
Safeguarding procedures and systems

Adopted September 2019 revised May 2020, September 2020, September 2021, September 2022 , September 2023, September 2024, September 2025 and September 2026

These are the Safeguarding procedures and systems of the Torbay & South Devon Music Centre and should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy dated September 2026

It comprises ten sections:

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1.Introduction

Torbay & South Devon Music Centre is a registered charity (1069605), which provides an opportunity for young people in Torbay & South Devon who play an instrument to make music together.

The Torbay & South Devon Music Centre recognises that in common with all organisations which make provision for children and young people it must ensure that:

- The safety of the child is paramount;
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- All those working in the organisation in whatever capacity whether as paid staff, managers, trustees or volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

It recognises that Staff and volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.

2.Policy statement/aims

Torbay & South Devon Music Centre has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in Music Centre activities from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. *Torbay & South Devon Music Centre* will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in Music Centre activities through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by *Torbay & South Devon Music Centre*. *September 2026*
A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 years (The Children and Young Persons Act 2001).

3.Promoting good practice

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgment about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school, youth work, the Third Sector and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice by those working within the organisation should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters into any of our activities having been subjected to child abuse in another environment, we can play a crucial role in improving the child's self-esteem. In such instances we must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

4.Good practice guidelines

Everyone involved with Torbay & South Devon Music Centre, should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote child safety and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- **Treating all young people equally, and with respect and dignity.**
- Always putting the safety of each young person first.
- **Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child); adults should use separate toilet facilities to the children.**
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- **Making our activities fun, enjoyable and supportive.**
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be kept to an absolute minimum and provided openly. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. Young people and their parents should always be consulted, and their agreement gained.
- **Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications, and insurance relevant to activities undertaken.**
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children.
- Ensuring that if mixed groups are involved in activities or outings, there should always be a male and female member of staff present or accompanying them. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur.

- Ensuring that at residential or other events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
- Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people, avoiding excessive involvement or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act *in loco parentis* if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental consent if officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

Practices to be avoided:

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of a senior official or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session:

- Avoid spending time alone with children away from others.
- Avoid taking or dropping off a child at an event or activity.

Practices never to be sanctioned:

The following should **never** be sanctioned. You should never:

- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or young people.
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour.
- Making suggestive or derogatory remarks in front of children.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- Trivialise child abuse issues
- Show favouritism to any individual
- Take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests a more prudent approach

Incidents that must be reported/recorded:

If any of the following occur, you should report this immediately to the appropriate officer and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a child.
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner.
- If he/she appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- If he/she misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

5. Use of photographic/filming equipment

There is evidence that some people have used a variety of events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled people in vulnerable positions. Care must be taken when

using photographic/filming equipment. Consent to the use of photographic and/or filming equipment is sought from parents or the legal guardian of the child, in the Music Centre's registration form.

Upskirting

'Upskirting' typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

6.E-safety

Definition of E-safety – the Music Centre's ability to protect and educate pupils and staff in their use of technology and to have appropriate mechanisms in place to intervene and support any incident where appropriate.

Protect

Torbay & South Devon Music Centre has a duty of care to protect its students by providing a safe learning environment when interacting with the Torbay & South Devon Music Centre website and other social media interaction within the Music Centre.

Torbay & South Devon Music Centre will ensure that all staff have an understanding of acceptable use of social media and that no student can be identified by their full name, location or age.

All staff should be aware of their own interaction with social media and how that may be attributed to the Music Centre. It is not a good idea to accept friend requests on personal accounts or to accept requests to follow you from pupils, recent pupils or even parents at the Music Centre. By accepting such requests, you could be making yourself vulnerable by sharing personal information or by having access to personal information about your pupils. You may be potentially leaving yourself open to allegations of inappropriate contact or conduct or even find yourself exposed to unwanted contact.

Online behaviour – an understanding of what constitutes, cyber-bullying and sexting and how to behave safely and with respect for others.

Protecting our online reputation – to ensure that all staff are aware of the risks and rewards associated with an online presence.

Understanding the reliability and validity of online information.

Data security - keeping personal information safe and ensuring compliance with the data protection act 1998.

7.Online music lessons/ music activities

A growing number of instrumental teachers are considering online lessons as a way to maintain their income and support the children and young people's musical learning. Whatever platform is chosen, the single most important factor in offering online lessons is to ensure that good safeguarding practice is followed to ensure children and young people are protected and that the same professional standards that would be expected in a face to face lesson apply.

The following safeguarding guidance is primarily aimed at self-employed instrumental teachers delivering live online lessons, to a student or students in their own home. The guidance has been

written by Tom Deam, DMEH Music Associate, who is himself a practicing self-employed instrumental teacher, in consultation with Lewis Gibbs, Head of DMEH and Babcock LDP Education Safeguarding Adviser, Jonathan Galling. (April 2020)

1. Arrangements for the date and time of the lesson should be made between the parent/carer and the instrumental teacher only, not the student themselves – it would be advisable to confirm the lesson time and date by email.*
 2. The parent/carer must make or answer the video call at the start of the lesson.
 3. There should be no direct communication of any kind between the teacher and the student outside of the lesson. Any necessary communication, aside from the lesson itself, should be made through the parent/carer.
 4. The parent/carer should be in the same room as the student for at least some of the duration of the lesson and must be present in the home throughout.
 5. The parent/carer may record the lesson, should the facility be available. As well as providing an additional safeguard for both student and teacher, this could also be useful for the student in reviewing the lesson.
 6. Under no circumstances should the teacher take any recordings or still images of any part of the lesson.
 7. The teacher should consider that, during the lesson, they have effectively turned the room from which they are conducting the lesson into an educational setting. The teacher should therefore dress and behave appropriately and use appropriate language. The teacher should ensure that nothing inappropriate can be seen in the background by the student. Other people should not be in the room if it would not be appropriate for them to be in the same educational setting as the student e.g. it would not be appropriate for a non-DBS checked adult visitor to be in the room.
 8. The teacher should stop the lesson if they feel that the setting/attire does not meet expectations. Similarly, parents/carers and students should feel confident and able to stop lessons if they feel the teacher is not meeting expectations or behaving appropriately i.e. suggesting lessons take place in a student's bedroom would be unacceptable. (April 2020 Safeguarding guidance for online instrumental lessons)
 9. Where face to face lessons would normally take place in school/ music centre, a list of online lessons delivered should be sent to the appropriate contact (probably the Music Subject Lead or Designated Safeguarding Lead) at the end of each week – good practice would be to include the student's name and the date, time and duration of each lesson.
 10. The teacher should be aware that any safeguarding concerns or disclosures should be responded to and reported in the same way as they would if they had occurred in the school/ music centre
 11. The parent/carer or any other person who has a safeguarding concern relating to the teacher, should report their concern to Moira Devonport Manager and Safeguarding lead TSDMC.
- *Parents/carers of older students, such as those in Year 12 or 13, will often ask the students themselves to make the arrangements for their instrumental lessons. We strongly advise against this, but should it be unavoidable, the teacher should comply strictly with the following guidance:
- The teacher should ensure that they have explicit written consent from the parent/carer to make such arrangements directly with the student.
 - Communications should be kept to an absolute minimum; must only be made via email; and use only written communication e.g. avoid the use of emoji or gifs as these can easily be misconstrued.
 - The parent/carer must always be copied into the communication – it is the responsibility of the teacher (not the student) to ensure that the parent/carer is receiving such emails and aware of the arrangements

Virtual TSDMC started June 2020

TSDMC recognized that we could still complete our mission by using online learning. Zoom was chosen due to the fact it did not need a particular account login.

Safeguarding protocols adopted to enable us to use this are:

- A Parental signed and email linked consent forms completed and only then can the link to attend the Zoom session sent to them.
- Each week the Zoom link is to be changed and no reoccurring meeting to be used.
- A waiting room to be used to invite only recognized names into the meeting.
- All people logging on have the camera /video on of themselves whilst attending meeting.
- Breakout rooms to be used for different groups and teacher/ staff member to be put in rooms before students so all supervised throughout.
- Any recordings made to be unnamed on the screen.

8. Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers

Torbay & South Devon Music Centre recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

- All staff are checked for suitability to work with children through DBS clearance at the point of engagement and on a regular basis.
- All adult volunteers and members are asked to sign a code of conduct when joining TSDMC.

Training

Staff and volunteers should receive regular training in order to:

- Be able to recognise signs and indicators of abuse;
- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is not likely to result in allegations being made;
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse;
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person;
- Work safely and effectively with children.

Torbay & South Devon Music Centre requires:

- All staff/volunteers to attend appropriate child protection awareness training, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards child protection and safeguarding.
- Relevant personnel to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person.
- Relevant personnel to attend a recognised first aid training course (where necessary).
- Attend update training when necessary.

9. Responding to allegations or suspicions

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead: Moira Devonport**
- **Deputy Designated Person: Tom Deam**

Responsibilities of the Designated Person

The Designated Person(s) should:

- Be the first point of contact for reporting allegations and or concerns of abuse.
- Receive information from staff, children, parents, carers, teachers and community workers who have child protection concerns and record it and act as a source of advice, support and knowledge within the organisation.
- Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying and seeking more information about the matter as appropriate
- Where appropriate consult initially with statutory child protection agencies such as local social services department or health board, or the NSPCC
- Where appropriate make a formal referral to a child protection agency or the police without delay
- Be aware of the local statutory child protection network and the role of the Area Child Protection Committee
- Be aware of relevant contact numbers and addresses

It is not the responsibility of anyone working at the Music Centre in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities.

Torbay & South Devon Music Centre will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern over potential child abuse including that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation,
- A safeguarding investigation,
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and safeguarding investigation may well influence and inform the disciplinary investigation, but all available information will be used to reach a decision.

Action if there are concerns

1. Concerns about poor practice:

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; the Designated Safeguarding Lead will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by Torbay & South Devon Music Centre, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to Designated Safeguarding Lead who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

2. Concerns about suspected abuse:

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Torbay & South Devon Music Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer the allegation to the Social Services who may involve the Police.
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from Social Services.
- If the Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to Social Services or the Police who will liaise to discuss the allegation.
- Make a serious incident report to the Charity Commission

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The parents /carers of the person who is alleged to have been abused.
- The person making the allegation.
- Social Services/Police.

Seek Social Services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser (or parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

Internal enquiries and suspension

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.
- Irrespective of the findings of Social Services or Police inquiries the Committee will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the Police. In such cases, the Committee must assess all available information, which could suggest that on a balance of probability it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The safety of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse:

- Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff may need. Use of help lines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process.
- Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

Local Safeguarding contacts to report concerns Include:

- The Devon Children and Families Partnership on 0345 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk
- Torbay Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub on 01803 208100 or email mash@torbay.gov.uk Out of office hours please call 0300 4564 876.
- Childline: 0800 1111

Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children).

Where such an allegation is made, the organisation should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the Social Services or the Police. This is because other children may be at risk from this person.

Action if bullying is suspected

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both those who are bullied and who bully others may have serious lasting problems

In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of power: Those who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to suspicions or allegations' above.

Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in our organisation:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the school /wherever the bullying is occurring.

Action towards the bully (ies):

- Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully's parents.

- Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- Provide support for any staff or volunteers involved with the victim.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- Inform all organisation members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken.
- Most 'low level' incidents will be dealt with at the time by staff and /or volunteers. However, if the bullying is severe (e.g. a serious assault), or if it persists despite efforts to deal with it, incidents should be referred to the Safeguarding Lead as in "responding to suspicions or allegations" above.

3. Concerns outside the immediate environment (e.g. a parent or carer):

- Report your concerns to the Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Designated Person, who should contact Social Services or the Police as soon as possible. **See 4 below for the information Social Services or the Police will need:**
- If the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact Social Services or the Police immediately.
- Social Services and the safeguarding Lead will decide how to involve the parents/carers.
- Maintain confidentiality on a **need to know** basis only.
- See 4 below regarding information needed for Social Services.

4. Information for Social Services or the Police about suspected abuse

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth of the child.
- The child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- Where possible referral to the Police or Social Services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact that took the referral should be recorded.

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact Social Services or the Police direct, or the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000, or Childline on 0800 1111.

10.Sources of information and advice

- Devon Children and Families Partnership (Devon Safeguarding Children Board): 0345 155 1071
- Devon out of hours 0845 6000 388
- Torbay Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (Safeguarding Children Board): 01803 208100
- Torbay Emergency Duty Number (after 5pm): 0300 4564 876
- NSPCC helpline: help@nspcc.org.uk
- NSPCC helpline text: 88858
- NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000
- Help for children & young people: Childline 0800 1111
- childnet.com (E-safety)
- www.gov.uk policy paper Safeguarding Children and Young People 2014
- DFE Keeping children safe in education Sept 2026
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

There is a wealth of information available to support schools, colleges and parents to keep children safe online. The following list is not exhaustive but should provide a useful starting point:

Organisation/Resource What it does/provides

[thinkuknow](#) NCA CEOPs advice on online safety

[disrespectnobody](#) Home Office advice on healthy relationships, including sexting and pornography

[UK safer internet centre](#) Contains a specialist helpline for UK schools and colleges

[swgfl](#) Includes a template for setting out online safety policies

[internet matters](#) Help for parents on how to keep their children safe online

[parentzone](#) Help for parents on how to keep their children safe online

[childnet cyberbullying](#) Guidance for schools on cyberbullying

[pshe association](#) Guidance and useful teaching resources covering online safety issues including pornography and the sharing of sexual images

[educateagainsthate](#) Practical advice for parents, teachers and governors on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.

[the use of social media for online radicalisation](#)

A briefing note for schools on how social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq

[UKCIS](#) The UK Council for Internet Safety's website provides:

📱 Sexting advice

📱 Online safety: Questions for Governing Bodies

📱 Education for a connected world framework

[NSPCC](#) NSPCC advice for schools and colleges

[net-aware](#) NSPCC advice for parents

[commonsensemedia](#) Independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents

[searching screening and confiscation](#)

Guidance to schools on searching children in schools and confiscating items such as mobile phones

