

# Bretforton Silver Band – Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

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Date policy reviewed/updated: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

Next review due for policy: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

‘Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone’

## **1. Introduction**

The adoption of this Safeguarding Policy and Procedures should be seen as a clear message from Bretforton Silver Band (the band) that it will ensure all necessary steps are taken to protect from harm, children who participate in brass playing at all levels. In addition, Bretforton Silver Band also has a safeguarding responsibility to adults, some of whom may be vulnerable at different times in their lives.

This policy establishes the role and responsibilities of the band and together with the procedures section clarifies what is expected of all members of the band. It highlights the importance placed by Bretforton Silver Band on the protection of children and adults. It also safeguards and protects all personnel from the risk of false allegations of abuse or poor practice. Everyone who participates in brass banding is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. This policy, and attached procedures, applies to playing members and other volunteers, including musical directors, teachers/tutors and committee members.

Some individuals may actively seek employment or voluntary work with children in order to harm them. Bretforton Silver Band is committed to adopting Policy and Procedures so that everyone involved accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children and adults from harm and abuse. This means following procedures to protect all band members and to report any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

This policy has been adapted from the guidelines provided by the British Federation of Brass Bands and where it states ‘children’ this also applies to young people and vulnerable adults.

## **2. Legal Framework**

This Policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998 Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004 Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Care Act 2014
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children
- Brass Bands England Safeguarding Advice and Guidance

### **3. Policy Statement**

Bretforton Silver Band is committed to the following:

- Making the welfare of children paramount.
- Ensuring opportunities for all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in brass banding in an enjoyable and safe environment.
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination, and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.
- Taking action swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse.
- Ensuring that all its member bands and affiliated organisations will similarly accept responsibility for the welfare of children in their care in accordance with the policies and procedures.

### **4. Good Practice, Poor Practice and Abuse**

To provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities in brass banding everyone must operate within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. Not only will this allow brass banding to make a positive contribution to the development of young people and safeguard their welfare, but it also protects all personnel from the risk of false allegations of abuse or poor practice.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse, whether intentional or accidental. It is not therefore the responsibility Band members to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is, however, their responsibility to identify poor practice and potential abuse and to act if they have concerns about the welfare of a child.

#### **4.1 Good Practice**

All personnel should adhere to the following principles and actions:

- Before undertaking any activities involving children, conduct a risk assessment to identify possible sources of danger and take appropriate action to minimise these risks.
- Make the experience of brass playing fun and enjoyable; promote fairness, confront, and deal with bullying and do not condone the use of prohibited or illegal substances.
- Treat all young people equally; this means giving both the more and less talented members of a group similar attention, time, respect and preserving their dignity.
- Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect, in which young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making.
- Avoid teaching sessions or meetings where a teacher and an individual student are completely unobserved.
- Maintain appropriate standards of behaviour at social events that young people attend. Do not condone rule violations or the use of prohibited or illegal substances.
- Be an excellent role model, for example by not smoking or drinking alcohol whilst working with young people.

- Be aware of the potential for cyberbullying, grooming and emotional abuse through online use of social networks, online games and mobile phones.
- No identifiable photographs of any child to be posted online, without explicit permission of the child's parent or a person with parental responsibility.
- Communicate regularly with parents and involve them in decision-making. Gain their consent in writing to act in loco parentis to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises.
- Be aware of any medical conditions, existing injuries and medicines being taken. Keep a written record of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given. Arrange that someone with knowledge of first aid is readily available.
- Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements, especially if an overnight stay is involved.
- In situations where children require supervision in changing rooms, it is essential that DBS checked chaperones work in pairs. Additionally, wherever possible, parents should be present, ensuring compliance with relevant laws and guidance.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of physical guidance is required in teaching technique, this should be provided openly and with the consent of the student.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with students.

## **4.2 Poor Practice**

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all personnel.

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Taking children alone in a car on journeys, however short.
- Taking children to your home where they will be alone with you.
- Sharing a room with a child.
- Engaging in rough, physical, or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Letting allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- Doing things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.

When cases arise where it is impractical to avoid any of the situations mentioned in this section, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the organisation and the children's parents. If during your care of a child you accidentally hurt them, the child seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a brief written note of it. This should be shared with the Band Safeguarding Officer and Parents should also be informed of the incident.

### 4.3 Abuse

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated, they may follow an individual into adulthood. Abuse may take a number of forms, and may be classified under the following headings:

**Neglect** - in a banding situation could include a conductor or band manager not keeping children safe, or exposing them to unnecessary risk of injury.

**Physical Abuse** - where someone physically hurts or injures children. Giving children alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute physical abuse.

**Sexual Abuse** - in banding, activities which might involve physical contact with children could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed.

**Emotional Abuse** - in banding this might include situations where children are subjected by a parent or teacher to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying, racism or unrealistic pressure.

**Bullying** - in banding, bullying may arise when a parent pushes a child too hard to succeed, a teacher adopts a win-at-all-costs philosophy, or an official at a contest/ festival uses bullying behaviour.

### 4.4 Indicators of abuse

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. The Band acknowledges that most people involved in brass banding are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns.
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her.
- Someone else – a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of a child.
- Unexplained changes in a child's behaviour.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt

Signs of bullying may include:

- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down.
- An unexplained drop-off in standard of performance.
- Physical signs such as stomach-aches, headaches or bingeing on food, cigarettes or alcohol.
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is not the responsibility of those working in banding to decide that child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.

## **5. Safeguarding Procedures**

Bretforton Silver Band has a thriving training band, 'Bret Set Go' whose members are predominantly under the age of 18 years, members of the senior band may also be under 18 years of age. All adult members of the band have responsibility for the safety and protection of any children or young people who are members of the organisation, and should therefore ensure that they follow the good practice outlined in this document.

These procedures are intended first to protect young people from abuse while engaged in the activities of the band and secondly to avoid allegations of abuse against officers and other members of the band.

1. The parent(s) or guardian(s)/carer(s) of band members under 18 years of age, will be required to sign a membership form covering such details as contacts, allergies and emergency health information and consent to the child being included in band photographs.
2. It is the duty of all members to ensure that the welfare of a child or children is of paramount importance.
3. The Committee shall appoint a Safeguarding Officer and Deputy (to cover in their absence) to oversee the implementation of the policy and procedures and to be the first point of reference in the event of a complaint or suspicion of abuse. These officers should not be a co-ordinator, tutor, or conductor of the Training Band.
4. In order to minimise the risk of abuse or an allegation of abuse, the Band and its members shall:
  - Ensure that, whenever possible, parents take responsibility for their own children.
  - Follow an "open door" policy and not allow an adult to be alone with a child in a closed room.
  - Never be alone with a child or children on a car journey, however short, unless there is absolutely no other option, or the child's or children's parent(s) or guardian(s) /carer(s) have given permission to the Safeguarding Officer or her/his deputy.
  - Not engage in or allow inappropriate physical contact of any kind.
  - Avoid personal verbal abuse and inappropriate use of electronic communication.
  - Carry out, as necessary and appropriate, risk assessments in relation to engagements and venues.
5. If any member of the band is concerned that abuse has occurred or may occur to themselves or another person, he or she should refer the matter immediately to the Safeguarding Officer or, if he/she is not available or the disclosure or complaint relates to the conduct of the Safeguarding Officer, the Deputy Safeguarding Officer, the Chairperson of the Band or another committee member.
6. The Band will ensure that appropriate vetting, including DBS checks are carried out for Band personnel (including non-member helpers) who will have significant access to children, and as agreed by the Committee. The Band Safeguarding Officer will keep a record of all such people and ensure that they have been vetted through the DBS.

## **6. Reporting Concerns**

If any member of the band becomes aware of a situation where there are concerns about the welfare or safety of themselves or another person, they should promptly bring the matter to the attention of the Safeguarding Officer. In the event that the Safeguarding Officer is unavailable, or if the concern involves the conduct of the Safeguarding Officer, members are encouraged to approach the Deputy Safeguarding Officer, the Chairperson of the Band, or another committee member. This reporting process applies to a range of concerns, not limited to instances of abuse, and is designed to ensure the well-being of all band members, probationary members, and volunteers.

If any member of the band is concerned that abuse has occurred, or may occur to themselves or another person, they should refer the matter immediately to the Safeguarding Officer or, if they are not available or the disclosure or complaint relates to the conduct of the Safeguarding Officer, then go to the Deputy Safeguarding Officer, the Chairperson of the Band or another committee member.

The Safeguarding Officer or other person receiving a disclosure or complaint from a band member or young person must not conduct any investigation but should refer the complaint as soon as possible to the Chairperson and to Social Services and/or, in case of emergency, to the Police.

The number for Social Care at the Worcestershire Hub is 0845 607 2000. Out of office hours (5:00pm to 8:00 am weekdays and all day at weekends and bank holidays) contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 01905 768020.

The Childline number is 0800 1111.

The Safeguarding Officer shall keep a written record of any complaints received and all action taken.

Any member of the Band who finds himself or herself in a compromising situation should immediately withdraw from that situation and speak to the Safeguarding Officer or a committee member as soon as possible. Similarly anyone who observes another Band member putting himself or herself at risk of an allegation should speak to the member concerned or to the Safeguarding Officer with a view to discreetly avoiding embarrassment.

The Safeguarding Officer is **Sally Taylor**

The Deputy Safeguarding Officer is **Michelle Everall**

A copy of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be available to all via the Band website, a copy will be posted on the Band notice board and copies will be available on request through Committee Members or the Safeguarding Officer.

Bretforton Silver Band will undertake to review and update, if necessary, these Policy and Procedures on at least an annual basis.

Signed: M Everall (Chairperson) on behalf of the Committee of Bretforton Silver Band.