National Youth Orchestra of Ireland
Ceolfhoireann Náisiúnta Óige na hÉireann

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Mission

Our mission is to provide exceptional educational and performance opportunities for young musicians from across the island of Ireland in the full symphonic repertoire, supporting their development to the greatest extent of their talents.

The *Child Safeguarding Policy* of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland is presented in addition to our *Child Safeguarding Statement* and contains the necessary references and information to ensure best practice in relation to our work with children and young people.

Values

At all times the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland believes that the welfare of children and young people in our care is paramount. We place a high value on:

- **EXCELLENCE** in realising the creativity and artistry of our members
- **AMBITION** for the fullest musical realisation of our members' potential, driving everyone who participates in our work.
- Active **PARTICIPATION** in our work, making it a far-reaching social and cultural, as well as an artistic, experience for everyone involved.
- Our **CONNECTION** with players, parents, teachers, peer organisations and professional ensembles ensures our place in the continuum of music performance in Ireland.
- **RESPONSIBILITY** in our approach to the care and nurture of young people at a formative time in their lives.

SECTION 2: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The *Child Safeguarding Policy* of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland is presented in addition to our *Child Safeguarding Statement*.

This document forms part of a suite of documents that are used to safeguard and promote the welfare of the young people who we work with.

The NYOI believes that the best interests of children and young people attending our services are paramount. We believe that all children attending our services have the right to be protected, treated with respect, listened to and to have their views taken into consideration in all decisions affecting them. Our guiding principles are underpinned by *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*, Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and current legislation such as the *Children First Act 2015*, *Child Care Act 1991*, *Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998* and the *National Vetting Bureau Act 2012*.

Our guiding principles apply to all paid staff, volunteers and board members within our organisation. All board members, staff, volunteers and students must sign up to and abide by these guiding principles and our child safeguarding procedures.

Relevant person under the children first act (2015)

Anna Rosa Mari, CEO, NYOI, Phone: +353 (0)85 820 9122, Email: ceo@nyoi.ie

Designated liaison person

Anna Rosa Mari, CEO, NYOI, Phone: +353 (0) 85 820 9122, Email: ceo@nyoi.ie

Deputy designated liaison persons

Alan Duff, Orchestra Manager, NYOI, Phone: +353 (0)86 169 0344, Email: duffalan87@gmail.com
Fionnuala Devins, Head of Welfare, NYOI, Phone: +353 (0)85 8209122, Email: operations@nyoi.ie

Mandated persons

Under the *Children First Act 2015* mandated persons have a statutory obligation to report concerns which reach or exceed the legally defined threshold of harm (see the *Children First Act 2015*) and to cooperate with Tusla in the assessment of mandated reports, where requested to do so.

The *Children First Act 2015* requires all providers of relevant services to have a procedure in place to maintain a list of any mandated persons in their organisation. At the time of writing, below are the mandated persons involved in the organisation who are aware of their responsibilities.

Anna Rosa Mari	(CEO)
Alan Duff	(Orchestra Manager)
Fionnuala Devins	(Head of Welfare)

SECTION 3: TYPES OF ABUSE AND HOW THEY MAY BE RECOGNISED

Definitions of abuse

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child or a stranger, and can be an adult or another child. In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, you should consider it a child welfare and protection issue for both children and you should follow child protection procedures for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

Neglect

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences.

Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties. The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child's life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect.

Neglect is associated with poverty but not necessarily caused by it. It is strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic violence, and parental mental illness and disability.
A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. This may become apparent where you see the child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child once.

The following are features of child neglect:

- Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision
- Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding
- Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e. a child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation
- Failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation
- Inadequate living conditions – unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture
- Lack of adequate clothing
- Inattention to basic hygiene
- Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age
- Persistent failure to attend school
- Abandonment or desertion

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults, responsible for taking care of children, are unaware of and unable (for a range of reasons) to meet their children's emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to recognise because the effects are not easily seen. A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer.

Emotional abuse may be seen in some of the following ways: Rejection

- Lack of comfort and love
- Lack of attachment
- Lack of proper stimulation (e.g. fun and play)
- Lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned
- Continuous lack of praise and encouragement
- Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child
- Bullying
- Conditional parenting in which care or affection of a child depends on their behaviours or actions
- Extreme overprotectiveness

- Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. locking child in bedroom) Ongoing family conflicts and family violence
- Seriously inappropriate expectations of a child relative to their age and stage of development

There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour.
It should be noted that no one indicator is conclusive evidence of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is more likely to impact negatively on a child where it is persistent over time and where there is a lack of other protective factors.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically, or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child's health and/ or development is, may be, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.

Physical abuse can include the following:
- Physical punishment
- Beating, slapping, hitting or kicking
- Pushing, shaking or throwing
- Pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling
- Use of excessive force in handling
- Deliberate poisoning
- Suffocation
- Fabricated/induced illness

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for their gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography.

Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities. It rarely involves just a single incident and in some instances occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family members, but can also be carried out by a stranger.

Cases of sexual abuse mainly come to light through disclosure by the child or their siblings/friends, from the suspicions of an adult, and/or by physical symptoms.

Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

- Any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child
- An invitation to sexual touching or intentional touching or molesting of a child's body whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification
- Masturbation in the presence of a child or the involvement of a child in an act of masturbation
- Sexual intercourse with a child, whether oral, vaginal or anal
- Sexual exploitation of a child, which includes:
    - Inviting, inducing or coercing a child to engage in prostitution or the production of child pornography [for example, exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means]
    - Inviting, coercing or inducing a child to participate in, or to observe, any sexual, indecent or obscene act
    - Showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse
    - Exposing a child to inappropriate or abusive material through information and communication technology
      Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person.

Underage sex that is not sexual abuse

In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that in criminal law the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 is illegal. However, it may not necessarily be regarded as child sexual abuse and reporting to Tusla is not necessary if all of the following criteria are met:

- The young person(s) concerned are between 15 and 17 years old;
- The age difference between them is not more than 24 months;
- There is no material difference in their maturity or capacity to consent;
- The relationship between the people engaged in the sexual activity does not involve intimidation or exploitation of either person;
- The young persons concerned state clearly that they do not want any information about the activity to be disclosed to Tusla.

SECTION 4: CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MAY MAKE CHILDREN MORE VULNERABLE TO HARM

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse than others. Also, there may be particular times or circumstances when a child may be more vulnerable to abuse in their lives. In particular, children with disabilities, children with communication difficulties, children in care or living away from home, or children with a parent or parents with problems in their own lives may be more susceptible to harm.

Parent or carer factors

- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Addiction, including gambling
- Mental health issues
- Parental disability issues, including learning or intellectual disability
- Conflictual relationships
- Domestic violence
- Adolescent parents

Child factors

- Age
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Disability
- Mental health issues, including self-harm and suicide
- Communication difficulties
- Trafficked/exploited
- Previous abuse
- Young carer

Community factors

- Cultural, ethnic, religious or faith-based norms in the family or community which may not meet the standards of child welfare or protection required in this jurisdiction
- Culture-specific practices, including:
    - Female genital mutilation
    - Forced marriage
    - Honour-based violence
    - Radicalisation

Environmental factors

- Housing issues
- Children who are out of home and not living with their parents, whether temporarily or permanently
- Poverty/Begging

- Bullying
- Internet and social media-related concerns

Poor motivation or willingness of parents/guardians to engage

- Non-attendance at appointments
- Lack of insight or understanding of how the child is being affected
- Lack of understanding about what needs to happen to bring about change
- Avoidance of contact and reluctance to work with services
- Inability or unwillingness to comply with agreed plans

SECTION 5: PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION AND WELFARE CONCERNS

Introduction

The National Youth Orchestra of Ireland understands clearly that the safety and welfare of children is everybody's responsibility, and it has adopted the principles set out in Children First - A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns.

The CEO has been designated as the person to contact if you have an issue or concern about any aspect of a child's or young person's safety and welfare. It is their responsibility to support and advise staff about policy and procedures in relation to child welfare and to ensure that procedures are followed. It is also the responsibility of the Designated Persons to liaise Tusla or Gardaí where appropriate.

During residential courses, the relevant Orchestra Manager and Head of Welfare have been designated as deputies to the CEO in matters of a child's or young person's safety and welfare. Their contact details will be found on the first page of the Course Form which should be kept by all primary carers. However, when an allegation is made against a member of the staff, the CEO has been designated to deal with the staff member while the Orchestra Manager and the Head of Welfare will deal with the issue from the child's point of view. See 'Dealing with an allegation against a member of staff' below.

Abuse concerns, disclosures and allegations

During residential courses any member of staff may be approached by a player with a possible abuse claim or concern. Or a staff member may have suspicions or observations about a player and should bring these to the notice of the Head of Welfare or the Orchestra Manager. At this point the steps to be taken are considered to be the assessment period and all facts, thoughts and concerns should be recorded on a National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident Form

Procedure

A three-stage procedure – set out below - will be followed with any disclosure of an allegation of, or concern about, a possible case of child abuse. The first stage is an assessment of the worry or claim. The second stage is the decision making of what actions should be taken. And the third is the stage when those actions will be carried out.

Assessment

Assessment may take a number of forms - dealing with a staff concern, dealing with a disclosure, or an allegation against a member of staff – and there are specific steps to be taken in each case.

Dealing with a staff concern

1. All members of the residential staff will bring any concern of possible abuse to the notice of the Head of Welfare.
2. A National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident Form will be used to record all suspicions, concerns, worrying observations or behavioural changes.
3. If the Head of Welfare feels that the concern is genuine, they will inform the CEO and start an assessment of the issue
4. During the assessment all details, including the date, time and people involved in the concern or disclosure will be recorded on the official National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident Form. Information recorded should be factual. Any opinions should be supported by facts

Dealing with a disclosure

1. React calmly
2. Listen carefully and attentively
3. Take the child seriously
4. Reassure the child that they have taken the right action in talking to you
5. Do not promise to keep anything secret
6. Ask questions for clarification only.
7. Do not ask leading questions
8. Check back with the child that what you have heard is correct and understood
9. Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser
10. Ensure that the child understands the procedures that will follow
11. Make a written record of the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible using the NYOI Incident form
12. Treat the information confidentially, subject to the requirements of legislation

SECTION 6: PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION AND WELFARE CONCERNS

The following excerpt from Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (4.3.2 - p.38) shows what would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:

- specific indication from the child or young person that they have been abused;
- an account by a person who saw the child/young person being abused
- evidence, such as an injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way
- an injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse [an example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour]
- consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

SECTION 7: IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM TO A CHILD

The following guidance is taken from *A Guide for the Reporting of Child protection and Welfare Concerns.*

Mandated persons have a legal obligation under the Children First Act 2015:

- To report harm of children above a defined threshold to Tusla
- To help Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report.

In an emergency situation, where there is the belief that the child is at risk of immediate harm, Tusla should be contacted without delay before making a written report. Under no circumstance should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or risk of harm, while waiting for Tusla to intervene. If a child is believed to be in immediate danger and Tusla cannot be contacted, An Garda Síochána should be contacted.

In such an emergency situation, mandated persons/DLP/DDLP must follow up with a mandated report to Tusla within three days.

SECTION 8: TALKING TO PARENTS ABOUT CONCERNS FOR THEIR CHILD

NYOI is committed to being open with all parents and primary carers.

NYOI undertakes to

- Advise primary carers of our *Child Safeguarding Statement* and *Child Safeguarding Policy*
- Make copies of our policies available via our website, by email or hard copy.
- Keep primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children (with the exception of cases where this is not in the best interests of the young person);
- Inform primary carers of all activities and potential activities;
- Issue contact / consent forms for our activities;
- Encourage and facilitate the involvement of parents, carers and responsible adults where appropriate.

It is best practice to tell the family that a report is being made. This means that the family is fully informed about what is occurring and understands the information that mandated persons are passing on and why. However, there are some exceptions to informing the family. You do not need to tell the family that a report is being made if -

- By doing so, the child will be placed at further risk.
- Where the family knowing about the report could affect Tusla's ability to carry out a risk assessment.
- You believe that doing so would place the reporter at risk of harm from the family.

When speaking to the parents questions that might be asked include

- What have I seen or heard that worries me about the child?
- If nothing changes, what am I most worried about that will happen to the child?
- What are the adults that are caring for the child doing that is bad or harming the child?
- What has been the impact of their behaviour on the child?
- What would the child say they are most worried about?

SECTION 9: MANAGING RETROSPECTIVE DISCLOSURES

Parents and staff who are working with children and young people may disclose abuse which took place earlier during their childhood. A disclosure of abuse by an adult which took place during their childhood must be noted or recorded. In these cases, it is essential that consideration is given to the current risk to any child.

If you receive a disclosure from a parent or staff that they were abused as a child, you may have to report this information to Tusla. This is because the person against whom there is an allegation may pose a current risk to children.

If you are a mandated person, you will have to establish whether there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a person who is currently a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being harmed. If you conclude that there is no current or future risk to children, you are not obliged to submit a mandated report to Tusla under section 14(1) (a) of the Children First Act 2015 in relation to the childhood abuse of a now adult.

You may wish to seek guidance from your organisation in discussing your legal obligations with the parent or staff involved. While Tusla will make every effort to examine these cases, it is a very complex area. It involves the accused's rights to their good name, privacy and the right to earn a living, as well as the requirements of natural justice. When the alleged victim can cooperate with Tusla, it can greatly help Tusla to examine the potential future risk to children.

In cases of retrospective abuse, where there are no identified children, you should complete a Retrospective Abuse Form and send it to Tusla. This form can be found on the Tusla website

SECTION 10: DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES OF ABUSE FROM A CHILD

If you receive a disclosure of abuse from a child, you may feel reluctant to report this for a number of reasons. For example, the child may say that they do not want the disclosure to be reported, or you may take the view that the child is now safe and that the involvement of Tusla may not be desired by either the child or their family. However, you need to inform Tusla of all risks to children above the threshold, as the removal of a risk to one child does not necessarily mean that there are no other children at risk. The information contained in a disclosure may be critical to Tusla's assessment of risk to another child either now or in the future.

Section 14 of the Children First Act 2015 requires mandated persons to report a mandated concern to Tusla 'as soon as practicable'. You should submit a report of a mandated concern to Tusla using the required report form, on which you should indicate that you are a mandated person and that your report is about a mandated concern. You should include as much relevant information as possible in the report as this will aid effective and early intervention for the child and may reduce the likelihood of Tusla needing to contact you for further information. You can find the report form and contact details on the Tusla website

Joint reporting

As a mandated person, you may make a report jointly with any other person, whether that person is also a mandated person or not. For example, this could arise in situations where a child is admitted to the hospital emergency department and could be seen by a number of health professionals, or on a residential course where a tutor, welfare staff or the conductor have concerns about the same child and wish to make a joint report to Tusla.

SECTION 11: RECORD KEEPING

We in the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland are committed to ensuring peoples' rights to confidentiality. Depending on the nature of the disclosure received, the CEO will determine the type of investigation that will take place. All disclosures are thoroughly and objectively investigated. The investigation is handled appropriately and sensitively. The person investigating the disclosure will aim first to establish the facts related to the case. In complex cases, an investigation plan will be drawn up outlining how the complaint will be investigated, see Section 5 above.

Tusla keeps records of all interactions with children and their families. At Tusla, how they assess and investigate suspicions or allegations of child abuse or neglect is influenced by the amount and quality of information they receive from the person or organisation reporting the concerns. Good guidance and record-keeping procedures and use of the NYOI incident form will help NYOI staff to record relevant information in an accessible and practical way. The quality of the information shared with Tusla will greatly influence how they assess and respond to the concern.

- Records will be factual and include details of contacts, consultations and any actions taken.
- NYOI will fully cooperate with Tusla in the sharing of records, where a child protection or welfare issue arises.
- NYOI will store records on child protection concerns, allegations and disclosures securely and safely.
- NYOI will use records for the purpose for which they are intended only
- NYOI will share records on a need-to-know basis only in the best interest of the child or young person.

SECTION 12: TRAINING

We in the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland are committed to a child-centred practice means of working. This puts the welfare and best interests of the child at the core of how we work. All staff and volunteers work in ways which are compliant with our guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures.

Tusla provides information and resources on Children First guidance and legislation including an e-learning module. This e-learning module, which is called *Introduction to Children First*, covers recognising and reporting child abuse, the role of mandated persons, including mandated assisting, and the responsibilities of organisations working with children to safeguard children using their services. Information on how you can access the e-learning module can be found on the Tusla website.
NYOI will make sure that welfare staff working with the orchestra will undergo this training and will provide records of all training. This training will be updated as needed.
The DLP and DDLP will undergo appropriate training and will provide receipts to NYOI on completion. This training will be updated as needed.

SECTION 13: SAFE RECRUITMENT AND MANAGEMENT

NYOI takes all reasonable steps to ensure that only suitable people are recruited to work with children by adopting and applying a safe method of recruiting staff and volunteers

- NYOI will ensure that staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and young people.
- Roles and responsibilities for every job (paid and voluntary) will be clearly defined.
- Permanent staff positions will be advertised widely.
- A panel of at least two representatives will select permanent staff through an interview process.
- Candidates will be required to complete an application form.
- NYOI will endeavour to select the most suitably qualified personnel.
- At least two written or verbal references which are recent, relevant and independent, will be necessary for all staff and will be sought using a confidential reference form. Should there be reason to exclude an applicant, this will be agreed on a case-by-case basis. References cannot be supplied by family members.
- All staff and volunteers carrying out 'relevant work' will be Garda Vetted prior to commencement of work.
- All staff will be required to declare prior abuse convictions and state if they have been the subject of any investigation or enquiry into abuse or other inappropriate behaviour.
- No person who would be deemed to constitute a risk will be permitted to work for NYOI. Risk factors include:
    - any child-related convictions or convictions involving violent offences; a refusal to sign a declaration form;
    - a refusal to provide details of two referees;
    - a refusal to submit to the Garda Vetting process;
    - insufficient documentary evidence of identification;
    - concealment of information relating to one's suitability for working with children.
- There will be a probationary period for each permanent member of staff recruited.
- All staff will be required to complete a NYOI declaration form before working with children and are required to be Garda vetted.

Managing and supervising staff and volunteers

All permanent staff will:

- Be inducted in the NYOI *Child Safeguarding Statement* and the *Child Safeguarding Policy* and sign a declaration to that effect;
- Be required to undergo the Tusla Universal eLearning;
- Be subject to NYOI recruitment procedures;
- Receive an adequate level of supervision and review of their work practices;

All freelance and regular voluntary staff will:

- Be inducted in the NYOI *Child Safeguarding Statement* and the *Child Safeguarding Policy* and sign a declaration to that effect;
- Be required to undergo the Tusla Universal eLearning;
- Be subject to NYOI recruitment procedures;
- Engage in Garda vetting
- Receive an adequate level of supervision and support including initial training on being a member of the welfare staff.
- Undergo a probationary or trial period.

SECTION 14: CODES OF BEHAVIOUR

NYOI is committed to providing a positive and enlightened environment to facilitate the best possible outcomes for all participants. It is our policy to safeguard the welfare of all young people who participate in our activities. The welfare of the young people under our care is paramount.

All participants in our activities will be required to acknowledge and abide by codes of conduct for the relevant activities they are participating in. Codes of conduct will be in line with this code.

14.1: Code of behaviour for orchestra members

Members of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland will agree to the following Code of Behaviour:

- I will accept rules concerning group discipline while under rehearsal and performance or in residence which are based on common sense, safety, consideration for others and the requirements of performance.
- I will not engage in any inappropriate behaviour, damage or otherwise misuse any property, equipment service or facility, visited or hired by NYOI.
- I will work hard during rehearsals to the best of my ability and will perform to the highest level possible.
- I will switch my mobile phone off fully during all rehearsals.
- Abide in full by the dress code as given by the course/manager on all occasions.
- Stay in groups of at least 3 when walking, shopping or sightseeing and have access to essential contact numbers and means of contact.
- Follow the instructions of the assigned group leader, NYOI staff or supervisors at NYOI related activities.
- I, or my primary carers, will pay for any damage caused to property by me whether in residence during rehearsal periods or on tour.
- I will observe quiet in bedrooms after lights out and until wake up the following morning in residential public and private accommodation in order to allow others who are asleep or who wish to sleep to rest undisturbed.
- I will not bring a penknife or any weapon on a course.
- I accept that all players on the course will be treated equally.

- I accept that it is my responsibility to help and encourage all other players to reach their potential on this course.

- I accept that bullying, in any form, is not acceptable behaviour by me or anyone else.

- I will not bully any other player or take part in any bullying perpetrated by anyone else.

- I will report any incidents of bullying I see or hear about to a member of staff as soon as possible

- I will not take photos of another player without their permission. I acknowledge the use of any device capable of taking a picture are not allowed in bathroom or shower areas.

- I will not distribute or forward any images of another player by mobile phone without their permission.

- I will not leave rehearsal, residential or concert venues without permission

- I will be in my designated bedroom at the specified time each evening

- I will not purchase or consume alcohol at any time while on a NYOI related activity.

- I will not smoke, vape or use e-cigarettes at any time while on a NYOI related activity.

- I will not possess or consume illegal drugs at any time while on a NYOI related activity.

14.2: Code of behaviour for residential staff and tutors

At all times, residential staff will adopt the following standards:

- A child-centred approach: treat all children and young people equally and as individuals.
- Listen to and respect children and young people.
- Provide encouragement, support and praise.
- Use appropriate language to communicate with different age groups and use age-appropriate teaching methods.
- Encourage a positive atmosphere during rehearsals, offering constructive criticism when needed.
- Respect a child's or young person's personal space.
- Discuss boundaries on behaviour and related sanctions, as appropriate, with children and young people and their primary carers.
- Create an atmosphere of trust.
- Respect differences in ability.

At all times, residential staff will follow good practice, in:

- Having emergency procedures in place and making all staff aware of these procedures.
- Adhering to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland anti-bullying policy.
- Encouraging children and young people to report any bullying, concerns or worries and to be aware of anti-bullying policy.
- Not, if at all possible, giving a lift to a child/young person or, if you do, making sure that primary carers are informed and that another staff member or at least two young people are in the vehicle.
- Maintaining awareness of language and comments made; if you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, try to address it in a sensitive manner.
- Conducting each session in open environments with the full knowledge and consent of primary carers.
- Reporting and recording any incidents and accidents.
- Keeping primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children.
- Ensuring proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved.
- Observing appropriate gender balance for residential courses.
- Reporting any child protection concerns to the Designated Person and follow reporting procedures.
- Being proactive in relation to concerns, i.e., don't 'do nothing' and don't let problems get out of control.

Residential staff will avoid inappropriate behaviour, which means:

- Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children/young people.
- Do not use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language.
- Do not single out a particular child/young person for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, or unwelcome focus or attention.
- Do not allow/engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Do not hit or physically chastise children/young people.
- Do not socialise inappropriately with children/young people, e.g., outside of structured organisational activities.
- Only use physical contact in an emergency or dangerous situation.
- Do not engage in horseplay or inappropriate touch at any time.

Residential staff will be mindful of the health and safety of children and young people in their care, which means

- Providing a safe environment.
- Not leaving children unattended or unsupervised.
- Managing any dangerous equipment used with musical instruments.
- Being aware of and following the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland accident procedure.

14.3: Code of behaviour for office staff

At all times, office staff at the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland will adopt a child-centred approach.

This means:

- Treating all children and young people equally and as individuals.
- Listening to and respecting children and young people.
- Using appropriate language to communicate with different age groups.
- Respecting a child's or young person's personal space.
- Being aware of a child's or young person's other commitments when scheduling rehearsals and performances.

Office staff will follow good practice in engaging with children and young people who are members of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland.

This means:

- Registering each child/young person (name, address, phone, special requirements, attendance, emergency contact).
- Avoiding contact with players while on your own in the office.
- Not, if at all possible, giving a lift to a child/young person and, if you do, then making sure that primary carers are informed and another person or at least two young people is in the vehicle.
- Maintaining awareness around language and comments made. If you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, then try to address it in a sensitive manner.
- Making primary carers, children/young people, staff and aware of the Child Welfare Policy and procedures.
- Reporting and recording any incidents and accidents, and being aware of the accident and emergency procedures.
- Adhering to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland anti-bullying policy
- Providing appropriate briefing for staff and volunteers.
- Updating and reviewing policies and procedures regularly.
- Keeping primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children.
- Ensuring proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved.
- To the greatest extent possible, observing appropriate gender balance for residential courses.
- Reporting any child protection concerns to the Designated Person and follow reporting procedures.
- Adopting a proactive approach: don't be passive in relation to concerns, i.e., don't 'do nothing' and don't let problems get out of control.

Office staff will avoid inappropriate behaviour in engaging with children and young people who are members of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland.

This means:

- Not spending excessive amounts of time alone with children/young people
- Not using or allowing offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language
- Not singling out a particular child/young person for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, or unwelcome focus or attention
- Not allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form
- Never hitting or physically chastising children or young people
- Not socialising inappropriately with children/young people, e.g., outside of structured organisational activities
- Only using physical contact in an emergency or dangerous situation
- Avoiding horseplay or inappropriate touch at any time
- Avoid transporting children or young people in staff vehicles wherever possible. If necessary, the primary carer should be informed where practicable, and the child or young person must always travel with at least two responsible persons, or at least two young people present in the vehicle.

Office staff will have due regard for the health, safety and welfare of all children and young people who are members of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland.

This includes:

- Ensuring that children and young people are not left unattended or unsupervised.
- Ensuring that any potentially dangerous materials are appropriately managed and stored.
- Providing and maintaining a safe environment.
- Being aware of and following the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland's accident and incident procedures.

SECTION 15: MANAGEMENT OF ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS

The first priority is to ensure that no child or young person is exposed to unnecessary risk. Two separate procedures will be followed in tandem:

- Procedure (1). The CEO will deal with issues related to the child/young person. If allegations are made against the Orchestra Manager or the Head of Welfare, then the CEO will be contacted.

- Procedure (2). In respect of the staff or volunteer against whom the allegation is made, the CEO will deal with issues related to the staff member. If allegations are made against the CEO, then the Chairman of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Board will be contacted.

Steps to be taken

1. Both the primary carers and child/young person will be informed of actions planned and taken (1)
2. The child/young person will be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner (1)
3. Primary carers will be informed of the allegation as soon as possible (1)
4. The staff member will be informed as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation (2)
5. The staff member will be given the opportunity to respond (2)
6. The Chairman of the Board of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland will be informed as soon as possible (1 & 2)
7. Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee will be taken in consultation with Tulsa and Gardaí (2)
8. After consultation with the Health Service Executive and Gardaí, the Chairman of the Board of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland will advise the person accused of what is going to happen next (2)

Decision stage

The most appropriate person should discuss or consult the concern, disclosure or allegation with primary carers, unless it is likely to put the child/young person at further risk.

The CEO may contact Tusla/ Duty Social Work Department for an informal consultation prior to making a report. However, at this stage no names, facts or actual details should be given as this will mean that an actual report is being made verbally instead of looking just for advice on the issue.

All decisions made on actions to be taken should be clearly added to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident form started during the assessment stage.

Action stage

If the claim is not considered to be abuse but bullying, it will be dealt with as such using the NYOI Bullying Policy.

All other outcomes such as disciplinary or protective measures, except for a report to Tusla, will be clearly recorded on a National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident Form.

Any protective measures deemed necessary will follow the applicable employment contract and the rules of natural justice. Protective measures will be appropriate to the level of risk while not unreasonably penalising the employee or staff member – unless necessary to protect the child/young person.

Protective measures might mean increased supervision, assignment to different duties, or suspension. If there are reasonable grounds for concern, the designated person will contact the Duty Social Worker in Tusla using the standard reporting form.

Reports to the Duty Social Worker may be made verbally initially and then followed by the standard reporting form. Reports will be made to Tusla without delay.

Information will be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis (see Confidentiality statement).

Primary carers should be made aware of a report to Tusla.

If the Designated Liaison Person or Deputy Designated Liaison Persons are not available, contact the local Duty Social Worker or other mandated persons involved in the orchestra.

In case of emergencies outside of Tusla hours, contact the Gardaí. In situations that threaten the immediate safety of a child/ young person, it may be necessary to contact the Gardaí.
Please note that in making a 'bona fide report' the Orchestra Manager, Head of Welfare, CEO or other adults are protected under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998.

SECTION 16: SAFE MANAGEMENT OF ACTIVITIES WITH CHILDREN

The NYOI will ensure that the safety of young people is our priority. To prevent and minimise accidents we will:

- Venues we use will be safe and welcoming for all musicians and audience members
- Maintain an up-to-date register of the contact details of all children/young people involved in the organisation and make these available to all Residential Staff and medical personnel as necessary
- Make the location of accident/incident documents known to staff
- Record the details of any accident fully on an official National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident report form
- Cross-reference children/young people's details between the register and official National Youth Orchestra of Ireland incident forms
- Return the form to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland office for safe keeping
- Make sure that first-aid boxes are available during residential courses, concert rehearsals and performances
- Make sure that first-aid boxes are re-stocked prior to any residential course
- Make the location of the first-aid boxes made known to all residential staff
- Ensure that the availability of first-aid will be in accordance with the organisation's Health and Safety guidelines
- Advise players of the risks of any dangerous material used on residential courses
- Take steps to minimise risk with the use of dangerous items such as bassoon oboe knives
- Ensure that all external organisations with whom we deal have provided proof that they have public liability insurance.

SECTION 17: COMPLAINTS

The National Youth Orchestra will deal promptly and courteously with suggestions, comments or expressions of concern from orchestra members, parents/guardians, welfare or professional staff with a view to resolving these satisfactorily and in a timely way. Complaints will be accepted and investigated irrespective of the nature of the complaint or who the person making the complaint is.

Summary for NYOI members

You are welcome to come and talk to us at any time - as a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland, you should feel free to tell us if there is anything you are unhappy about.

- If you have a comment or complaint, please tell us as soon as possible.
- You can speak to the CEO or Head of Welfare. We are always here to listen to you.
- If you would prefer to write down your complaint, you can give us a letter, send an email or send us a text.
- You can also ask your mum or dad, granny or grandad, aunt or uncle or another guardian to make a complaint on your behalf – there's more about this below. If you need help with making a complaint, please ask any staff member in the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland. We will acknowledge any complaint you make as soon as possible, no more than 5 days after you have made the complaint.
- When we receive a complaint from you, we will investigate that complaint in the same way that we would investigate a complaint that comes in from an adult. We take all complaints seriously and we will always listen to all children that make a complaint or have comments to make about our work.
- We will try to make improvements based on complaints and try to resolve the issue that is causing you concern quickly and informally.
- The NYOI aims to deal with formal complaints within 1 month. You will always be kept informed about your complaint, please let us know how you would like us to update you. We will talk to you about your complaint if we have questions or need to find out more about what happened.
- After our investigation into the complaint, we will let you know what we find out and the changes, if any, we are going to make in NYOI because of the complaint.
- If you are unhappy with the outcome of your complaint, please let us know and you will have an opportunity to appeal it. The appeal of the complaint will be

looked after by different people in the NYOI than those who looked after the complaint the first time.

Complaints and comments

We understand that at times children or young people, their parents/guardians or others may have a concern about the way we do our work. This procedure is intended to provide a process for addressing these and helping us to learn from them so we can maintain our high standards and our reputation for excellence.

At all times the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland believes that the welfare of children and young people in our care is paramount. We place a high value on excellence (in realising the creativity and artistry of our members); ambition (for the fullest musical realisation of our members' potential, driving everyone who participates in our work); active participation in our work (making it a far-reaching social and cultural as well as an artistic experience for everyone involved); our connection with players, parents, teachers, peer organisations and professional ensembles (ensuring our place in the continuum of music performance in Ireland); and responsibility in our approach to the care and nurture of young people at a formative time in their lives.

The National Youth Orchestra of Ireland is committed to providing a high-quality service to everyone we deal with. If children or their parents/guardians/other individuals have any comments or complaints about our work, we would like to hear from you. We are committed to listening to all complaints and to treating them seriously so that we can learn from them and continuously improve our work with children and young people.

In the first instance, we hope that complaints can be handled informally. In the event that a complaint cannot be handled informally within the context of our engagement with the members of our orchestra, we advise individuals to follow the procedure set out in this policy.

All complaints made are treated confidentially. We respect the voice of our members and their right to raise comments or complaints about our work. We have a child friendly complaints policy available to all children in our service. We accept complaints directly from children and via their parents/guardians.

How to make a complaint

Informal

Where possible we endeavour to handle all complaints informally in the first instance. This should ideally be done in person and can be a conversation with the relevant manager (usually the CEO) or a person nominated by them if possible.

We aim to resolve a complaint informally as soon as possible but within a maximum of 5 working days. If your complaint cannot be dealt with informally, we will direct you to our formal complaints procedure. We aim to ensure that making a complaint is as easy as possible and to deal with it promptly and politely. We endeavour to learn from complaints and use them to improve our work. We review our complaints policy regularly along with all our policies and procedures.

Formal

There may be instances when a complaint cannot be handled informally. In these circumstances we direct children or young people or their parents/guardians/other individuals to make a formal complaint in writing.

If you wish to make a formal complaint, we request that you follow the steps set out below.

- You can make a formal complaint by email, addressed to ceo@nyoi.ie
- If the subject of your complaint is the CEO you should address your concern to tgboland7@gmail.com
- If you have a difficulty with submitting a complaint in writing, please contact us by phone or in person and we can support you with making the complaint.
- Please be clear about what you are hoping to achieve (apology, explanation etc.), provide copies of any relevant documentation and include the following information when making a complaint to the CEO: your name, address, a daytime telephone number, an email address together with full details of the complaint including relevant dates and times; the names of those involved (including staff). Please state your preferred method of communication (telephone, email letter, etc).

Dealing with your formal complaint

We will take the following steps in dealing with your complaint:

1. We will formally acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days.
2. The CEO/Chairman (or the Chairman, if the complaint relates to the CEO) will assess the complaint and the level of risk posed.
3. If a matter concerns an immediate risk to safety or security the response will be immediate and will be escalated appropriately.
4. The CEO will confirm that the issue raised in the complaint is within the control of the organisation.
5. If there is more than one issue raised in the complaint, the CEO will determine whether each issue needs to be separately addressed.
6. The CEO will consider how best to address the complaint. We will let you know if this includes an investigation. If the complaint is straightforward, generally someone from the organisation will investigate - we will let you know who will be doing this.
7. If necessary, the Board of NYOI will create a panel to investigate the complaint. The persons investigating the complaint are in no way involved in the complaint, are not related to the complainant or any staff members involved in the complaint. Following the investigation of the complaint, a separate HR procedure may need to be invoked.
8. A full response to the complaint will be issued within 30 working days.
9. If there is likely to be a delay to the timeline of issuing a response, we will notify the person making the complaint as soon as possible.
10. The person making the complaint will be kept informed of the progress of the complaint.

Investigation

Depending on the nature of the complaint received, the CEO will determine the type of investigation that will take place. All complaints are thoroughly and objectively investigated. The investigation is handled appropriately and sensitively. The person investigating the complaint will aim first to establish the facts related to the case. In complex cases, an investigation plan will be drawn up outlining how the complaint will be investigated. When investigating a complaint, all relevant evidence will be looked at.

In the process of the investigation, we may need to meet with the complainant to discuss your complaint further. Complainants can bring a person with them to any such meeting. All staff must participate in the investigation of a complaint, as required. Any staff member involved in the complaint will be supported throughout the process.

Outcome and Response

Following the formal investigation of your complaint, we will let you know what we have found via your preferred form of communication. If necessary, we will produce a longer report. We will explain how and why we came to our conclusions and outline any changes to policies/procedures, practice and risk management arising from the investigation.

Where no grounds for the complaint are found, the person making the complaint will be notified and information detailing the next stage will be provided. We will share any recommendations from our investigation with the complainant and also all relevant staff. We will outline the appeals process as part of the complaint response.

Appeal

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response to the complaint, then there is the opportunity to appeal it. The appeal must be submitted to the CEO within 5 working days.

The appeal is handled by someone who was not involved in the original complaint process.

Record of complaints and confidentiality

An accurate and detailed record of each complaint is kept for a period of 2 years from the date the complaint has been dealt with. Complaint information is stored confidentially and is only accessed by the CEO/the Chairman. The record held on file clearly outlines what the complaint was and how it was dealt with. The record of complaints will be made available for inspection purposes by authorised persons as determined by the Board.

SECTION 18: ANTI BULLYING

Bullying has no place in the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland. Staff will promote a positive anti-bullying ethos during residential courses and raise awareness, amongst their professional colleagues and players, that bullying should not be tolerated. By emphasizing the Players Code of Behaviour, Staff should create an environment in which all players are valued as individuals with rights and are encouraged and affirmed.

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behavior that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly in social environments such as schools, clubs or residential courses, such as ours. It includes behaviors such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting and extortion by one or more players against a victim or victims.

The effects of bullying can last for some time and can significantly affect an individual's wellbeing, causing poor social development and depression. The outcomes of bullying can include:

- physical injury, headaches, stomach aches
- stress symptoms such as sleep or eating disorders and panic attacks
- loss of confidence and self-esteem
- reluctance to take part in the orchestra anymore
- lowered academic achievement
- exclusion and isolation
- consideration of suicide

It is important for staff to take a pro-active role in investigating whether bullying is occurring because many players will not tell. However, a player may confide in anyone so everyone should be aware of how to handle such a confidence. If a player tells you that they are being bullied, you should:

- Listen calmly and accept what is said. If possible, there should be two staff present (but this should be determined by the needs of the child). If not, leave the door open so passers-by can see the staff member but not the player.

- Take notes following the conversation and keep these on file as this forms the basis of the bullying report. Notes should include the nature of incident, date, time, location, names of those involved, witnesses, relevant history and staff member's response.

- Reassure the player that help is available, action will be taken, the player was right to tell, it is not their fault and it could happen to anyone.

- Negotiate confidentiality and be clear you'll only tell people who need to know.

- Ensure the player's safety. Safety is paramount and that this can be maintained through appropriate supervision. Liaise with primary carers in relation to a solution and possible actions.

- Tell the player that you'll keep them informed as to how you intend to proceed.

- Make an intervention and ensure that all your actions will be guided by the needs of the child. The following is a list of possible actions:

    - Inform the Orchestra Manager, Head of Welfare and CEO if available, of your concerns.
    - Decide whom to consult with: Orchestra Manager, Head of Welfare, CEO, Primary carers.
    - Decide whom to interview: witnesses, alleged bullies, and uninvolved players.
    - Find out: what, where, when, who, how, why? Act in a non-confrontational manner.
    - Resolve the problem: Make bullying the responsibility of all players on the Course or, if the behavior is confined to a section, all the players in that section. Alternatively, approach the victim and the bully (explain why the bully's behavior is wrong, how it makes the victim feel and request an apology); parents/legal guardians and bully (if sanctions linked to the behavior are to be employed, request the parents/legal guardians to reinforce these).
    - Refer on in difficult cases: if it remains unresolved on the Course a report should be fully written up and referred on to the Board of Directors. The National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident Form can be used for this but may require additional sheets added. The report should include any of the notes taken during the course (see point 2 above).

- Make a record of facts rather than opinions. Include details from the bullying report (i.e. nature of incident, date, time, location, names of those involved, witnesses, relevant history and Staff member's response), details recounted by others involved, any agreements made, an account of action taken and suggestions for follow up and monitoring.

- Use the official National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident Report Form for the bullying report. Reassure the players that this report will be kept in confidence and its contents will only be revealed to those who need to know. This form must be returned to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland office for safe-keeping and to be used in any subsequent actions or follow-up to the incident.

SECTION 19: COMMUNICATIONS

Approach to communication - general

When speaking with players, staff will maintain the conversation at a level appropriate to the age of the player, using both tone and emphasis that lets them know of our sincerity and respect for them and their views. Staff will always be respectful of players and not involve them in critical conversations about others.

We will maintain open and full communications with primary carers, at all times trying to develop a better understanding of the benefits of orchestra membership for their child/ward and what is expected of both their child/ward and themselves to improve the experience for all. We will try to ensure that primary carers feel comfortable talking with all staff working for the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland. We will be open to all concerns and queries that primary carers may have.

All email correspondence will be sent directly to the young person with their parent/carer cc'd in the email.

19.1 Communications with parents or carers

Staff of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland will give continuous attention to the relationship with primary carers. In our dealings with them we will:

- Appreciate the trust which primary carers place in us.
- Listen carefully to what primary carers say about their children.
- Try to understand primary carers' concerns from their perspective and seek to establish a common ground.
- Inform primary carers of any accidents and how they happened. Primary carers are understanding and accept scrapes and bumps occur.
- Inform primary carers about our Codes of Behavior and this Child Welfare Policy.
- Provide information to primary carers of new members as soon as they gain an orchestral place.
- Not assume that primary carers know what happens in the ensemble.
- Ensure that anything we distribute to primary carers in writing is accurate and clearly stated. Providing clear information on times, dates and location of courses/events and avoiding the use of orchestra and musical jargon.
- Use a form of reproduction that is easy to read for notes, consent forms, requests and explanations of our activities.
- Send our communication to the primary carers far enough in advance so that they can consider it and act, if we expect a response.
- Keep a copy of written communications.
- Share good news of activities of the orchestras through such activities newsletters, concert programme and the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland website and social media as relevant.

19.2: Sensible use of mobile phones/devices

The use of mobile phones/devices is now the norm for most children and young people and we recognise that, aside from their function as a communication device, they play a significant role in the social lives of young people. Notwithstanding this, the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland will exercise its duty of care concerning the way mobile phones are used on courses and at auditions, having regard at all times for the safety and welfare of children and young people in our care.

The Camera on a phone/device should be used safely and responsibly. Pictures can be very powerful and stir up strong emotions. Camera phone users should respect the private lives of others and not take or distribute pictures of other people without their permission. Staff and players should not send pictures that are obscene, indecent or menacing and should be sensitive to other people's gender, creed, religion or personal background.

Children should be advised to avoid sending a picture or video to someone without their permission. Apart from not being sure what that person will do with it, a picture may contain something that could help them trace or find out more about the child. Clues in the picture may be in the background – number or front of a house, a street name, school uniform and these snippets of information may help those who want to harm children.

While players are in residence on one of our courses or attending an audition, the following standards will apply in relation to the use of mobile phones:

- The phone numbers of National Youth Orchestra of Ireland staff members are provided to primary carers before each course; they are the primary point of communication and are to be contacted if there is an emergency or change to previously agreed arrangements.

- There will be a stated preferred time period when primary carers may make contact if they wish; primary carers should note that contact outside of this time may not be possible due to the fact that players are required to switch off their phones during rehearsals. In cases of emergency a staff member's number will be provided and should be used.

- The use of mobile phones including text messaging or playing games is not allowed to be a distraction from a safe awareness of the environment or to interfere with players' full participation in audition, rehearsal or performance.

- In the interest of the welfare of all of our players, the use of mobile phones/devices in bedrooms/dormitories after lights out is not permitted. All phones and digital devices(tablets) etc are required to be handed up to night staff at lights out and will be returned in the morning.

19.3: Photographs and images of children

Photographs can be powerful tools to promote the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland but we are aware that they can also be dangerous and promote the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention directed at a player or players appearing in photographs.

The use of images of players on our website and publications can be very useful and in general we try to use illustrations and non-personal musical imagery when promoting our activities. There may be instances where we would like to use photographs of individual players or groups. To reduce the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention directed at players appearing in such photographs we will follow these rules:

- When a player's photograph is used, their name will not be published without permission.
- For players over the age of 18, the player's permission will be requested.
- For players under 18 the primary carers' permission will also be requested.
- We will only use images of players in appropriate dress. The content of the photographs will focus on the activity not on any particular child.
- Where we wish to use particular photographs on our website and want to caption the images with names the permission of the players (and primary carers for players under 18) will be specifically requested.
- At the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland activities and performances, where possible audiences will be made aware of the Child Welfare responsibilities of our organisation and they will be asked not to take photographs during performances. Outside of the actual performance audiences will be advised to only take photographs of their own family members or of other players with their permission and the permission of their primary carers (if under 18).
- If a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland staff has any doubts in these situations they should request that no photographs are taken of any players in our care. Any refusal to accede to this request will be reported to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland office and to the Board if considered serious enough.
- At official National Youth Orchestra of Ireland or other press photoshoots there will be a National Youth Orchestra of Ireland staff member present where possible. They will ensure that the photographer(s) are clear about our expectations of them in relation to child welfare. They will also:

- Provide a clear brief to the photographer(s) about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour
- Make sure that the photographer's name, contact details and accreditations are recorded and kept in the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland office.
- Inform players and primary carers that a photographer will be in attendance at the activity and check that they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- Not allow unsupervised access to players or one-to-one photo sessions.
- Not approve/allow photo sessions outside the activity or at a Player's home.

SECTION 20: INFORMATION FOR CHILDREN ABOUT THEIR RIGHT TO BE PROTECTED FROM HARM

The NYOI is committed to promoting best practice within our organisation and to the protection of the young people with whom we work. This policy and the NYOI's safeguarding statement will be available on the NYOI website.

NYOI is committed to promoting the rights of young people including the participation of young people in making decisions on matters that affect them. They will be instructed by the various members of residential staff and who they can go to if they need.

NYOI is committed to adherence to the *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2017) and the Children First Act 2015.

SECTION 21: REVIEW

The NYOI is committed to promoting best practice within our organisation and to the protection

The designated person with responsibility for all child welfare issues in the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland is the CEO. During all residential courses, the CEO is assisted by her deputies, the Orchestra Manager and the Head of Welfare.

This Child Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed in September 2028, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed on behalf of the Board:

_____

Tom Boland, Chairperson National Youth Orchestra of Ireland

Approved by the Board of NYOI on 1/10/2026

Signed by the CEO:

_____

Anna Rosa Mari, CEO National Youth Orchestra of Ireland

Date: 15/09/2026

APPENDIX 1

CHILD PROTECTION DECLARATION FORM – FOR ALL ADULTS WORKING WITH NYOI

Surname	
First Name	
Date of Birth	
Place and Country of Birth	
Contact Details	
Address	
Contact number	
Email	
Occupation	
Experience: Do you work with or have experience of working with children in other areas of your life? If yes, please give details.	

Declaration: National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Child Welfare Policy.

I have read, understood and accepted the procedures and course staff Code of Behaviour as set out in the current National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Child Safeguarding Policy.

Yes ❒ No ❒

Is there any reason that you would be considered unsuitable to work with children and young people?

Yes ❒ No ❒

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence?

Yes ❒ No ❒

Has an accusation of abuse of inappropriate conduct ever been made against you?

Yes ❒ No ❒

Signed:_____ Date:_____

Please return to the **Head of Welfare**, National Youth Orchestra of Ireland.

APPENDIX 2

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

This form must be filled in as fully as possible and any extra details noted on the back or on separate sheets and stapled to this form. Completed forms will be kept in the official National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident folder which must be returned to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland office as soon as possible after the incident. If any information is not to hand, please return immediately and forward this information to the office later.

Course	
Date	

Fill out the following 3 boxes in cases or Medical or Accident:

Nature of incident (please tick) Accident ❒ Disciplinary ❒ Medical ❒ Other (give details) ❒

Name	
Email	
Address	
Phone Number	
Details of incident	
Member(s) of Staff in charge	
Time and Location	
Treatment administered (if any)	
By whom	

Continued …..

Medical Intervention- did the ill or injured person			
Go home ❒	Visit Doctor ❒	Go to A & E ❒	Stay in hospital ❒
Name of Doctor/Hospital			
Treatment given			

Signature of player involved (if possible) ..... Date .....

Signature of staff member involved ..... Date .....

Signature of primary carer ..... Date.....

Fill out the following 3 boxes in cases of Disciplinary or Other:

Attach additional paper if needed

Name(s) of those involved
Details of incident, including date and time
Action(s) taken, including date, time and by whom
Give details of outcome of actions taken and any follow- up actions agreed on

Signature of player(s) involved ..... Date .....

Signature of player(s) involved ..... Date .....

Signature of player(s) involved ..... Date .....

Signature of staff member involved ..... Date .....

Signature of staff member involved ..... Date .....

Signature of parent/guardian (if necessary) ..... Date.....

Please return as soon as possible after the incident to the **CEO**, National Youth Orchestra of Ireland.