergency contact details of any relevant pick-up arrangements – including permission for another adult to pick up the vulnerable person after the activity has finished

Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse

- If any member, staff or volunteer in Dorset Sinfonia witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they should immediately report it to one of the named safeguarding officers; Jo Rowe or Kat Dixon.
- If neither named person is available, or is involved in or connected to, the abuse, it should be reported to a DBS checked adult: Matthew Bakewell, Sheila Peters, Dave Ansell, Rachel Greenwood.
- If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the named safeguarding officer or an individual they trust.

Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse

The Named person (or person reported in their absence) will first make a decision based on the immediacy of the concern and the following two factors:

1. If the vulnerable person is in immediate danger or needs emergency medical attention – call the police and/or ambulance service.
2. If the person at the centre of the allegation is working with vulnerable persons at the current time – remove them, in a sensitive manner, from direct contact with vulnerable people and follow the procedures below.

If none of the above applies the named person will:

- Make a note of the concerns reported to them.
- Speak with committee members to decide how to handle the reported abuse. Excluding any committee members who of involved in the incident.
- Escalate the report by either:
    - Raising concerns with the police – for serious or possible criminal offences.
    - Requesting an assessment by the local authority social care department about whether a vulnerable person is in need of protection.
    - An internal investigation – for less serious incidents where they feel internal mediation will be successful.
- Where cases are escalated the committee will cooperate with the police or local authority in dealing with the reported incident.
- Where an internal investigation takes place the committee will:

    - Inform all parties involved of the reported abuse as soon as possible.
    - Inform the family/guardians of the person reported as being been abused of the incident.
    - Arrange separate meetings with both parties within 10 days of the reported incident. A joint meeting may be arranged if appropriate.
- Both parties should be given the change to bring a friend or representative to the meeting.
- Meetings will be attended by the named safeguarding officer and at least one other committee member.
- All parties will also be invited to submit a written statement in advance of the meeting.
- Once meetings have taken place the committee will decide on next steps and communicate them to all parties in writing within 5 days. They will be either:
    - Escalate the incident to the relevant authority.
    - Further investigation – with established procedures and timelines to work towards a resolution.
    - A decision or resolution.

Resolution and disciplinary action

- If abuse is found to have taken place any final resolution or decision will be taken in the best interest of the person who has suffered the abuse and the best interests of Dorset Sinfonia.
- Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with the Dorset Sinfonia constitution.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints regarding the safety of vulnerable people and/or the conduct of members towards such people are to be referred to the designated safeguarding officer in the first instance. He/she will then raise it with the committee as a whole, who will decide what further action should be taken, if relevant. Committee will then report back to the complainant.

Written: October 2022

Reviewed every 2 years. Last reviewed: Sept 2026