

JUNIOR COLLEGE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURE

February 2020

Safeguarding Children Policy Statement

The Royal College of Music is committed to the protection and safeguarding of children and young people, and believes the responsibility held in this regard, to promote their interests and well-being, to be of paramount concern.

The Council of the Royal College of Music acknowledges its responsibilities for the safeguarding and protection of children and young people under its temporary care, and as such will receive an Annual Safeguarding Report from the college Safeguarding Committee.

This Policy has been written with reference to, and should be read in conjunction with, *“Keeping Children Safe in Education”* (Department of Education, July 2015) and *“Working together to safeguard children”* (HM Government, March 2015) and the *Charity Commission for England & Wales : Strategy for dealing with safeguarding issues in Charities* (December 2017).

Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 also requires the college to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Any concerns in this regard will be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate college procedure.

1. Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, a child is a person under the age of 18. Unless otherwise specified ‘student’ means ‘Junior College Student’ for the purposes of this document.

2. Senior College Applicants / Students under the age of 18

The RCM’s senior college provides degree-level education and, as such, students are normally over the age of 18 at the point of commencing their studies. Applicants may exceptionally be admitted below the age of 18, provided they are able to meet the standard entry requirements. In most cases this will be for a short period prior to turning 18 during their first year of study.

Notwithstanding, all persons under the age of 18 are considered to be children in UK law, and the RCM has a duty of care to them and the principles of the RCM’s Child Safeguarding Policy will stand, in these circumstances.

Further details can be found in the RCM Admissions Policy, paragraphs 43 – 48.

3. Specific Areas of Safeguarding Responsibility

We consider the duty of all those employed or involved with the college to prevent the physical, emotional neglectful and sexual abuse of all children and young children/ Therefore all staff must adhere to the college Policy and Procedures and respond appropriately to concerns allegations or disclosure of abuse and harm

The College must ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to ensure the safeguarding of children and young people. In circumstances where a concern is raised, the College will consider whether it requires the involvement of an external agency.

Instances of abuse may result from action by a member of RCM staff or another student, but may also be caused by individuals (whether adults or children) unconnected with the RCM, including family members. Suspicions of abuse will be acted upon by the RCM regardless of the possible source, although cases may be turned over to other authorities, including the student's school, where appropriate.

4. Categories of abuse

4.1 Physical abuse. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent, or carer, feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

4.2 Emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

4.3 Sexual abuse. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

4.4 Neglect. Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent, or carer, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

5. The Appointment And Induction Of Staff

- 5.1 Most appointments in the Junior College, whether of administrative or teaching staff, will involve unsupervised & sustained, one-to-one contact with students and/or accompanying children on concert tours.
- 5.2 When making such appointments the College will make additional checks on applicants. The checks will encompass obtaining and checking references, passport and educational/professional qualifications, interview questions about unexplained gaps in employment history.
- 5.3 In respect of teaching posts and certain other posts a Disclosure and Barring Service check will be required. This will be determined by a risk assessment being carried out. The checking process will commence when a conditional offer of appointment is made. The applicant will be informed of this procedure and asked to agree to it. Applicants will be told that refusal to permit checks will prevent further consideration of their application.
- 5.4 Where an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically debar appointment, but if any of the checks suggests that the appointment may pose a risk to children then an appointment will not be made.
- 5.5 Appointments must be signed-off by the Head of Junior Programmes, and the Deputy Director, who will together review the documentary and other information obtained during the appointment process.
- 5.6 HR will keep records (where permitted by law) of the documentary information obtained during the appointment process and of the sign-off by the Head of Junior Programmes and the Deputy Director. These records will be monitored annually, as set out in the relevant section below.
- 5.7 New staff will receive a copy of this policy and procedure and will be asked to sign a declaration acknowledging they have read and understood its terms. The Head of Junior Programmes will ensure that there are regular induction and updating events for all Junior College teachers to ensure they are aware of and understand the policy and procedure.

6. DBS Checks & Training Of Staff

6.1 The College will ensure that Junior Department staff and roles are regularly reviewed through a 4 year rolling programme of checking DBS's are in place for holders of all identified posts. Existing staff (paid or unpaid) who transfer from a role which does not require a DBS check to one which involves contact with children will also be subject to a DBS check.

6.2 All new members of Junior Department staff will be expected to receive safeguarding training within their first term at Level 1.

6.3 All staff will be required to participate in training courses on Safeguarding Children issues and will be expected to commit to receiving Level 1 training every three years

6.4 The DSL and their nominated Deputy will undergo and refresh the Level 3 Training every two years

7. Physical Contact In Teaching

7.1 Physical contact between teacher and student is sometimes necessary for the student's learning (e.g. to correct poor posture or to adjust bow hold). Its purpose and form should be explained to the student by the teacher and the student's consent obtained in advance of physical contact taking place. In this context, as in all others, a teacher will be sensitive to feedback from her or his student and will respond accordingly.

7.2 The blinds on teaching room windows must always be kept open throughout the Junior College teaching day and must not be closed; even when teaching is not taking place. The door of the teaching room must be easily accessible to the student at all times.

8. Teaching offsite, including from home and week day teaching in the college

8.1 Junior College teaching off-site, including from home, is not normally permitted. It will only be permitted where there are exceptional reasons to make it appropriate. A request must be made to the Head of Junior Programmes in writing and can only proceed with the Head of Junior Programmes approval. Before approval is given the off-site premises must be inspected by a member of Junior Programmes administration who will ensure the environment is appropriate for teaching. It will only be permitted if it is chaperoned on every occasion by an adult taking responsibility for the welfare of the Junior College student. The names and contact details of the adult taking responsibility for the welfare of the child, where this is not the parent must be provided in writing to the Head of Junior Programmes.

9.2 Sometimes it is appropriate for teaching to take place on week days within the College. Permission must be sought from the Head of Junior Programmes for such teaching, who will also ensure that the parent(s) or carer(s) of the student have given their permission. There will be no special arrangements for such teaching, other than those which apply on a Saturday – for example the blind on the teaching room window must be fully open and the door of the teaching room must be easily accessible to the student at all times.

9. Monitoring and review of policy and its implementation

9.1 This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, government guidance or as a result of any other significant change or event, to ensure it is up-to-date and appropriate. There will be a bi-annual meeting of the Safeguarding Committee (comprising the Deputy Director, Head of Junior Programmes, Head of Learning & Participation and Head of HR) to review the policy and monitor its implementation. This meeting will receive any reports of incidents during the year and will review the log of staff appointments and associated safeguarding checks within the year, including Disclosure & Barring Service checks made. An annual report of this meeting will be submitted to the Directorate and to Council.

10. Guidelines for teachers on professional conduct and child protection

10.1 Members of teaching staff who are members of the Incorporated Society of Musicians are referred to the guidance provided on the ISM website <http://www.ism.org/advice/ism-safeguarding-child-protection-policy-code-of-practice-and-procedures>

11. Junior College child safeguarding procedure

Any concerns in regard to the Prevent strategy or concerns about radicalisation will be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate college procedure. Please see the strategy at

<http://www.rcm.ac.uk/about/governance/strategy/Policy-on-students-of-concern-who-may-be-at-risk-of-radicalisation-or-extremism.pdf>

This procedure sets out what should be done to respond when an allegation or suspicion of child abuse is raised

11.1 Suspicions of abuse may be raised from a number of sources, including the student, and in a number of ways. Sources include:

- a student disclosing information about him/herself;
- when a student is asked if everything is alright, the student discloses abuse;
- behaviour or physical marks on a student (e.g. bruises, welts, lacerations);
- a student discloses through his or her academic or practical work that they are being abused;
- a student discloses that he or she knows that another student is being abused;
- a third party discloses that they know a student is being abused.

It is most important that staff respond appropriately when suspicions are raised and that the RCM's child safeguarding procedure is *always* followed.

11.2 If a student starts to disclose abuse, members of staff should take the following action:

- **Reassure** the student that he or she is right to tell and is not to blame;
- **Confidentiality:** do not promise confidentiality, explain that you have to make sure that the student is safe and you may need to ask other adults to help you do this. You can tell the child who you will need to tell and when you will do this;
- **Questioning:** the student should be kept to the minimum necessary to understand what is being alleged. Inappropriate questioning can cause problems for the subsequent investigation and any Court proceedings. Never ask leading questions as this may invalidate a student's testimony in court, for example never say 'did they do 'x' to you?', rather say 'tell me what happened';
- **Listen** carefully and repeat the student's words. When the student is finished make sure he or she feels secure; explain what you are going to do next;
- **Report:** a full written report should be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information, including the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the student who has allegedly been abused; the address and telephone number of the complainant and of the student (if available); the student's date of birth/age; the date and time of the alleged incident; the date and time of the report; the nature of the alleged abuse; a description of any injuries observed (but see 'examination' below); the account which has been given of the allegation which should, as far as possible, be in the student's own words;
- **Follow-up:** make arrangements with the student to speak to them later: they have chosen you as an adult they can trust;
- **Examination:** do not attempt a detailed examination to remove a student's clothes to look further at any injury. A student should only be examined by a doctor.

11.3 Immediately and without delay the member of staff to whom the disclosure has been made must inform the Head of Junior Programmes what has happened. The Head of Junior Programmes is the College's Designated

Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and leads any case teams established. The Head of Junior Programmes will immediately inform the Deputy Director, as senior management representative on the case team, and the Director, RCM. In the absence of the Head of Junior Programmes the Deputy Director will take on the role of case team leader. Another Directorate member may, if necessary, deputise for the Director or for the Deputy Director, in their absence. As soon as any absent member of staff returns they will be informed about the case. Information about the case will initially be confined to these individuals.

11.4 The following will form the case team: Head of Junior Programmes (DSL, case team leader), Deputy Director, the person responsible for the initial report and other members of the Safeguarding Committee as required. The case team will meet immediately to look at the evidence and to decide a course of action, which will be documented. As part of their consideration, the case team will consider whether the allegation concerns issues of abuse or whether, in fact, the allegation does not meet the definitions of abuse and is more properly considered as a *complaint* about the College's services. Any case that includes a suspicion of abuse will be treated first as a case of suspected abuse. This decision making process for suspected abuse cases will be as follows:

- is the incident/allegation/suspicion so clear that it is obvious that an immediate referral to other agencies should be made?
- if the issue is clearly one which has no substance but it is not immediately apparent whether a referral should be made, consideration will be given to seeking the advice of the police and/or social services and/or the child's school on a no names basis if necessary
- if the matter is inconclusive and the police and social services do not consider that an action is required at that point, consideration should be given to whether others such as the school or parents should be notified of the concern
- consideration will be given to whether the College's staff disciplinary procedures should be enacted.

11.5 Any suspicion, allegation or actual abuse of a child by a member of staff shall be reported to the Head of Junior Programmes as soon as possible. If within two hours of the initial concern arising it has not been possible to do so, the matter must be referred to the Deputy Director, which can be done via JD administrative staff or direct by email. Where the suspicion, allegation or actual abuse concerns the Head of Junior Programmes, the matter shall be reported directly to the Deputy Director.

11.6 Where necessary and appropriate serious incidents as defined in paragraphs 4 & 12 above should be reported to the relevant agencies in accordance with the law and best practice

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