



Safeguarding Policy

Since its launch, the Royal Philharmonic Society has celebrated the virtues of musicians working together and engaging with the public. Throughout its history, it has achieved this by fostering an ethos of mutual trust and respect in which everyone acts professionally and considerately at all times. All involved in the RPS – staff, musicians, members, partner organisations, supporters, guests and audience – are asked to embody these fundamental societal values.

A range of RPS activities helps musicians further their potential. These comprise some initiatives especially for those under 18 years of age and, occasionally, participants in projects may be vulnerable adults. We are committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all those with whom we work, especially children and vulnerable adults, recognising their right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse. In this, staff and representatives of the Society and others engaging in our activities must adhere to this Safeguarding Policy which we review and update regularly in line with good practice and government guidelines.

When planning all projects, we aim to ensure a balance between artistic objectives and the emotional, intellectual and physical needs of all who might participate. We aim never to discriminate against participants because of age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious belief or sexual identity. We always listen to the needs and concerns of participants and ensure these are acted upon appropriately.

Robin Sheffield, RPS General Manager is our Designated Safeguarding Person. He will ensure that those involved in RPS projects are aware of our Safeguarding Policy and their need to comply with it, and will act as the first point of contact about safeguarding matters on a project. If he is not present at a project, another RPS representative will be appointed to be the first point of contact for this, and others involved will be notified who that is. If for any reason it is not possible or appropriate to talk to the Designated Safeguarding Person about a safeguarding issue, James Murphy, RPS Chief Executive, may always be contacted.

Definitions

In this context, 'child' or 'children' refers to anyone under the age of 18, as defined by the Children Act 1989. 'Vulnerable adult' refers to anyone aged 18 or over who, because of disability, could be vulnerable to abuse e.g. an adult with mental health problems, learning disability, physical disability or communication impairment.

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse:

1. 'Physical abuse' – including hitting, shaking, throwing and burning; failure to act to protect a child or vulnerable adult from such actions is also considered to be physical abuse.
2. 'Emotional abuse' – the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or vulnerable adult, which can include making a person feel worthless, unloved or inadequate.
3. 'Sexual abuse' – including activities that may involve physical contact, or non-contact such as involving children in looking at pornographic material; sexual activities with a child are abusive regardless of whether or not the child is perceived to consent.
4. 'Neglect' – the persistent failure to meet a child or vulnerable adult's needs.

DBS Checks

All RPS staff and those the organisation employs to run workshops with children and vulnerable adults undertake a Standard DBS ([Disclosure and Barring Service](#)) Check to confirm they have no criminal record – including spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings – which may make them unfit to work with children or vulnerable adults.

Our Designated Safeguarding Person will ensure all such people have passed DBS Checks and address who else, on each upcoming project, may be required to undertake one.

Code of Conduct

- All persons attending RPS activities – staff, musicians, members, partner organisations, supporters, guests and audience – are expected to act in a dignified and respectful manner in the presence of all others involved.
- All persons engaged by the RPS to work with children or vulnerable adults will do so in a professional and accountable manner, and never under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any illegal substance.
- We vouch that a paid employee of the RPS who has passed a Standard DBS Check will attend all activities involving children or vulnerable adults. If this is not our Designated Safeguarding Person, another RPS representative will be appointed to fulfil their responsibilities for that activity, and others involved will be notified who that is.
- We strive, wherever possible, for no person engaged by the RPS to be alone with children or vulnerable adults: either individuals or groups. If this is unavoidable, the RPS representative will aim to ensure this takes place in sight or earshot of others, optimally in a room with the door left open. In such instances, the individual undertaking such activity will always notify another RPS representative and/or responsible adult that they are working in a one-to-one situation.
- We generally avoid physical contact with children or vulnerable adults. Very occasionally, minimal yet appropriate physical contact from a practising musician may be instructive in the demonstration of a musical technique. In this instance, they will always ask the participant's permission first, explaining what they are going to do and why. They will not proceed if the participant shows any unease. In no circumstances would physical contact ever be initiated in a one-to-one context.
- We respect that some participants may misinterpret the actions of adults and find good intentions to be intrusive or intimidating. Though an RPS representative will always explain their actions to a participant, they would desist if the participant continues to show unease, and find a different method of imparting information.
- As the RPS wants to celebrate and promote the musicians with whom it works, it may sensitively look to photograph, record or film participants in projects. In all cases, it will notify them (and their guardians where appropriate) in advance of the nature, purpose and intended outcomes of such activity, and strive to exclude any individuals who may be averse to such measures. Recorded or filmed footage will only relate to the artistic purposes of the project, and material derived will only be used for the purposes expressed. The RPS will ensure any guests invited to fulfil photography, recording or filming are aware of the sensitivity involved and that they adhere to this policy. We will ask that partner organisations do the same of any equivalent guests they engage.
- When working in partnership, our Designated Safeguarding Person will always discuss partners' own safeguarding procedures with them prior to activities, ensuring we comply as appropriate, sharing our own policy to ensure they comply with it in return. In any case, we will uphold all aspects of our own policy on any collaborative project.
- Wherever appropriate, RPS staff will wear a name badge or visible equivalent and ensure that all other representatives are introduced by name to participants at the outset.
- When working with students from a school or members of a community group, the RPS will request that a responsible adult from that organisation is present to supervise their participants.

- Where possible, RPS representatives – including members, supporters and guests – will not use the same toilets or dressing rooms as children or vulnerable adults, designating and labelling separate facilities wherever these are available. Where such facilities must be shared, RPS representatives will not use them at the same time as the participants.
- RPS representatives will not meet with children or vulnerable adults outside of organisational activities.
- When children or vulnerable adults are required to travel to or from an RPS activity, we ask that they make arrangements for this in advance in consultation with a parent or guardian. RPS representatives will not give children or vulnerable adults a lift in their own car or other vehicle.
- In accordance with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), the RPS will not share any personal information provided by participants in its projects with other parties beyond what is necessary to run the organisational activity
- RPS representatives will not exchange any monies, personal effects or personal details with children or vulnerable adults beyond what is necessary to run the organisational activity. On social media, RPS representatives will only ever communicate with children and vulnerable adults in publically visible ways and purely for organisational purposes.

Reporting procedures

If anyone involved with or witnessing an RPS activity has any concerns about a participant's potential vulnerability – whether it is felt this may need further assessment or possible action – they should share their concerns immediately with an RPS representative: ideally our Designated Safeguarding Person or whoever is their deputy on a project. If this is not possible, they should communicate their concerns to our Chief Executive.

Concern may arise in one of the following ways:

- Witnessing or anticipating potentially inappropriate conduct towards, or in the presence of, a child or vulnerable adult involved in an RPS activity
- A child or vulnerable adult disclosing unease or alleged abuse
- Witnessing evidence of physical abuse, such as bruising or injury, to a participant
- Unusual behaviour by a child or vulnerable adult

If a child or vulnerable adult raises a concern, an RPS representative will always:

- listen attentively to what they say, with minimal interruption or questioning, aiming to establish if any abusive behaviour has allegedly taken place
- reassure them that they have done the right thing by sharing their concern
- not promise total confidentiality*, but explain whom they must tell and why
- promptly write down an account of the situation as presented

[*While every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned, especially when an allegation has been made and is being investigated, legislation states that the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount. This means that considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations should not be allowed to override the right of children or vulnerable adults to be protected from harm.]

Depending on the nature of the concern, the Designated Safeguarding Person may look to suspend the activity or certain participants' involvement while the matter is sensitively addressed. If appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Person will make the appropriate referral to a statutory protection agency for children and vulnerable adults. This may be the local authority's Designated Officer or Social Care Services or, in some circumstances, the police or [NSPCC](#). If any children or vulnerable adults involved have a guardian (or responsible adult overseeing them where they are part of a group), the Designated Safeguarding Person will – as appropriate – inform them of what actions are being taken. They will ensure all actions taken have been written down and filed by the RPS.

If someone involved in an RPS activity acts unprofessionally or disrespectfully in the presence of others – but not necessarily children or vulnerable adults – the Chief Executive may take appropriate action which may include contacting them to talk about their conduct and its impact both on the values and reputation of the RPS and their future engagement.

If you require further information regarding any aspect of our Safeguarding Policy, please contact

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