



1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. Sydney Youth Orchestras (SYO) is committed to the education and nurturing of children and young people to achieve musical excellence through a structured program of orchestral training and performance.
- 1.2. Participants in our programs and their families are the number one priority for SYO. Their safety and wellbeing is paramount to the organisation.
- 1.3. SYO respects that the parents/guardians of our participants have primary responsibility for their care. Our guidelines and procedures recognise this role, and call on parents/guardians to communicate proactively and honestly with SYO about issues and concerns.
- 1.4. SYO is a child-related employer registered with the Office of the Children's Guardian and follows the guidelines to be a Child Safe Organisation.
- 1.5. Under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) 1998 Act, children are under 16 years of age and young people are 16 and 17 years of age.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The SYO Child Safe Policy, Codes of Conduct and related Guidelines and Procedures aim to:
 - Create a safe place for all participants to get the most from our programs and activities
 - Provide clarity for all those working at SYO (on staff, on contract or as volunteers) about their responsibilities to promote and ensure an environment of mutual respect and child safety and wellbeing
 - Provide a clear and consistent pathway for dealing with issues that may arise which compromise the safety and wellbeing of our participants
 - Provide staff with clear instructions to follow where Risk of significant harm is identified or suspected through Recognising and Responding to Risk of Significant Harm training.

Ensure SYO is compliant with NSW Child Protection Legislation regarding employment of staff and contractors:

- Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998
- Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998

These Acts introduce a process for helping employers to decide whether people are suited to work in child-related positions in NSW. The Acts prohibit persons found guilty of committing a serious sex offence from working in such positions and require that some people must be subject to background checking when applying for such paid positions. Checking includes current Working with Children Checks, National Criminal History Checks including Apprehended Violence Orders and relevant employment references.

3. Scope

3.1 The Policy and its related documents are binding on all staff, sub-contractors and volunteers working with SYO who have direct interaction with our participants. They are also binding on participants in our programs who are over the age of 18.

3.2 The Policy and its related documents are also binding on former employees, sub-contractors, volunteers or participants of SYO.

3.3 All participants, parents and/or guardians are required to comply with SYO Participant Code of Conduct, which sets out expected ways of behaving and working together to create a safe and supportive working environment.

3.4 The Policy and related documents forms the framework for all procedures and guidelines relating to SYO programs and activities including;

- Weekly orchestral rehearsals (and breaks)
- Overnight camps (senior orchestras)
- Day camps (junior orchestras)
- Open Programs (holiday programs)
- Corporate and private performances
- Tours (regional, interstate and international)
- Special events (e.g. SYO annual gala)
- Concerts
- Tutoring (small groups workshops)

4. Duty of Care

4.1. SYO is responsible for the wellbeing of children and young people (under 18) whilst under its care. The wellbeing of children and young people in our programs is SYO's primary concern.

4.2. SYO has a duty to take reasonable care for the safety and welfare of all children and young people whilst they are engaged in our programs and activities.

4.3. This duty extends to SYO staff, volunteers and contractors engaged in child-related employment.

4.4. "Reasonable care" includes taking such measures as are reasonable to protect against risk of harm that reasonably ought to be foreseen, from both known and foreseeable hazards.

4.5. SYO's duty includes taking preventative and protective actions related to risk of harassment or abuse.

- 4.6. SYO develops risk assessment for each project the organisation undertakes in planning stage of the project, and strategies and plans are developed to mitigate risks as appropriate.
- 4.7. SYO supports staff, volunteers and contractors in child-related employment to maintain and support a safe environment, through required checks and screening, appropriate induction and regular training.
- 4.8. The key role of SYO staff, volunteers and contractors is to create a safe learning environment, encouraging children's independence and using professional judgement, to ensure children are not at unreasonable risk.
- 4.9. Staff, volunteers and contractors are expected to exercise discretion and judgement in interacting with children and young people, and maintain professional boundaries (See the SYO Staff, Contractor and Volunteer Code of Conduct).

5. Role of parents and participants

- 5.1. SYO regularly communicates with participants and parents/guardians about our expectations and their role and responsibilities under the Child Safe Policy and related guidelines and procedures.
- 5.2. Participants and their parents/guardians are encouraged to raise issues with each other first and then with SYO staff, who have clear pathways for resolution of issues. We will work to resolve issues in a timely manner, in line with this policy's objectives.

6. Working with Children Checks

- 6.1. SYO is responsible for ensuring all staff recruited to SYO are appropriately screened through reference checks, National Criminal History Checks (NCHC) and current Working With Children Checks (WWCC).
- 6.2. Under the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1988 and Commission for Children and Young People Act 1988, SYO is required to obtain WWCC for all staff, contractors and volunteers directly engaged with children and young people.
- 6.3. The following SYO procedures will include reference to this required process:
 - Recruitment and employment of staff
 - Engagement of sub-contractors (including musical staff)
 - Engagement of volunteers.

7. Recognising and reporting risk and harm

- 7.1. SYO is a mandatory report under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act (<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect>), which requires staff to be trained and aware of indicators that a child may be at risk of significant harm. SYO will provide Recognising and Responding to Risk of Significant Harm training to all staff in a child-related role. (See Recognising and Reporting Risk of Significant Harm R.O.S.H Guidelines)
- 7.2. SYO staff must report to the SYO CEO or Management if they believe a child or young person is at risk of harm or concerns exist in regards to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of the child or young person. Effect of harm can be either physical and behavioural or both.
- 7.3. All staff, contractors and volunteers are required to bring these matters to the SYO CEO or Management, who will report to relevant parties at the earliest possible time.

8. Keeping records and privacy

- 8.1. SYO ensures that an appropriate audit trail is kept of all appointments and contracts of those in child-related employment (in paid and volunteer roles)
- 8.2. We will keep appropriate records of all incidents reported by staff, volunteers or participants.
- 8.3. SYO will keep this information private (in accordance with the Privacy Act) except for purposes of reporting risk and harm.

Supporting documents

A. Codes of Conduct

The SYO develops and maintains codes of conduct that are relevant and accessible to all participants, parents employees and volunteers:

- The Staff, Contractor and Volunteer Code of Conduct aims to support those engaged in child-related employment to maintain professional boundaries whilst encouraging the musical and educational development of children and young people involved in SYO programs and activities.
- The Participant Code of Conduct aims to set a standard of behaviour within the rehearsal room and performance venues, as well as during associated social or play times, travel, touring and performances.
 - The Participant Code of Conduct will be reviewed annually by a consultative group, which will include participants and parents.
 - A child-friendly version will be developed for participants under 18.

B. Child Safe Guidelines

The SYO develops and maintains a set of guidelines for staff, sub-contractors and volunteers around the following:

- Accidents and emergencies
- Accommodation and rooming (including billeting)
- Age appropriate behaviour
- Aggressive behaviour
- Bullying and harassment
- Clothing and cleanliness
- Contacting participants
- Corresponding with parents/guardians
- Employee, contractor and volunteer screening
- First aid (training, kit and record-keeping)
- Gender issues
- Permission from parents/guardians
- Privacy
- Physical interaction
- Recording, filming and sharing images (including social media)
- Reporting misconduct, including sexual misconduct
- Reporting risk and harm
- Resolving conflict
- Risk assessment
- Supervision, including staff to participant ratios.

SYO CEO and staff will review these guidelines annually.

C. Risk Management Procedures

SYO maintains the following Risk Management Procedures to cover all its activities and programs in which participants are involved:

- Application and enrolment
- Orchestra rehearsals and workshops
- Open Programs (holiday programs)
- Camps (day and overnight)
- Performances (including special events, corporate and private functions)
- Touring (regional, interstate and international).

Risk Management Procedures will be reviewed annually by SYO staff to ensure they meet the aims of this Policy and support the wellbeing of all participants.

D. Induction and Training

SYO will provide appropriate induction and training for all staff.

For those in roles with ongoing engagement with children and young people (operations staff, conductors, tutors and volunteer supervisors etc.) the training will include training by the Children’s Guardian, or appropriate body.

All staff will undertake a “refresher” after two years.

E. Recognising and Responding to Risk of Significant Harm Guidelines and Training

SYO will provide appropriate training and refreshers for all staff.

SIGN OFF AND REVIEW

Version	Authorised By	Approved Date	Review Cycle	
3	CEO	03/02/2023	2 Years	February 2025
2	GM	02/07/2018	2 Years	May 2020
1	CEO	10/11/2016	2 Years	Nov 2018

HISTORY

Version	Description	Author	Amended Date
1	Policy	CEO	25/01/2017
2	Policy	GM & Hurstfield Consulting	02/07/2018
3	Policy	CEO	03/02/2023