



Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Code of Practice and Procedures

GASSER MUSIC STUDIO is a private music teaching service offering instrumental lessons to children and adults. This policy and guidance is specifically focused on children. For the purposes of this policy and guidance, a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. For further advice in relation to vulnerable adults are advised to contact GASSER MUSIC STUDIO staff.

This policy and guidance should be observed by all GASSER MUSIC STUDIO tutors.

Many tutors of the GASSER MUSIC STUDIO will have frequent contact with children in the course of their professional activities. The studio acknowledges that it has a responsibility to promote best practice and the highest standards of conduct among its members and staff in relation to the safety of children. It also recognises that good safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are also of benefit to the tutors, as they can help protect them from misunderstandings.

Background

All GASSER MUSIC STUDIO staff (including self-employed tutors) who have access to or contact with children must:

- recognise 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 recognise signs of the four most common types of abuse (emotional, physical, sexual, neglect);
- be aware of 'grooming' behaviour (the befriending of children as a precursor to abuse); and
- immediately report any concerns using the GASSER MUSIC STUDIO's procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns.

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GASSER MUSIC STUDIO in turn will endeavour to safeguard children by:

1. adopting a Safeguarding Code of Practice for all GASSER MUSIC STUDIO members;
2. adopting a procedure for reporting safeguarding concerns; and
3. reporting concerns to the relevant authorities.

The Policy

It is the GASSER MUSIC STUDIO's policy that:

1. All GASSER MUSIC STUDIO staff and GASSER MUSIC STUDIO members 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 behaviour, using the procedures laid down.
2. The Designated Safeguarding Person/ DSP (contact details can be found at the end of the document) will take action following any expression of concern and the lines of responsibility in respect of child protection are clear.
3. The DSP know how to make appropriate referrals to statutory child protection agencies.
4. All GASSER MUSIC STUDIO members who come into contact with children in the course of their professional activities must adhere to the GASSER MUSIC STUDIO Safeguarding 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 GASSER MUSIC STUDIO. Failure to comply with these obligations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the GASSER MUSIC STUDIO's Disciplinary Procedure.
5. 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 time-scales for passing it on.
6. The Children Act 1989 states that 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.
7. This Safeguarding and 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 members and staff and actively promoted within the organisation.
8. A culture of mutual respect between children and GASSER MUSIC STUDIO members will be encouraged, with adults modelling good practice in this context.
9. It is part of the GASSER MUSIC STUDIO's acceptance of its responsibility of duty of care towards children that GASSER MUSIC STUDIO members 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

1. Inappropriate physical contact with children must be avoided. Physical contact is only appropriate in very limited circumstances. For more detailed advice please see the Guidance for Private Music Teachers set out in the Appendix to the GASSER MUSIC STUDIO Code of Conduct.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Never communicate with children via Twitter, Facebook or other social media.
6. Do not engage in behaviour which could be construed as 'grooming' a child (for example giving a child money, presents or favours or talking or behaving in an inappropriate or unprofessional manner towards children).
7. 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 GASSER MUSIC STUDIO's procedure for reporting such concerns, and not to attempt to investigate the concern yourself.
8. Always report any concerns immediately to the GASSER MUSIC STUDIO's Designated Safeguarding Person regarding the conduct of another GASSER MUSIC STUDIO member in relation to children or vulnerable adults.
9. 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.
10. Good practice includes valuing and respecting children as individuals, and the adult modelling of appropriate conduct - which will always exclude bullying, shouting, racism, sectarianism or sexism.
11. Further advice and guidance on child protection and safeguarding issues is available via the relevant advice pages on the GASSER MUSIC STUDIO website and in Annexe 2 to the GASSER MUSIC STUDIO Members' Code of Conduct (guidance for Private teachers).

Guidance on responding to a child making an allegation of abuse

1. Stay calm.
2. Listen carefully to what is said and show that you are taking it seriously.

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3. 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.
4. Tell the child that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it.
5. Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace.
6. Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
7. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
8. Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared.
9. Make no judgment about what you have heard.
10. 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.
11. Remember that whilst 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 DSP.

How to report your concerns - Reporting procedures for GASSER MUSIC STUDIO members

GASSER MUSIC STUDIO members 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 behaviour by a child.

If a GASSER MUSIC STUDIO member has such concerns they should report them immediately to the appropriate person in the organisation. This principle applies regardless of whether the GASSER MUSIC STUDIO member is working in an employed or self-employed capacity.

If a child in your care has suffered a serious injury as a result of abuse, seek medical attention immediately and then inform your Local Authority Children's Social Care Department. If you have a concern out of GASSER MUSIC STUDIO office hours you can seek advice from the NSPCC free 24-hour Child Protection Helpline (0808 800 5000).

GASSER MUSIC STUDIO members are always able to contact the GASSER MUSIC STUDIO's DSP if they wish to discuss any safeguarding concerns, however they arise.

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GASSER MUSIC STUDIO members must report to the GASSER MUSIC STUDIO's DSP immediately any concerns they may have about the conduct of another GASSER MUSIC STUDIO member 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 offence 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 DSP will consider the concerns raised and refer them immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or, 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 or not to take any further action. If further information comes to light at a later stage which warrants a referral to the LADO, Gasser Music Studio will make this referral.

Reporting Procedure for GASSER MUSIC STUDIO staff

When GASSER MUSIC STUDIO staff members do not, in the normal course of their duties, have direct contact with children, there may be circumstances in which concerns about the safety of a child are brought to the attention of a GASSER MUSIC STUDIO staff member. Any such concerns must be reported immediately to the DSP who will follow the procedure for considering child protection concerns set out at section 5 of this document.

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