



## **CHILD SAFETY & WELLBEING POLICY SUITE**

*Master Version (2025)*

### **COVER PAGE / POLICY SUITE INDEX**

#### **BALLARAT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

#### **Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy Suite**

*Version 2025*

This suite contains:

1. **Child Safety Public Summary**
2. **Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy**
3. **Child Safety Code of Conduct**
4. **Child Safety Responding & Reporting Policy and Procedure**
5. **Child Safety Rehearsal Room Poster**

This suite sets out policies, procedures and codes which encompass the 11 Child Safe Standards that the BSO is required to comply with : <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/>

Approved by: **BSO Committee of Management**

Endorsed on: *[January 2026]*

Next Review: *[January 2027]*



## Child Safety & Wellbeing – Public Summary

The Ballarat Symphony Orchestra (BSO) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment for all children and young people who participate in our musical community. Whilst our organisation is largely made up of adult musicians, we recognise the value of the contribution of young musicians and are dedicated to ensuring their safety, wellbeing and enjoyment at all times.

### Our Commitment

- We have **zero tolerance for child abuse**.
- We actively promote a culture where children feel **safe, respected and heard**.
- We support the cultural safety of **Aboriginal children**, children from **diverse backgrounds**, children with **disabilities**, and **LGBTIQA+ young people**.
- We ensure all adults involved in BSO understand their responsibilities.

### How We Keep Children Safe

- All adults follow our **Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy** and **Child Safety Code of Conduct**.
- We ensure communication with children is appropriate, transparent and parent-inclusive.
- We avoid one-to-one unsupervised situations wherever possible.
- We maintain clear procedures for responding to concerns or allegations.
- We require Working with Children Checks for committee members and others in child-related roles.
- We regularly review our child safety practices.

### If a Child Feels Unsafe

Children are encouraged to speak to:

- The **Child Safety Officer**, or
- Any **Committee Member**

We listen carefully, take concerns seriously, and act promptly.

## Reporting Concerns

If you have a concern about a child's safety, please contact:

- **BSO Child Safety Officer**
- **Any BSO Committee Member**
- BSO Committee contact [bsovp19@gmail.com](mailto:bsovp19@gmail.com)

If a child is in immediate danger, call **000**.

## Our Policies

The following documents are available to all members and families:

- **Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy**
- **Child Safety Code of Conduct**
- **Responding & Reporting Policy and Procedure**

These outline how we protect children, how we respond to concerns, and what behaviour is expected of all adults involved in BSO.

## Working Together

Child safety is a shared responsibility.

By working together — children, families, members, volunteers and committee — we ensure that BSO remains a safe, respectful and inspiring place for young musicians to learn, grow and thrive.



## Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy

Version 2025

### 1. Introduction

The Ballarat Symphony Orchestra (BSO) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and empowering environment for all children and young people who participate in our musical activities. Whilst our organisation is largely made up of adult musicians, we welcome young musicians as valued members of our community and recognise their contribution to our artistic life and future.

BSO has **zero tolerance for child abuse**. Every adult involved in our organisation shares responsibility for ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and dignity of children.

This policy aligns with the **Victorian Child Safe Standards** and **Ministerial Order 1359**.

### 2. Purpose

This policy:

- Demonstrates BSO's commitment to child safety and wellbeing
- Establishes clear expectations for behaviour and conduct
- Guides our processes for preventing, identifying, and responding to child safety concerns
- Ensures all members understand their obligations
- Supports a culture where children's voices are respected and heard

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Committee members
- Orchestra members
- Volunteers
- Guest musicians
- Contractors
- Adjudicators, comperes, and other performance participants
- Any adult involved in BSO activities where children are present

It applies to all BSO environments, including:

- Rehearsals, auditions, workshops, sound checks, and performances

- Social events and post-concert gatherings
- Online communication and digital platforms
- Any other setting where a child interacts with BSO

#### 4. Definitions

##### **Child / Young Person**

A person under 18 years of age.

##### **Child Abuse**

Includes physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect, grooming, and exposure to family violence.

##### **Child-Related Work**

Work or volunteering that involves direct contact with children.

##### **Child Safety**

Actions and attitudes that protect children from harm and promote their wellbeing.

#### 5. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

BSO is a child safe organisation that welcomes all children, young people, and their families. We commit to:

- Providing environments where children feel safe, respected, and able to participate
- Listening to children and taking their views seriously
- Promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children
- Supporting children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Ensuring inclusion and safety for children with disabilities
- Respecting and supporting LGBTIQ+ young people
- Preventing racism, discrimination, bullying, and harassment
- Taking all allegations and safety concerns seriously
- Responding promptly and appropriately to any risk of harm

Child safety is a shared responsibility across the entire organisation.

#### 6. Governance, Leadership & Responsibilities

##### **Committee Responsibilities**

The BSO Committee will:

- Maintain a strong child safe culture
- Ensure policies, procedures, and codes of conduct are implemented
- Promote respectful behaviour between adults and children
- Ensure child safety is a standing agenda item
- Support training and awareness for members

- Ensure concerns can be raised safely and confidentially
- Review child safety practices regularly

### **Child Safety Officer**

BSO has appointed a Child Safety Officer who:

- Acts as the first point of contact for concerns
- Supports members to understand and follow child safety policies
- Coordinates responses to child safety incidents
- Ensures compliance with this policy
- Promotes awareness of child safety obligations

### **Members, Volunteers & Guests**

**All adults involved with BSO must:**

- Follow this policy and the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Treat children with respect
- Listen to children’s concerns
- Avoid one-to-one unsupervised situations with children where practicable
- Report concerns or allegations immediately
- Communicate with children only in ways that are appropriate and necessary

### **Section Conveners**

All adult BSO section conveners must

- Communicate with children only through parent-inclusive channels and not directly and solely with the child and not collect emails or phone numbers of the child
- Use BSO-approved platforms for all orchestra-related communication
- Ensure online interactions are transparent and appropriate
- Report any concerning online behaviour immediately to BSO Committee and Child safe Officer
- Refer all new child players (have parent communication info ready) and all new players and potential members to BSO Committee for induction to the Child Safe Policy Suite.

## **7. Child Safety Code of Conduct (Summary)**

Adults must:

- Treat children respectfully
- Use age-appropriate language
- Listen to children and respond to concerns
- Promote inclusion and cultural safety

- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries
- Ensure communication with children is transparent and relevant to BSO activities
- Report any concerns or breaches

Adults must **not**:

- Ignore concerns or disclosures
- Engage in grooming or favouritism
- Use sexualised or inappropriate language
- Communicate privately with children outside organisational needs
- Photograph or film children without consent
- Consume alcohol or drugs where children are present
- Meet with a child alone without parental knowledge and consent

A full Code of Conduct document is provided separately.

## 8. Managing Risks to Child Safety

BSO manages risks by:

- Maintaining a Child Safety Risk Register
- Ensuring children are not left alone with a single adult unless appropriate
- Ensuring rehearsal and performance venues remain supervised until all children are collected
- Monitoring member behaviour and suitability
- Reviewing risks annually or after any incident

## 9. Culturally Safe and Inclusive Environment

BSO is committed to:

- Respecting Aboriginal culture, identity, and community
- Ensuring racism is confronted and not tolerated
- Supporting participation of Aboriginal children and families
- Ensuring all policies and practices reflect cultural safety principles for all

## 10. Empowering Children & Young People

BSO supports children by:

- Encouraging them to express their views
- Treating them as valued members of the orchestra
- Ensuring they know who to speak to if they feel unsafe
- Providing clear information about their rights

- Encouraging friendships and peer support
- Listening to their feedback and acting on it

## 11. Family & Community Engagement

BSO will:

- Provide accessible information about child safety policies
- Invite feedback and suggestions
- Communicate through parents/guardians rather than directly with children
- Encourage parents to attend rehearsals if they wish
- Ensure parents know how to raise concerns

## 12. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

BSO recognises and supports the diverse needs of:

- Aboriginal children
- Children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Children with disabilities
- Children unable to live at home
- LGBTIQ+ young people
- Children experiencing vulnerability

We tailor our practices to ensure all children feel safe and included.

## 13. Suitable Members & Volunteers

BSO ensures suitability by:

- Requiring Working with Children Checks for committee members and others in child-related roles
- **Member induction**  
**All members will be made aware of our Child Safety Procedures, policies and codes, and be directed to raise any concerns regarding Child Safety to our Child Safety Officer.**
- Monitoring behaviour and compliance
- Acting where behaviour is inappropriate or unsafe
- working with children cards/ checks can be obtained (free if on behalf of a volunteer organisation such as the BSO) at <https://service.vic.gov.au/services/working-with-children>

## 14. Training & Awareness

Training for Committee members will be provided at least annually via <https://www.vic.gov.au/mandatory-reporting-training>

and will include:

- Child safety obligations
- Recognising signs of harm
- Responding to disclosures
- Cultural safety
- Recordkeeping and information sharing
- Risk identification and mitigation

## 15. Responding & Reporting

All concerns, allegations, or disclosures must be taken seriously.

**If a child is in immediate danger:**

Call **000**.

### Reporting Process

as per our **Child Safety Responding & Reporting Procedure** summarised as follows:

1. Ensure the child is safe
2. Listen calmly and supportively
3. Document the disclosure or concern
4. Report to the Child Safety Officer or Committee
5. Notify parents/guardians where appropriate
6. Report to Victoria Police if a criminal offence is suspected
7. Report to Child Protection if harm may involve a family member

As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant people have been informed, we will ensure we follow:

8. the **Four Critical Actions** <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/protecting-children/guidance/making-report-or-referral-four-critical-actions>
9. for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
10. the **Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending** for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

*BSO does not investigate allegations beyond establishing the need to report.*

## 16. Complaints

Complaints about child safety can be made to:

- The Child Safety Officer

*Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy  
Version 2026*

*Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy Suite*

- Any Committee member

Complaints will be managed confidentially, respectfully, and promptly.

## 17. Privacy & Recordkeeping

BSO collects and stores information in accordance with Victorian privacy laws.

Records relating to child safety concerns are stored securely and retained as required.

## 18. Communications

BSO is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the community through:

- ensuring that key ***Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy Suite*** of documents are available on our website including the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document), Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedure
- emailing PROTECT posters to all members, and new members
- Displaying our Child Safe Poster during rehearsals
- updates in our member newsletters
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at committee and committee meetings.

## 19. Related Policies and Procedures:

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is to be read in conjunction with the following related policies, procedures and codes

- **Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy**
- **Child Safety Code of Conduct**
- **Responding & Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedure**

## 20. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed:

- Every two years
- After any significant child safety incident
- When legislation or standards change

Children, families, and members will be invited to contribute to reviews.

## 21. Approval

**Endorsed:** *[November 2025]*

**Next Review:** *[November 2026]*

**Approved by:** *BSO Committee of Management*



## Child Safety Code of Conduct

Version 2025

### 1. Purpose

The Ballarat Symphony Orchestra (BSO) Child Safety Code of Conduct outlines the standards of behaviour expected of all adults involved in BSO activities. Its purpose is to ensure that every child and young person participating in the orchestra is safe, respected, and supported.

This Code applies to:

- Orchestra members
- Committee members
- Volunteers
- Guest musicians
- Contractors
- Adjudicators, comperes, and other performance participants
- Any adult involved in BSO activities

It applies to all physical and online environments connected to BSO.

### 2. Our Commitment

BSO is committed to:

- Zero tolerance for child abuse
- Creating a safe, inclusive, culturally respectful environment
- Ensuring children feel heard, valued, and empowered
- Responding promptly to concerns or allegations
- Ensuring all adults understand their responsibilities

### 3. Acceptable Behaviour

All adults involved with BSO must:

#### Respect & Inclusion

- Treat children and families with courtesy, respect, and fairness
- Use age-appropriate, inclusive, and non-discriminatory language

- Support the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- Respect the needs of children with disabilities and diverse backgrounds
- Affirm the identities of LGBTIQ+ young people

### **Communication & Interaction**

- Listen to children and take their concerns seriously
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries
- Ensure one-to-one interactions occur in open, observable spaces
- Communicate with children only for legitimate BSO purposes
- Ensure online communication is transparent and parent-inclusive

### **Safety & Reporting**

- Act immediately if a child is at risk
- Report concerns, disclosures, or breaches to the Child Safety Officer or Committee
- Follow BSO's Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy and Responding & Reporting Procedure
- Support children to understand their rights and speak up

## **4. Unacceptable Behaviour**

Adults involved with BSO must **not**:

### **Inappropriate Conduct**

- Ignore or dismiss concerns, suspicions, or disclosures
- Engage in grooming, favouritism, or special treatment
- Use sexualised, suggestive, or inappropriate language
- Engage in unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact
- Meet with a child alone without parental knowledge and consent

### **Communication Misconduct**

- Communicate privately with a child via personal channels (social media, texting, private email)
- Photograph or film a child without consent from both the child and parent/guardian
- Share images of children without permission

### **Discrimination & Harm**

- Treat a child unfavourably based on age, gender, race, culture, disability, sexuality, or vulnerability
- Engage in bullying, harassment, or intimidation
- Consume alcohol or drugs where children are present
- Allow children to be exposed to unsafe environments

## 5. Online & Digital Conduct

Adults must:

- Communicate with children only through parent-inclusive channels and not directly and solely with the child
- Use BSO-approved platforms for all orchestra-related communication
- Ensure online interactions are transparent and appropriate
- Report any concerning online behaviour immediately

Adults must not:

- “Friend”, follow, or privately message children on personal accounts
- Share personal contact details with children
- Engage in online conversations that are not directly related to BSO activities

## 6. Breaches of the Code

Breaches of this Code may include:

- Behaviour inconsistent with acceptable conduct
- Failure to report concerns or disclosures
- Inappropriate communication or physical contact
- Any action that places a child at risk

**Consequences may include:**

- Removal from rehearsals or performances
- Suspension or termination of membership
- Referral to Victoria Police or Child Protection
- Reporting under the Reportable Conduct Scheme

All breaches or suspected breaches must be reported to the BSO Committee via the Child Safety Officer.

## 7. Acknowledgement

All BSO members, volunteers, and relevant contractors must:

- Read this Code of Conduct
- Agree to comply with it, signing to acknowledge
- Always uphold BSO’s commitment to child safety

## 8. Approval

Endorsed: [November 2025]

Next Review: [November 2026]

Approved by: BSO Committee of Management



## Child Safety Responding & Reporting Policy and Procedure

Version 2025

### 1. Purpose

This procedure outlines how the Ballarat Symphony Orchestra (BSO) responds to concerns, allegations, disclosures, or suspicions of child abuse or harm. It ensures that all adults involved in BSO understand:

- What to do if they become aware of a child safety concern
- How to respond to a child who discloses harm
- Who to report to within BSO
- When and how to report to external authorities
- How records must be kept

This procedure aligns with the **Victorian Child Safe Standards**, the **Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)**, and the **PROTECT Four Critical Actions**.

### 2. Immediate Response Principles

When responding to any child safety concern, adults must:

- **Prioritise the child's immediate safety**
- **Stay calm, supportive, and non-judgmental**
- **Act promptly**
- **Report, not investigate**
- **Document accurately**
- **Maintain confidentiality** (on a need-to-know basis only)

If a child is in **immediate danger**, call **000**.

### 3. When to Report

A report must be made if:

- A child discloses abuse or harm
- Someone witnesses behaviour that places a child at risk
- Someone observes signs of abuse or neglect

- An adult behaves inappropriately toward a child
- There is a reasonable belief that a child is unsafe
- A child discloses harm occurring outside BSO (e.g., at home or school)

You do **not** need proof.

You do **not** need to be certain.

You only need a **reasonable belief** that harm may have occurred or may occur.

#### 4. How to Respond to a Child Who Discloses Harm

If a child tells you something concerning:

##### Do:

- Listen calmly
- Let them speak in their own words
- Acknowledge their feelings
- Reassure them they've done the right thing
- Tell them you will help
- Record what they said as soon as possible
- Report immediately

##### Do Not:

- Promise secrecy
- Express shock or disbelief
- Ask leading questions
- Blame or judge
- Investigate or interview others

A simple response such as:

**“Thank you for telling me. I’m here to help. I need to share this with people who can keep you safe.”**

is appropriate and safe.

#### 5. Internal Reporting Steps

All concerns must be reported to:

##### 1. The Child Safety Officer

or

##### 2. Any BSO Committee Member (if the Child Safety Officer is unavailable)

Reports may be made verbally but must be followed by written notes.

The Child Safety Officer will:

- Ensure the child is safe
- Clarify the nature of the concern (without investigating)
- Determine whether external reporting is required
- Document the concern
- Notify the Committee President if appropriate

## 6. External Reporting Requirements

Depending on the situation, one or more external authorities must be notified.

### A. Victoria Police (000 or local station)

Report to police if:

- A criminal offence may have occurred
- A child is at immediate risk
- Sexual abuse is suspected
- Grooming is suspected

### B. Child Protection (Department of Families, Fairness and Housing)

Report to Child Protection if:

- The child may be at risk from a family member
- Parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child
- There are concerns about neglect or family violence

### C. Other Agencies (as relevant)

- **The Orange Door** (family violence or wellbeing concerns)
- **Commission for Children and Young People** (Reportable Conduct Scheme — if an allegation is made against a BSO adult)

The Child Safety Officer will guide members through these steps.

## 7. The Four Critical Actions (Summary)

BSO follows the Victorian PROTECT model:

### 1. Respond

Ensure the child is safe and supported.

### 2. Report

Notify internal and external authorities as required.

### 3. Record

Document all details factually and promptly.

#### 4. Follow-up

Support the child, monitor ongoing risk, and review BSO practices.

#### 8. Recordkeeping Requirements

Accurate documentation is essential.

Records must include:

- Date, time, and location of the incident or disclosure
- Names of all people involved
- Exact words spoken by the child (as close as possible)
- Observations (not interpretations)
- Actions taken
- Reports made to authorities
- Follow-up steps

Records must be:

- Stored securely
- Accessible only to authorised committee members
- Retained in accordance with legal requirements

As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant people have been informed, we will ensure we follow:

1. the Four Critical Actions <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/protecting-children/guidance/making-report-or-referral-four-critical-actions> for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child.
2. the Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

*BSO does not investigate allegations beyond establishing the need to report.*

#### 9. Managing Allegations Against BSO Adults

If an allegation is made against a BSO member, volunteer, or contractor:

- The Child Safety Officer must be notified immediately
- The Committee President must be informed
- The individual may be stood down from duties pending investigation
- Police and/or Child Protection must be notified
- The Reportable Conduct Scheme may apply
- Confidentiality must be maintained

BSO will ensure procedural fairness while prioritising child safety.

## 10. Supporting Children and Others Involved

BSO will provide support to:

- The child
- Their family (where appropriate)
- The person who made the report
- Any witnesses
- The person subject to the allegation (without compromising safety)

Support may include:

- Clear communication
- Safety planning
- Adjustments to participation
- Referral to external services

## 11. Confidentiality

Information will be shared only:

- With those directly involved in responding
- With authorities as required
- To ensure the child's safety

Gossip, speculation, or unnecessary disclosure is prohibited.

## 12. Review of Procedure

This procedure will be reviewed:

- Every two years
- After any significant child safety incident
- When legislation or standards change

Feedback from children, families, and members will inform improvements.

## 13. Approval

**Endorsed:** *[January 2026]*

**Next Review:** *[January 2027]*

**Approved by:** *BSO Committee of Management*

# Ballarat

## SYMPHONY

living classical music

### REHEARSAL-ROOM POSTER CHILD SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

#### We Keep Young Musicians Safe By:

- Treating every child with respect
- Listening to their concerns
- Ensuring safe, supervised environments
- Communicating appropriately and transparently
- Following our Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Responding quickly to any concerns

#### Child Safety – What You Need to Know

- At BSO, your safety is the most important thing.
- You have the right to:
  - Feel safe
  - Be respected
  - Be listened to
  - Ask questions
  - Tell us if something doesn't feel right

#### Adults must:

- Treat you kindly
- Use respectful language
- Keep you safe
- Listen if you're worried
- Tell you what will happen next if you report something

#### Adults must not:

- Use rude or inappropriate language
- Be alone with you without others around
- Message you privately
- Take photos without permission
- Ignore your concerns

#### If something makes you uncomfortable

You can talk to:

The Child Safety Officer  
Any Committee Member

You will be listened to.  
You will not get in trouble.  
We will help you.

Our Child Safety Policies Are Available on Request  
Together we create a safe, inclusive and inspiring place for young musicians.