



*West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service Band* is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. *WYFRS band* acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse. The Band Management Team and all Band members will endeavour to work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

WYFRS Band does not operate a youth band. However, members of the band may be less than 18 years of age. All members of WYFRS Band have responsibility for the safety of any children or young people who are members of the organisation, and should therefore ensure that they follow the good practice outlined below in this document.

Because there is no direct teaching of young people or children in the band, and no members have a specific responsibility for, or are likely to be working alone with any young person or child, the management team have judged that CRB checks are not required for any members of the organisation. The management team believes that all members have responsibility for the welfare of any young people/children, and so a designated Welfare Officer is not appropriate. If, in the future, WYFRS band begins tuition for young people on an individual basis, or plans to start a youth band, this statement and practice will be reviewed.

### **Good Practice, Poor Practice and Abuse**

To provide young people with the best possible experience and opportunities in banding everyone must operate within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. Not only will this allow banding 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 member of the 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, by speaking to a member of the management team.

### **Good practice**

All band members 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 band 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.
- 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 young person. Concerts, solos, must be suited primarily to the needs and the interests of the child, not those of the parents, conductor 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 conductor or any other member of the band uses their position and power to decide what the young person should or should not do without consideration of the young person's needs and capabilities
- Always be publicly open when working with children. Avoid sessions or meetings where an adult and an individual young person are completely unobserved
- Maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with young people. It is inappropriate for adults in positions of authority to have an intimate relationship with a young person, even if they are over 16, the normal age of legal consent. (This could also be a criminal offence 'abuse of trust' in certain circumstances defined by the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000)
- Maintain appropriate standards of behaviour at social events that young people attend
- 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.
- Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements, especially if an overnight stay is involved

### **Poor practice**

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all band members;

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with a young person away from others
- Taking young people alone in a car on journeys, however short
- Taking a young person to your home where they will be alone with you
- Sharing a room with a young person
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form
- Allowing a young person to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun
- Reducing a young person to tears as a form of control
- Letting allegations a young person makes go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon
- Doing things of a personal nature that the young person can do for themselves
- Having young people stay at your home with you unsupervised