

Bellingham Symphony Orchestra

Child Safety Policies and Procedures

A. Purpose

We are strongly committed to child safety and to maintaining a child friendly environment. We strive to provide an environment where every child is safe, is treated with respect, and is protected from harm.

B. Scope

For purposes of this policy, the terms “child” or “children” include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years. The term “staff” includes permanent employees, contract workers, sub-contractors, and interns who work regularly with children in the context of BSO’s programs, including the BYCP, MITS, and BITS. The term “volunteer” means anyone assisting staff in the context of BSO’s programs.

C. Recruitment Practices

BSO takes reasonable steps to ensure that all our staff are properly vetted and have cleared appropriate background checks for persons engaged to work with children, including:

- Personal interviews and references required for all staff.
- Criminal background checks for all supervisory staff and volunteers.
- Criminal background checks for anyone who has regular direct contact with children or who works in close proximity to children and is not directly supervised at all times.

Further assessment may be conducted at the discretion of the Executive Director.

D. Community and Student Behavior Policies

Everyone covered by the scope of this policy is expected to abide by BSO’s Community and Student Code of Conduct.

E. Support for Staff

BSO seeks to attract and retain the best staff. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We ensure that staff who work with children have ongoing supervision, support, and training so that their performance is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child safe environment.

F. Reporting and Responding to Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

BSO will not tolerate incidents of child abuse. If abuse is reasonably suspected we will alert Child Protective Services (360-594-6700 or 1-866-829-2153) or the Bellingham Police Department (360-778-8800).

G. Communication

BSO will ensure that everyone to whom this policy applies is aware of and has had an opportunity to read the policy.

We also ask staff to sign a written statement indicating that they have read and will abide by this policy. We retain a copy of all signed statements.