



A Noteworthy Music Studio Child Protection Policy

***This policy and guidance should be observed by all
A Noteworthy Music Studio (ANMS) teachers and staff.***

ANMS teachers will have frequent contact with children in the course of their professional activities. ANMS acknowledges that it has a responsibility to promote best practice and the highest standards of conduct among its teachers and staff in relation to the safety of children. It also recognizes that good safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are also of benefit to ANMS teachers, as they can help protect them from misunderstandings or erroneous allegations.

A Noteworthy Music Studio is committed to practices which protect children from harm.

Background

All ANMS teachers and staff who have access to or contact with children must:

- recognize and accept they have a responsibility to protect any children within their sphere of work and care;
- develop awareness of the issues which can cause children harm and have knowledge of and be able to recognize signs of the four most common types of abuse (emotional, physical, sexual, neglect);
- be aware of 'grooming' behavior (the befriending of children as a precursor to abuse); and
- immediately report any concerns using the ANMS's procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns.

ANMS in turn will endeavor to safeguard children by:

- adopting a Safeguarding Code of Practice for all ANMS teachers;
- adopting a procedure for reporting safeguarding concerns; and
- reporting concerns to the relevant authorities.

The Policy

It is ANMS's policy that:

- All ANMS staff and ANMS teachers accept responsibility for the welfare of children with whom they come into contact in the course of their work, and that they will report any concerns about a child or somebody else's behavior, using the procedures outline in this document and in the Teacher's Code of Conduct.
- The Studio Director will take action following any expression of concern and the lines of responsibility in respect of child protection are clear.
- The Studio Director knows how to make appropriate referrals to statutory child protection agencies.
- All ANMS teachers must submit to a background check prior to teaching any individual lessons.

- All ANMS teachers who come into contact with children in the course of their professional activities must adhere to the ANMS Code of Practice (see section 3), the procedure for reporting safeguarding concerns (see section 5) and have regard to any other relevant guidance issued by the ANMS. Failure to comply with these obligations may result in the immediate termination of a teacher's contract.
- Information relating to any allegation or disclosure must be clearly recorded as soon as possible, and there is a procedure setting out who should record information and the timeframe for passing it on.
- At ANMS, the welfare of the child is paramount. This means that considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm. However, every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.
- This Child Protection Policy will be referred to or included in recruitment, training and policy materials, where appropriate, and this policy will be openly and widely made available to teachers and staff and actively promoted within the studio.
- A culture of mutual respect between children and ANMS teachers will be encouraged, with adults modeling good practice in this context.
- It is part of the ANMS's acceptance of its responsibility of duty of care towards children that ANMS teachers and staff who encounter child protection concerns in the context of their work will be supported when they report their concerns in good faith.

Our Code of Practice

- Inappropriate physical contact with children must be avoided. Physical contact is only appropriate in very limited circumstances. For more detailed advice please refer to the document "A Noteworthy Music Studio Code of Conduct for Music Teachers"
- It is not good practice to take children alone in a car on journeys, however short, unless with the prior consent of the child's parent or guardian, and then only in exceptional circumstances.
- Do not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about a child, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted. Inappropriate remarks include innuendo, swearing, and discussing their or your own intimate relationships.
- Other than in exceptional circumstances, do not communicate directly with children by email or text messages and only then with the prior consent of the child's parent or guardian. If electronic communication is necessary best practice would be to communicate directly with parents or guardians, and/or to copy them on any such communication with the children.
- Never communicate with children via Twitter, Facebook or other social media.
- Do not engage in behavior which could be construed as 'grooming' a child (for example giving a child money, presents or favors or talking or behaving in an inappropriate or unprofessional manner towards children).
- Do take a disclosure of abuse from a child seriously. It is important not to deter children from making a 'disclosure' of abuse through fear of not being believed, and to listen to what they have to say. Guidance on responding to an allegation of abuse is set out in section 4 of this document. If the allegation gives rise to a child protection

concern it is important to follow the ANMS's procedure for reporting such concerns, and not to attempt to investigate the concern yourself.

- Always report any concerns immediately to the ANMS's Studio Director regarding the conduct of another ANMS member in relation to children or vulnerable adults.
- Remember that those who abuse children can be of any age (even other children), gender, ethnic background or class, and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action taking place.
- Good practice includes valuing and respecting children as individuals, and the adult modeling of appropriate conduct - which will always exclude bullying, shouting, racism, sectarianism or sexism.
- Further advice and guidance on child protection and safeguarding issues is available via the relevant advice pages on the ANMS website and the ANMS Teachers' Code of Conduct.

Guidance on responding to a child making an allegation of abuse

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is said and show that you are taking it seriously.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- Tell the child that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it.
- Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared.
- Make no judgement about what you have heard.
- Record in writing what was said, using the child's own words as soon as possible - note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
- Remember that while you may have been the first person encountering an allegation of abuse ***it is not your responsibility to decide whether abuse has occurred***. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the studio Director (or other designated person if the report involves the Director).

How to report your concerns - reporting procedures for ANMS teachers

ANMS teachers could have their suspicion or concern raised in a number of ways, the most likely of which are:

1. the conduct of another music professional or adult;
2. a child 'disclosing' abuse;
3. bruising or evidence of physical hurt;
4. unusual behavior by a child.

If an ANMS teacher has such concerns they should report them immediately to the appropriate person in the studio. If a child in your care has suffered a serious injury as a result of abuse, seek medical attention immediately and then inform the Studio Director.

ANMS teachers are always able to contact the Studio Director if they wish to discuss any safeguarding concerns, however they arise. ANMS teachers must report to the ANMS Studio Director immediately any concerns they may have about the conduct of another ANMS teacher in relation to children.

The most common examples of the types of concerns that must be reported immediately are:

- someone has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- someone has possibly committed a criminal offense against or related to a child; or
- someone has behaved towards a child in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The Studio Director will consider the concerns raised and then, after taking appropriate advice (which may include discussing the circumstances on a confidential basis with professional advisers), decide either to deal with the matter internally, refer to local child protection professionals and/or local law enforcement, or not to take any further action.

Reporting Procedure for ANMS staff

ANMS staff (other than teachers) do not, in the normal course of their duties, have direct contact with children. However, there may be circumstances in which concerns about the safety of a child or about the conduct of an ANMS teacher in relation to children are brought to the attention of an ANMS staff. Any such concerns must be reported immediately to the ANMS's Studio Director and the above procedures will be followed.