



## **NYSA Child Protection Policy**

**Last updated: 10 February 2007**

### **Policy Statement**

NYSA is a charitable company set up for the benefit of young people aged from 8 – 21 interested in furthering their musical education. Its core activity is the running of residential string chamber orchestra courses and associated concerts and concert tours.

Throughout this document the word “child” should be understood to refer to anyone under the age of 18. In general terms however the word “student” applies to any young person attending the courses or playing in the concerts staged by NYSA

For the purposes of this policy, NYSA staff include the teachers and all care staff and domestic helpers and volunteers. All staff who have potentially, unsupervised access to or contact with children are instructed on the subject of child abuse and how to develop awareness as well as the documented “best practise” to adopt to avoid any danger to the students in the temporary care of NYSA.

NYSA undertakes to review its policies annually.

### **Routine to follow for each course**

1. A staff member will be nominated in advance as the person in authority to be responsible for Child Protection Policy for that course, to whom any concerns should be reported. Normally this will be the Director but he or she could nominate some other person on the course, if that is felt to be desirable, so long as this is clearly notified to everyone and is public knowledge.
2. For each course the student notice board will have on it the name of the person responsible for the policy for the course and the name of a second person, normally not present in residence on the course, to whom students may have contact by telephone if they have concerns they do not wish to share with the staff on the course.
3. A public notice will be posted on the Open Access Notice Board at the beginning of each course setting out the basic concepts for behaviour [see below] and how to report potential abuse, for students, staff and parents to read. The full Child Protection Policy will also be displayed on the NYSA web site.
4. A questionnaire will be given to all students at the end of each course with the opportunity for the responses to be completely confidential and anonymous.

### **Training**

NYSA intends to provide Child Protection training for the Nominated Child Protection Officer (NCPO) through the NSPCC Consultancy Services or equivalent.

## **Addressing Lack of information about what to do**

The Child Protection Policy containing all relevant contact information will be mentioned in the introductory meeting at the beginning of the course, displayed on the notice board and on the web site. It is important that all students, staff, parents and carers know how to contact the NCPO with a concern.

## **Staffing Policy**

### **Recruitment and Selection Procedures**

1. A clear definition of the role the candidate would play so that the most suitable appointee can be identified. At interview at least one representative from NYSA will discuss the child protection policies of the organisation and explore the candidate's attitudes towards working with children.
2. Consideration of a selection of possible candidates to ensure equal opportunities, bearing in mind that the requirements for the courses are specific and this will often restrict choice from a wide field. Domestic helpers will not be appointed without personal recommendation from one of the NYSA directors.
3. Two written references will be required for any prospective new member of staff not personally known already to one of the directors of NYSA.
4. Requirement for a CRB current check to be available, or requested and sought by NYSA, before the appointment is finalised.
5. A clear guarantee that disclosed information will be treated in confidence.

### **Advice to staff to be included with the contract of engagement for each course:**

1. Every activity should be as open as possible, and it is important that no more time should be spent alone with individual students than is necessary. If one to one teaching takes place it must always be in public rooms. Curtains or blinds should not be closed and doors must remain unlocked and the lights on if the daylight is naturally dim.
2. It is important to avoid unnecessary physical contact with students. Examples of exceptional circumstances under which physical contact may be considered acceptable are: providing assistance to an injured student, providing reassurance in distress or adjusting a hand position in relation to playing a musical instrument, but only if the student is comfortable with this.
3. No member of staff should take a child alone in a car. If a journey is deemed essential the member of staff or the child must have a companion and permission from the Course Director. The parents' or in the case of emergency, The Course Director's) permission must be sought before the journey takes place.
4. While children should not be prevented or discouraged from speaking of concerns they may have to any member of staff it is essential to make it clear that it may not be possible to keep such discussion private but that if action is necessary it will be taken
5. Staff are advised to remember that teaching and learning are based on mutual respect and consideration for individual needs. No member of staff should apply bullying tactics or make remarks, even in fun, which could be misconstrued, to obtain the response they are looking for, and should never use abusive language or make suggestions which could cause loss of self respect. The student should treat the staff with courtesy and respect.
6. Remember that those who abuse children can be of any age (even other children), gender, ethnic background or class, and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action taking place.

7. When it is clear that there may be cause for alarm a member of staff or student should never try to deal with it alone. The member of staff or the student should write a clear account of the concerns giving reasons for them, sign and date it and give it to the person who is nominated (NCPO) to deal with such matters for the course.

### **Appropriate response of staff**

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is **not** responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the designated child protection person in the organisation.

### **If approached by a student with concerns the staff member should**

1. Stay calm.; Listen carefully to what is said.; Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets but tell the child that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it.
2. Allow the student to continue at her/his own pace; Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer. Reassure the student that they have done the right thing in telling you.
3. Record in writing what was said, using the child's own words as soon as possible – note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated by you.

### **Reasons for reporting concerns not passed on by students**

Staff could have their suspicion or concern raised in a number of ways, some of which could be:

1. unusual conduct of another member of NYSA staff or an older student;
2. bruising or evidence of physical hurt; which may or may not be accompanied by;
3. unusual behaviour by a child.

No preconceptions should colour the investigation.

It is important to remember that a child's demeanor may or may not provide clues and none of the above prove that abuse is occurring. In the case of NYSA holiday residential courses children may show evidence of home-sickness which could confuse the staff.

Sometimes children tell another person of abuse directly, though not necessarily a professional. A child's message may not be clear. Children are inclined to give up if their messages are not well received. Sometimes children may try to communicate through actions rather than words (e.g. running away).

Children cannot be relied upon to challenge explanations offered by older people or parent figures especially when the latter are present. Direct, sympathetic but objective, communication with children is extremely important - but may be difficult when both have conflicting and fluctuating feelings.

**Disbelief:** All staff must be aware that their own reluctance to believe or to record or report an allegation made against a colleague could put a child at risk.

### **Definitions of Abuse:**

**Physical Abuse** - causing actual physical hurt.

**Emotional Abuse** – usually verbal insults or implications of inability of the victim to achieve in some way.

**Sexual Abuse** – usually insinuation but may lead to actual physical sexual abuse.

**Neglect-** in the context of the courses when young people are in the temporary care of NYSA it important to ensure that the students are appropriately fed and that they eat normally and that normal sleep patterns are catered for and that students do not suffer from undue disturbance or insomnia. Anxiety can also be a problem in a competitive environment.

### **Role and Responsibilities of the Nominated Child Protection Officer (NCPO)**

The role of the designated person(s) is to:

1. **receive** information from students, staff, parents/carers and volunteers who have child protection concerns and to record it appropriately, safely and confidentially;
2. **assess** the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate;
3. **know** which outside child protection agency to contact in the event of a child protection concern. To liaise with outside agencies to review the policies and advise the Director and/or the trustees of appropriate actions to take;
4. **provide information and advice** on child protection within the organisation;
5. **ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing under confidential cover;**

**NYSA Reference Form for new staff**

\_\_\_\_\_ has expressed an interest in joining the NYSA staff, and has given your name as a referee. This post involves working with children. As an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children, we are anxious to know: do you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children or young people?

Yes / No

If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence. If you are happy to complete this reference, all the information contained on the form will remain absolutely confidential and will only be shared with the course directors, should the applicant be invited to work for NYSA. We would appreciate you being extremely candid in your evaluation of this person.

How long have you known this person? \_\_\_\_\_

In what capacity? \_\_\_\_\_

What attributes does this person have to make them suitable to work with children?

How would you describe their personality?

	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Responsibility					
Maturity					
Self motivation					
Can motivate others					
Commitment					
Energy					
Trustworthiness					
Reliability					

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Signed

Date

Please return this form to:

**Checklist for reporting suspected child abuse**

Name of child:..... Age and date of birth: .....

First language:..... Any special factors: .....

.....

Parent's/guardian's name(s): .....

Home address : .....

..... phone number:.....

Are you reporting your own concerns or passing on those of somebody else? Give details:

Brief description of what has prompted the concerns; include dates, times of day etc. of any specific incidents:

Any physical signs?

Behavioural signs?

Indirect signs:

Have you spoken to the child? ..... If so, what was said?

Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? ..... If so, give details:

Have you consulted anyone else? ..... if so give details:

Your name and position: .....

To whom reported and date of reporting: .....

Signature: ..... Today's date: .....