Safeguarding Policy

Section 1

1.1 The purpose of this policy:

1. To protect children, young people and adults with care and support needs who are members of the band or connected to the band in some other way.
2. To provide members and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection. Delph Youth Band believes that a child, young person or adult with care and support needs should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk and to keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that protects them.

1.2 Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up based using guidance and templates provided by Brass Bands England as part of their BandSafe Safeguarding Tool which was devised in partnership with the NSPCC. This is based on law and guidance that seeks to protect children and adults at risk, which includes:

- Children Act (1989)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Children Act (2004)
- Protection of Freedoms Act (2012)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government (2022)
- The Care Act (2014)
- The Mental Capacity Act (2005)
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

1.3 We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act (1989);
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues; and
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

In addition, Delph Youth Band is aware that they also have safeguarding responsibilities towards adult members, some of whom may be vulnerable at different times in their lives. The principles outlined above in relation to children, also apply to our work with adults. In terms of a legal framework, the arrangements for those over 18 are governed by the Care Act 2014. This Act stipulates that statutory safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has care and support needs, and
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and,
- as a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

We will seek to keep children, young people and adults safe by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them, ensuring that, in the case of adults, we work with their consent unless 'vital interests' [as defined in the Data Protection Act (1998)] are at stake, or the person has been assessed as lacking mental capacity [as defined in the Mental Capacity Act (2005)];
- adopting child protection and adult safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for and members and volunteers;
- ensuring that our governance arrangements reflect our commitment to safeguarding
- working to ensure that there is a safe culture within our band;
- providing effective support and training for volunteers with responsibility;
- recruiting members and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- sharing information about child protection and adult safeguarding with children, parents, volunteers and members;
- sharing concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately.

1.4 Useful contact details:

Youth Band Safeguarding Officer: Julie Ayres (07805 224728)

Local police: 0161 872 5050, non-emergency 101

Local authority social care department (children and vulnerable adults): Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 0161 770 7777. Urgent calls out of hours: 0161 770 6936

Oldham's Local Authority Designated officer (LADO): Collette Morris 07583 101 863/0161 770 8870 or colette.morris@oldham.gov.uk

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 or help@nspcc.org.uk

ChildLine: 0800 1111 (textphone 0800 400 222) or www.childline.org.uk

The Samaritans: https://www.samaritans.org/

National Domestic Abuse Helpline: https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/

Brass Bands England Safeguarding Officer: 01226 771015

Section 2

Good Practice, Poor Practice and Abuse

2.1 Introduction

To provide young people with the best possible experience and opportunities in music everyone must operate within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. Not only will this allow brass music to make a positive contribution to the development of young people and safeguards 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 of personnel within *Delph Youth Band* to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is, however, their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and to act if they have concerns about the welfare of a child, as explained in section 4. This section (2) will help you identify what is meant by good practice, poor practice and abuse.

2.2 Good practice

All personnel should adhere to the following principles and actions:

- Before undertaking any activities involving young people, 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 rule violations or the use of prohibited or illegal substances.
- Insist on adherence to Child Protection procedures.
- 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.
- Respect the developmental stage of each young person and do not risk sacrificing their welfare in a desire for personal achievements. This means ensuring that the practice intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional stage of the development of the student. Concerts, band competitions, solo competitions etc. must be suited primarily to the needs and the interests of the child, not those of the parents, musical directors, volunteers, workers, teacher or band.
- 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 situations where the musical director, volunteers, workers, teacher, conductor or any other member of the *Delph Youth Band* uses their position and power to decide what the student should or should not do without consideration of the young person's needs and capabilities.
- Always be publicly open when working with children and young people. Avoid teaching sessions or meetings where an adult and an individual student are completely unobserved.
- Where children and young people need to be supervised in changing rooms, on residentials, or similar situations, adults including musical directors, teachers and helpers should work in pairs, and involve parents if possible, maintaining an appropriate and open environment, with no secrets. Changing should be strictly single sex and any adults supervising must have up to date DBS certificates in place.
- 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. It is important to educate parents of what is and is not acceptable in the context of brass playing. Physical contact (touching - guidance) can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the student's permission has been given.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with students. It is inappropriate for teachers and others in positions of authority to have an intimate relationship with a young person, even if they are over 16, the age of legal consent.
- Maintain appropriate standards of behaviour at social events that young people attend.
- Be an excellent role model, for example by not smoking or drinking alcohol while working with young people. Young people within the band will also not consume alcohol whilst taking part in events, functions and training.
- 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. Personnel with First Aid training will be present at events and training.
- Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements, especially if an overnight stay is involved. A full and appropriate risk assessment will also be in place and have been checked by the SO.

2.3 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 and young people away from others
- Taking children and young people alone in a car on journeys, however short.
- Taking children and young people 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 and young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reducing a child to tears as a form of control.
- Letting allegations / disclosures a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- Doing things of a personal nature that children and young people can do for themselves.
- Having children and young people stay at your home with you.
- Unsupervised toilet breaks in open toilets such as urinals where members of the Youth Band are present. Always seek a cubicle.

Where 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 and young people'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 an appropriate written note of it. Use the referral form found in Appendix E Parents should also be informed of the incident.

Primary communication with members of the group should be through emails to parents/carers or telephone calls to parents/carers rather than using the mobiles of children and young people.

2.4 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.

Children and young people with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation, and a powerlessness to protect them or adequately to communicate that abuse has occurred. Children and young people from ethnic minorities, who may also be experiencing racial discrimination, may be, or feel, doubly powerless in these respects.

Abuse may take a number of forms, and may be classified under the following headings:

- Neglect
  This is where adults fail to meet a child's basic needs like food, shelter, warm clothing or medical care, or to protect them from physical harm. Children and young people might also be constantly left alone or unsupervised.

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

- Physical Abuse
  This is where someone physically hurts or injures children and young people, for example by hitting, shaking, throwing, squeezing, burning, suffocating and biting or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Giving children and young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute physical abuse.

- Sexual Abuse
  Girls and boys can be abused by adults or other children and young people, both male and female, who use children and young people to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, or fondling. Showing children and young people pornographic material is also a form of sexual abuse.

  In banding activities which might involve physical contact with children and young people could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Also, the power of the teacher/adult over young students if misused, may lead to abusive situations developing.

- Emotional Abuse
  Persistent lack of love and affection, affecting children and young people may be led to believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve the child being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the child very nervous and withdrawn. It may also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children and young people. Emotional abuse also occurs when there is constant overprotection, which prevents children and young people from socialising.

  Emotional abuse in banding might include situations where children and young people are subjected by a parent or teacher to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying, racism or unrealistic pressure in order to perform to high expectations.

- Bullying
  This may be bullying of a child by an adult or another child. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period if time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It may be physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling, graffiti, abusive text messages transmitted by phone or on the internet), emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

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

2.5 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 *Delph Youth Band* acknowledges that most people involved in the organisation 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, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent.
- 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 – e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper - or behaviour changing over time.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour in games.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- Being prevented from socialising with other children and young people.
- Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Losing weight for no apparent reason.
- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

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.
Signs of bullying may include:

- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctant to go to band rehearsals or to competitions.
- An unexplained drop-off in standard of performance.
- Physical signs such as stomach-aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed-wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes and bingeing on food, cigarettes or alcohol.
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

3. Recruiting and selecting personnel to work with children and young people

3.1 Introduction

Anyone may have the potential to abuse children and young people in some way and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children and young people. The particular circumstances of individual cases need to be taken into account, but the fundamental principle is that those in charge of activities involving young people must take all reasonable steps to satisfy themselves as to the suitability of those who are given access to the children and young people in their care.

3.2 Controlling access to children and young people

Applicants for positions that involve significant access to young people (for example a *Delph Youth Band* musical director or tutor) should first complete procedures designed to elicit information about

their past career (including any gaps), and to disclose any criminal record or other matter that has a bearing on their suitability to work with children and young people e.g. previous investigations with police or social services or disciplinary investigations in relation to work with children and young people. It should be made clear that failure to disclose relevant information will result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal or exclusion.

Consent should be obtained from applicants for checks to be conducted to determine whether the Disclosure Barring Service holds any relevant information on them. DBS certificates are held securely and a spreadsheet containing relevant up to date information is held by the SO.

3.3 Vetting

All personnel who will have significant access to young people must first be vetted to establish whether they have any criminal convictions or other past behaviour that suggests they are unsuitable to work with children and young people. This applies equally to paid staff, parents and volunteers. This is done by obtaining a Disclosure about the individual from the Disclosure Barring Service. This applies to anyone applying for a new paid position with the band, and those volunteers who wish to help out on residential events or who have sole responsibility for children during events that Delph Youth Band members participate in.

It is important to emphasise that the absence of any relevant disclosure emerging from this vetting process does not guarantee that the individual is safe to work with children and young people, so it should not be relied on excessively. It is only one of a number of factors in the initial assessment of the person's suitability for such responsibilities. BBE Safer recruitment processes must be followed when appointing Musical Directors or Tutors.

3.4 The Safeguarding Officer

The *Delph Youth Band* will appoint a Safeguarding Officer who takes overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the policy, including the annual review. The SO will have the primary responsibility to check that everyone who has significant access to young people within the organisation is suitable for that role and has been vetted as described above. The person appointed should be identifiable to the junior members of the band and their parents, but should have a degree of independence from their activities – for example he or she should not be the junior co-ordinator or actively teach or conduct in the organisation. At least one deputy Safeguarding Officer will be appointed.

3.5 Training

Training courses on Child Protection are available and are recommended for the SO and any named Child Protection officers. The BBE Bandsafe course is recommended. The band will have at least 2 people with Bandsafe training and at least one Bandsafe trained person present at all events.

4. Responding to suspicions and allegations

4.1 Introduction

Many cases of child abuse in fact take place within the family setting. However, abuse can and does occur in other situations as well, which may include music or other social activities, and is rarely a one-off event when it occurs within such a setting. It is crucial that those involved in music tuition are aware of this possibility and that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action taken.

It is not the responsibility of anyone in a musical organisation whether in a paid or a voluntary capacity, to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. However, there is a responsibility to inform appropriate agencies of possible abuse so that they can then make inquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child. This applies both to suspicions of abuse occurring within the context of musical activities and to allegations that abuse is taking place elsewhere. This section explains how you should respond to such concerns.

4.2 Receiving evidence of possible abuse

We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. We may see it happening ourselves; we may suspect that it is occurring because of signs such as those listed in 2.5 above; it may be reported to us by someone else, or directly by the child affected.

In the last of these cases, it is particularly important to respond appropriately. If a child says or indicates that he or she is being abused, or information is obtained which gives you concern that a child is being abused, you should follow the guidance below:

4.3 Recording information

As with other forms of information arising in relation to child protection, information of this kind is highly sensitive and confidential. Accordingly, it should be held under secure conditions and only made available to those who have a definite need for it.

You should make a note as soon as possible of whatever information you obtain, both for your own future reference and possibly for passing on to others, appropriate agencies such as the social services department or the police. In writing such a note, you should confine yourself to the facts, and distinguish between what is your own personal knowledge and what you have been told by other people. You should not include your own opinions on the matter, to avoid the possibility of libel. Information should include the following:

- The nature of the allegation, in as much detail as possible, including times, dates, locations and other relevant information.
- Details of the child involved, including name, age, address and other contact details, and identifying who has parental responsibility for the child.
- Details of the person against whom the allegation is made, including name, relationship with the child, age and contact details (if known).
- The identity and contact details of any informants or other witnesses.
- The child's account, if he or she can give one, of what has happened. The 'voice of the child' should be recorded in speech marks. Exactly what they have said should be recorded.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries.
- Details of who else has been informed of the alleged incident.
- Any other relevant information.

4.4 Reporting the concern

The *Delph Youth Band* expects its personnel to discuss any concern they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the person in charge, and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken. The particular route you might follow in various circumstances is suggested below.

- Working within a group

If you are working with any of the *Delph Youth Band* groups, you should inform the Safeguarding Officer. Lines of communication should be open to the SO when the Youth Band are in training, competing, performing or on residential activities.
It is essential that all adults who come into contact with young people understand that ANYONE can make a referral to MASH or the Police if they have reason to believe the young person is at risk of immediate or significant harm.

Circumstances in which other people might then need to be informed are discussed below:

- Parents or carers
  There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents or carers where there are concerns about their children and young people. Therefore, in most situations, it would be important to talk to parents or carers to help clarify any initial concerns. For example, if a child seems withdrawn, they may have experienced bereavement in the family. However, there are circumstances in which a child might be placed at even greater risk were such concerns to be shared, e.g. where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately. In these situations, or where concerns still exist, any suspicion, allegation, or incident of abuse must be reported to appropriate agencies as soon as possible.

- MASH – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
  Oldham has a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team that deals with referrals. This is made up of representatives from a range of agencies and their sole purpose is to investigate allegations and disclosures in a timely manner and put interventions in place accordingly. Social Workers, Health and the Police are part of the MASH team.

- NSPCC 24 Hour Child Protection Line (0800 800 5000)
  The NSPCC offer 24-hour child protection information line which gives people easy access to child protection services and allow them to share concerns about a child with the most appropriate agency. The helpline service provides:

    - support for adults who are worried about a child;
    - advice for parents and carers;
    - consultations with professionals who come into contact with abused children or children at risk of abuse;
    - information about child protection and the NSPCC.

The person in charge may be unsure about whether the allegation constitutes abuse or not, and unclear about what action to take. There may be circumstances where allegations are about poor practice (which need not be referred to the MASH team) rather than abuse, but those responsible should consult with the band's SO who will obtain further advice where there is any doubt. Notifying the SO is also important because this matter may be just one of a series of other instances which together cause concern.

4.5 Disciplinary procedures

The discovery that someone may be abusing a child will raise feelings and concerns among other personnel, and it can be inherently difficult to report such matters. However, it is important that any concerns for the welfare of the child arising from abuse or harassment by someone should be reported immediately. As indicated above an allegation of abuse may give rise to a child protection investigation by the MASH team and/or a criminal investigation involving the police.

If the matter is being investigated by the police and/or social services, the organisation may decide to await the outcome of these investigations, which may well influence a disciplinary investigation, although not necessarily so. In appropriate cases, the organisation will suspend the individual concerned while an investigation is taking place. This is not intended to prejudge the outcome of the investigation, but simply to remove the individual from contact with children and young people until the investigation is concluded.

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality for all concerned, and consideration will be given to what support may be appropriate to children and young people, parents, members of staff and volunteers.

4.6 Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse are sometimes made some time after the event, for example, by an adult who was abused as a child by a member of staff who is still working with children and young people. Where such an allegation is made, you should follow the procedures given above and have the matter reported to the police and/or social services department. This is because other children and young people, either within banding or outside it, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children and young people.

5. Conclusion

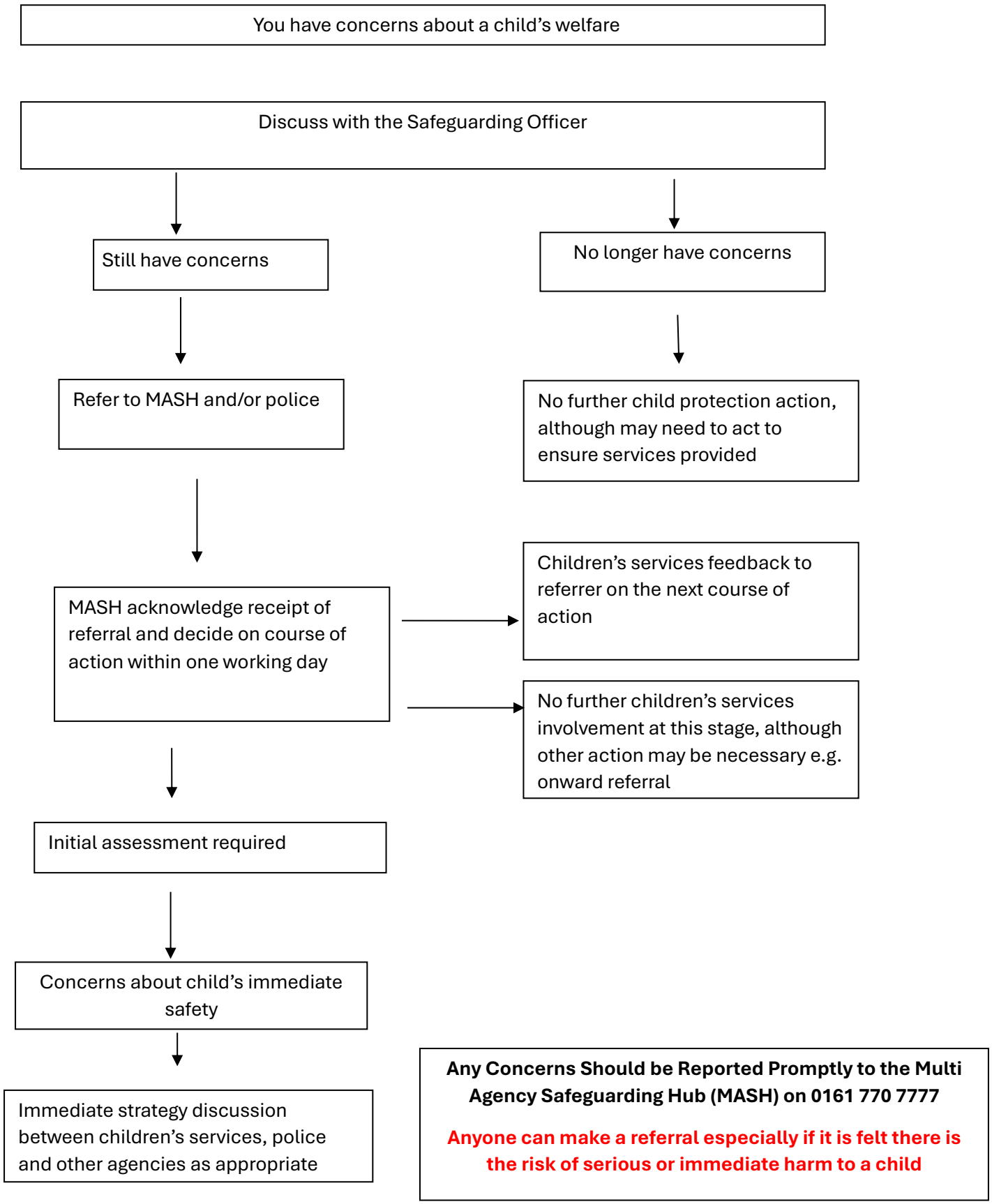
Delph Youth Band, by accepting this policy document, has indicated its determination to ensure that children and young people can participate in all forms of brass music, and do so, with their safety being of paramount importance. It is essential that this document is representative of a process of continual improvement in the area of child protection within brass music. It is for all adults engaged in brass banding activities to promote good practice and procedures, whilst being ever vigilant and aware of their responsibilities towards the children and young people and young people in their care.

Updated July 2025

Next update June 2026

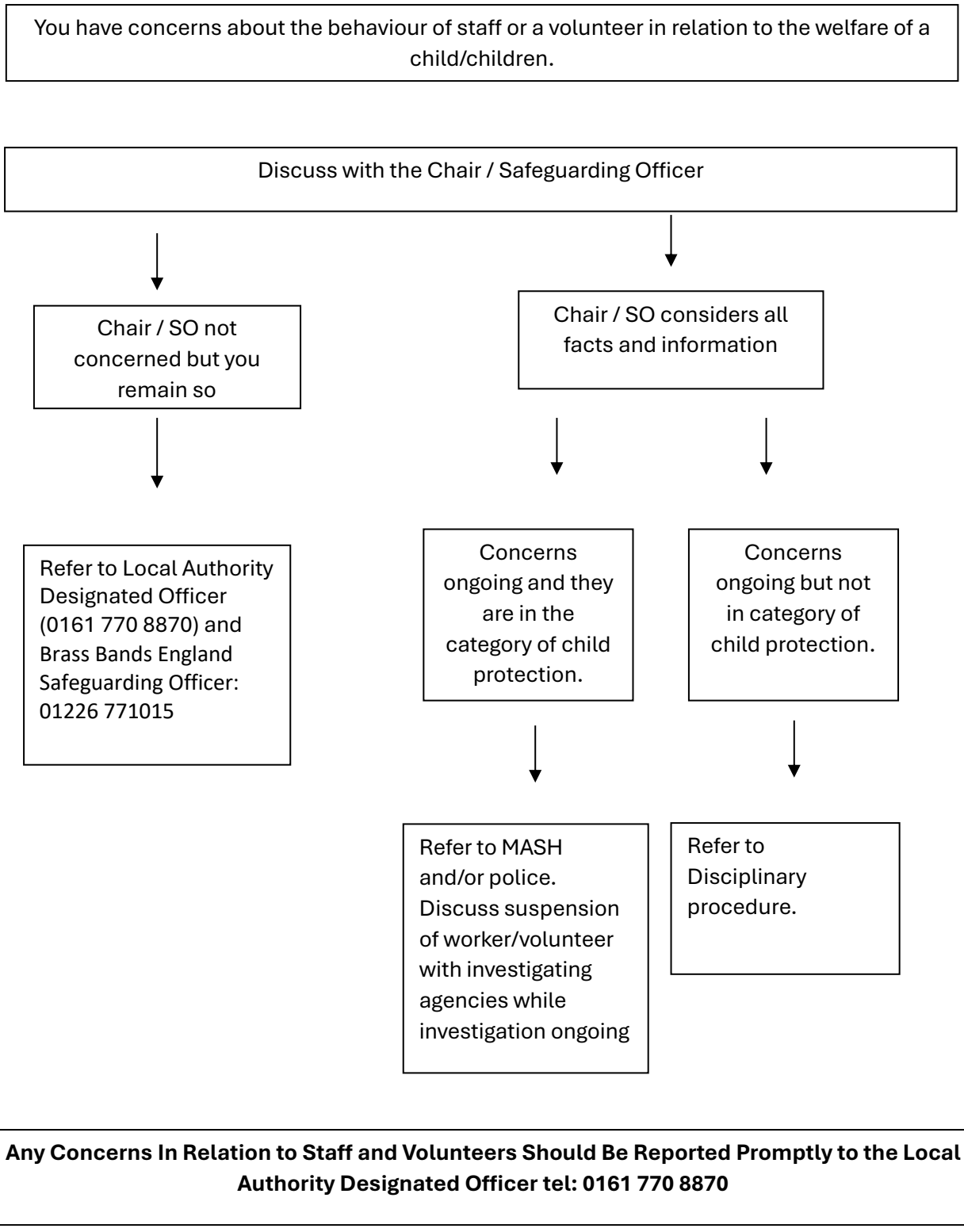
Appendix A

Reporting Child Protection Concerns



Appendix B

WHISTLEBLOWING Reporting Child Protection concerns in relation to staff and volunteers.



Any Concerns In Relation to Staff and Volunteers Should Be Reported Promptly to the Local Authority Designated Officer tel: 0161 770 8870

Appendix C

Event protocols

The following protocols should be followed to safeguard players for all events.

1. Players should be signed up for events by parents if under the age of 18. Players who are 18+ can sign themselves up to events. This will be done digitally but in effect it is evidence of parental permission. This will be via MS or Google Forms.
2. A copy of the emergency contact information, medical information and dietary allergies, and photo permissions must be available at all events for players of all ages. In the case of residentials or long-distance trips, it should also be available for adults. The information is collected via a membership form when joining the band and is updated regularly.
3. In advance, an event sheet with logistics and a risk assessment will be shared with parents.
4. A register will be taken to each event and players must sign in and out of the event. Players must not make their own way home unless a prior arrangement has been made.
5. A Bandsafe trained adult will be present at each event.
6. Any adults who have responsibility for supervising under 18s will have undertaken a Delph Youth Band DBS check or be part of the DBS update service and their certificate Shared.
7. The ratio of adults with DBS to players will be at least 1:12. Where an adult with DBS is playing or conducting, there should be one additional adult with DBS to support players. In small groups (e.g. carolling), there should be at least 2 adults with DBS at each event. Where both are playing or conducting, one will drop out to support players if required.
8. All events with players of 16 and under will be registered for BOPA with BBE. The certificate from BBE will be shared with the LA child licensing department.
9. The BOPA certificate will be displayed at each event.
10. There will be at least 1 first aider at each event. Where this is a venue first aider, confirmation must be received that there will be one present. A first aid kit will be taken to events and an accident book will be completed where required (It is in the First Aid kit). Parent/guardian must receive the top copy and the second copy kept in band records.
11. If lifts are given to an event of a player who is under 18, a parent/guardian must give permission. The driver should have a DBS.