



# The Newcastle & District Society of Organists

## President: Ian Roberts, Newcastle Cathedral

### **Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at Risk**

#### Preamble and Context

The Newcastle and District Society of Organists exists to promote the appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the pipe organ and its music in both liturgical and secular contexts. The membership of the Society includes both student members, some of whom are older schoolchildren under 18 years old, and long-standing members, with a wide range of ages. It interacts with its membership through a magazine (“Mixture”), a weekly round-up of upcoming events in the world of the pipe organ (“Piccolo”) and organised events that include recitals, masterclasses, talks and practical introductions to some of the aspects of playing the instrument. Its membership is currently about 90.

NDSO events are normally open to all members: some bear a charge, others are *gratis*, and although all are aimed at any interested member, we do not organise events specifically for children. Occasionally the Society acts in a support role for events which are organised by other groups with an interest in young peoples’ education. Currently such groups include the Royal College of Organists (RCO) with whom we have a well-established relationship, and with a small number of schools. In a similar way, we do not organise events specifically aimed at adults who might be deemed to be vulnerable/at risk. In both cases, however, the NDSO will seek to ensure that the lead organisation has an appropriate safeguarding policy in place and will place itself under this policy.

For its own events, the NDSO accepts that it has a duty of care towards young people and vulnerable adults who attend these events, and the safeguarding policy below is intended to provide the context within which our events take place. The NDSO Events Secretary will ensure that the local organisers of NDSO events are familiar with the content of this policy and themselves have appropriate systems in place to follow the guidelines below. In addition, the NDSO committee will appoint a person to act as Safeguarding Adviser, such a person normally being a senior professional with experience in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The committee will also undertake to read and participate in updating this policy on at least an annual basis.

The policy will be placed on the Society’s website and be available to anyone on request.

Andrew Hamnett  
July 2019

### 1. Aims and purpose of the policy

The aim of this policy is to promote safeguarding, prevent abuse and protect children and vulnerable adults who participate in NDSO events. It includes clear procedures for taking appropriate action following the raising of safeguarding concerns involving children or adults at any such event, and sets out the responsibilities of the organisers of such events should a safeguarding issue arise.

The purpose of this policy is to embed practices throughout the actions of the NDSO to safeguard children and at-risk adults (as defined below) who attend meetings and events organised by the society, and to provide all members and participants with the over-arching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding vulnerable groups as well as providing practical advice to follow in the event of a safeguarding disclosure being made to one of the event organisers.

### 2. Definitions

NDSO is the abbreviation used through this document for the Newcastle and District Society of Organists.

Children and young people includes anyone aged under 18 years, who is therefore deemed vulnerable owing to their age. With certain disabilities this may include young people up to the age of 25. The Children Act 2004 (§ 11) places a duty on a range of organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and this responsibility includes the requirement to report serious safeguarding issues to the statutory authorities.

Adults at risk includes any adult of any age who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm owing to a permanent or temporary illness or disability, or who has been made vulnerable by their circumstances, which may include domestic abuse, discrimination or homelessness. Statutory guidance (Care Act 2014) describes adults at risk who need safeguarding as those having the need for care and support, are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect or as a result of those care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk or, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Abuse is any selfish act of oppression and injustice, exploitation and manipulation of power by those in authority; it includes physical, sexual and emotional abuse, bullying and neglect. A more detailed definition is given in Appendix 1 to this document.

### 3. Introduction

The key responsibilities of the NDSO in terms of safeguarding are to safeguard children and adults at risk who attend NDSO-organised events and to ensure that both groups can attend our events in safety. The NDSO accepts that children, young people and adults have a right to live in a way that does not cause them harm or impede their human rights, and we acknowledge their right to protection from harm regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs. In accord with legislation, we accept that the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount, and we undertake, as a society, to follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice.

We will seek to establish within the organisation of our events, a caring environment in which there is informed vigilance about the dangers of abuse, appoint a Safeguarding Advisor for the Society, whilst recognising that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility,

and to organise events so as to promote a safe environment, minimising the risks of harm to children and adults. The society also undertakes to respond appropriately to any safeguarding concerns raised with event organisers as outlined below.

The society will seek to keep children and adults at risk safe by valuing them, listening to them and respecting them, ensuring that no harm comes to them, and by adopting appropriate safeguarding practices through the procedures and code of conduct detailed below. The society will ensure that all reasonable checks (including, where appropriate, through the DBS) are made when appointing event organisers and others who have responsibilities within the society. This is to ensure that the society has taken seriously its duty of care in organising its events, and ensuring the best outcomes for children, young people and adults at risk.

#### 4. *Duty of Care and Confidentiality*

The society recognises that it has a duty of care towards those attending its events, both children and adults, and records of any disclosure or incident giving rise to concern will be treated as confidential. We will maintain this confidentiality except in circumstances where to do so would place the individual or another individual at risk. Under these circumstances, the organisers of any event reserve the right to report any concern to the designated Safeguarding Advisor or, where appropriate, to the relevant local authority Safeguarding Team: all contact details are given below. It is of the utmost importance that no guarantee of confidentiality can be given to anyone making a disclosure; the Safeguarding Advisor has had appropriate training to make an informed decision as to what action should be taken. It is also important to remember that other agencies may have relevant information about the safety of the person who has made the disclosure.

#### 5. *Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Adults at Risk*

This code of conduct given in Appendix 2 outlines the procedures expected of NDSO members and participants at NDSO events who engage with children or vulnerable adults during its activities. The purpose of the code is to give guidance to those who have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult, or who perceive inappropriate behaviour or abuse towards them. It is important that members of the society maintain the standard of behaviour expected of them; doing so will reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations of abuse being made at them.

When working with children or adults at risk, all NDSO members should follow the safeguarding policy and the code of conduct in Appendix 2 at all times, treat both children and vulnerable adults fairly and without prejudgement, ensure that contact is appropriate in relation to the activity organised, always ensure that language is not offensive or discriminatory, be prepared to challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions to the Safeguarding Advisor. All organisers should ensure, wherever possible, that there is more than one adult present during activities with children or vulnerable adults; if this isn't possible, do make sure that you are within sight or earshot of other adults.

If a child or at-risk adult makes a disclosure to you, listen carefully and respectfully, do not make any judgements or interrogate the person concerned, or interrupt them when giving a spontaneous account. Do not touch the person disclosing at any point unless essential for their safety. Make it clear that you cannot promise complete confidentiality and ensure that the disclosure is made in a quiet part of the room, but not in a separate area. Reassure the person concerned that they have done the right thing in telling you, and that they have done

nothing wrong, and explain what you propose to do next. This will usually consist in speaking to the Safeguarding Advisor, but in extreme cases may involve other agencies or emergency services. It is important to make clear to the child or vulnerable adult that you may need to share what they have told you in order to keep them safe. Do not ask the person to repeat their story to anyone else at this point.

Always record and share your concerns about any child or vulnerable adult as soon as possible with the Safeguarding Advisor, or, in their absence with the Events Secretary, Membership Secretary or President of the NDSO. Where the disclosure concerns a member of the NDSO committee it must be shared with the Safeguarding Advisor. Record your concerns accurately and succinctly, using, where possible, the actual words of the person making the disclosure: confine your report to the facts as you have them and not your opinions, including what was seen, what was heard or what was told to you, and record the names of any others who witnessed a disclosure or incident. Under no circumstances should you discuss your concerns with parents, guardians or carers without taking advice from the Safeguarding Advisor. This is because in some circumstances the safety of the person disclosing may be put at risk if information is shared widely or prematurely. It is essential that you do not try to investigate any allegations yourself if you hear a disclosure – this may compromise any future investigation by the police or other agencies.

Where you are concerned that the danger of abuse is both very real and urgent, or where there is urgent need for medical attention, call the police or ambulance as appropriate. In all cases, it is vital to take whatever action is needed to safeguard the child or adult. Where you feel that you need urgent specialist advice and the Safeguarding Advisor is not available, you should contact one of the local authority offices given below; these have a 24-hour helpline which should be able to give rapid and expert advice.

Whatever the procedure taken, please inform a member of the NDSO committee as soon as possible; it is essential that the Society is aware of any safeguarding issues so that it can plan its activities in the safest possible way. This is particularly important if an allegation is made about a member of the local organising group.

Members of the NDSO committee are asked to acknowledge that they have read this document by returning the declaration form at the end of this document or by making a declaration by e-mail.

## 6. Contact Details

The current Safeguarding Advisor is

Ruth Rogan, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser  
Church House, St John's Terrace, North Shields, NE29 6HS.  
T: 07825 167 016; E-mail [r.rogan@newcastle.anglican.org](mailto:r.rogan@newcastle.anglican.org)

For Northumberland Children's Services, if you are worried that someone is in immediate danger, you should call 999 for emergency services; you can call the Children's services on (01670 536000) during office hours or outside office hours call the Emergency Duty Team on (0345 6005252).

If you are concerned about a vulnerable adult who is at risk of neglect or abuse in Northumberland contact: (01670 536400) during office hours or outside office hours call the Emergency Duty Team on (0345 6005252).

For County Durham Children's Services: if you have a concern about a child or young person's welfare who lives in County Durham, call First Contact on 03000 267 979. First Contact brings together children's services staff with partners such as Durham Constabulary and health services.

For Newcastle Social Services, if you are concerned about a child or young person you can call 0191 277 2500 (weekdays 8:45am to 5pm) and for urgent issues call the Emergency Duty Team on 0191 278 7878 or access the website <https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/care-and-support/information-and-support-adults/report-suspected-adult-abuse-and-neglect>

To report concerns about abuse of vulnerable adults contact Community Health and Social Care Direct (8am to 5pm) - Telephone: 0191 278 8377 and outside of these hours - Telephone: 0191 278 7878

#### North Tyneside Contacts

For children fill in the form at the website below or call in confidence on 0345 2000 109 (office hours) or (0191) 200 6800 (evenings and weekends).

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/488/are-you-worried-about-child>

For adults You can complete the form at the website below to report concerns about a vulnerable adult or their carer. You can also call in confidence on (0191) 643 2777 (office hours) or (0191) 200 6800 (evenings and weekends).

<https://mycare.northtyneside.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/worriedadult#assess>

## Appendix 1

### **What is abuse and neglect - Children.**

These definitions are taken from *Working Together 2013*. The Church of England National Safeguarding team also produce a very useful document *C1 HO2*. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

#### **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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

#### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), 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 maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

#### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

#### **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.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **What is abuse? Adults in need of protection**

The following definitions of abuse are laid down in *'No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults (adults at risk) from abuse (Department of Health 2000);*

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. In giving substance to that statement, however, consideration needs to be given to several factors: Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

### **Physical Abuse**

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care.

### **Sexual Abuse**

This is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent, or where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override or overcome lack of consent.

### **Psychological or Emotional Abuse**

These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the vulnerable adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the adult at risk's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty.

### **Financial or Material Abuse**

This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions

### **Neglect, or Act of Omission**

This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the adult at risk's needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the adult at risk or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well being or development is impaired

### **Discriminatory Abuse**

This is the inappropriate treatment of an adult at risk because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals.

Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

### **Organisational Abuse**

This is the mistreatment or abuse of an adult at risk by a regime or individuals within an institution (e.g. hospital or care home) or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice.

**Domestic violence** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence.

**Self-neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

**Modern slavery** – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, and forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

**Spiritual Abuse** – this is defined as coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context, including misuse of Scripture, oppressive teaching pressure to conform, requirements of secrecy, censorship of decision making and denial of the right to faith.

## **Appendix 2 – Code of Conduct – do’s and don’ts.**

### **The code contains the following elements:**

1. Treat all people with dignity and respect
2. Act inclusively, seeking to make all people feel welcome and valued
3. Treat people with equal care and concern and without prejudice or discrimination
4. Challenge unacceptable behaviour from whatever corner and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse
5. Ensure that, wherever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children or vulnerable adults, or at the least make sure that you are within sight or hearing of other adults
6. Respect a child or at risk adult’s right to privacy
7. Relate to children in public: if a child wishes to talk on a one-to-one basis about an issue, tell another organiser and find somewhere that is quiet but still public to talk.
8. Write down the substance of any disclosure made to you, adding date and signature, and pass the information to the Safeguarding Advisor unless the matter seems urgent. In addition this information should be sent to the Events Secretary, membership secretary or president so that the NDSO committee has a record. If you feel unhappy with the advice from the safeguarding advisor, it is important that you discuss the issues with him or her and clarify the action they are proposing and the reasons for it; be persistent until you are satisfied.
9. If the problem seems urgent, and there seems to be a real risk of harm to the child or adult, contact the police or the local authority Children’s Social Care directly (whose details are given below).

### **Important don’ts**

1. Don’t allow allegations to go unreported
2. Don’t spend time alone with a child or vulnerable adult out of sight of other people and without the knowledge of the lead organiser of the event.
3. Don’t engage in, or allow, any form of inappropriate touching. This would include doing personal things for a child or an adult at risk that they can do for themselves. Where the person is disabled, tasks should only be carried out with the full consent of the individual or their parent/carer.
4. Don’t abuse the position of authority you may have: don’t belittle, scapegoat, put down or ridicule a young person or vulnerable adult (even in ‘fun’) and don’t use language with a sexual connotation or innuendo.
5. Don’t exclude other children or adults from conversations unless there is a good reason
6. Don’t use physical force at any time except, as a last resort, to prevent injury
7. Don’t act in any way that could be construed as threatening or intrusive
8. Neither exaggerate nor trivialise the abuse of children or vulnerable adults
9. Don’t rely on your own reputation or that of the society to protect you
10. Don’t take unnecessary risks when common sense, policy or practice suggest a more prudent approach
11. Don’t adopt an attitude of complacency with regard to your own conduct
12. Don’t stop any child who is freely recalling events; that child will have chosen you as confidant and you must not seek anyone else to replace you.
13. You must not promise to keep a secret – it is your responsibility and duty to share any information with the Safeguarding Advisor
14. Do not interrogate the child or pass judgement on what is being said.
15. Do not give your personal contact details (such as a personal phone number, home address,

e-mail, Skype address or other communication routes) to a child or an adult at risk, or use any such route to communicate with a child or adult at risk, other than regarding the activity (for example through the official website for the activity).

16. Do not take photographs or make other recordings of at-risk people without the specific written consent of the individual, or the consent of someone with parental responsibility for the individual.

# Declaration

## Policy for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

An email declaration by acknowledgement of this Policy is deemed acceptable.

I declare that I have read and understood the Newcastle and District Society of Organists Policy for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults dated \_\_\_\_\_ and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct contained therein.

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Name & Signature

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Address

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Postcode