

Whitehorse Orchestra Inc.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

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Whitehorse Orchestra acknowledges the Wurundjeri people, the Traditional Owners of the land on which we operate. We acknowledge and respect their contributions, experience and knowledge as First Nations People. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present, and those to come.

1. PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL

- a. In the official Rules of the Association, there are a number of items that are left for the Committee to determine from time to time. To ensure consistency, it is appropriate for the Committee to address these issues and record its decisions in the form of operating rules or policies.
- b. In addition, the Committee is called upon from time to time to make decisions on matters of Orchestra procedure. An example might be how to manage requests from people wanting to borrow instruments. Although many decisions relate to one-off issues, there are others that establish rules or policies for future reference. A record of all decisions shall be kept in Committee meeting minutes.
- c. Often when a decision is required on policy matters, we tend to remember that it has been discussed before, but usually do not recall exactly what the decision was. This leads to timewasting, unnecessary discussion, and inconsistencies.
- d. To avoid these problems, decisions that may affect ongoing policy are recorded as such in this manual to provide consistency and to streamline the decision-making process.

2. KEEPING THE MANUAL UP TO DATE

- a. The Secretary is ultimately responsible for keeping the manual up to date. It should be updated as soon as possible following any additions, amendments or deletions to our policies which have been agreed to by the Committee. The manual will be given an updated version number and date upon each update.
- b. Updated copies will be distributed to each member of the Committee. If a person other than a committee member holds a copy, they should be given an updated version when appropriate.
- c. The Committee should review the manual regularly to ensure that it reflects current Orchestra policy.

3. MUSICAL DIRECTOR

The Musical Director has the responsibility of conducting rehearsals and performances in a manner which continues to enhance the standard of performance.

The role covers the "outer workings" of the Orchestra including:

- a. choice of concert programmes, dates and as required, publicity

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- b. choice of soloists
- c. concert presentation and order of program
- d. unique events and engagement with the wider community
- e. unique requirements e.g. extra players, extra rehearsals, special instruments
- f. rehearsal structure and content
- g. player recognition, dedicated events
- h. looking for opportunities to enhance the orchestra's profile and reputation
- i. new projects.

4. ORCHESTRA LEADER / CONCERTMASTER

The role covers the "inner workings" of the Orchestra as follows:

- a. Administration
 - i. Fingerings and bowings for string players
 - ii. Seating positions (places and sight lines)
- b. Performance
 - i. Tutorials
 - ii. Sectionals
 - iii. Player and group development
 - iv. New player orientation
- c. Culture
 - i. Basic orchestral standards
 - ii. Building orchestra communication skills
 - iii. Leadership development

5. MUSIC LIBRARIAN

The Orchestra will have a Music Librarian who may or may not be a playing member of the Orchestra.

The Librarian's duties will include the following:

- a. Co-ordination with the Musical Director to ensure that required music is available for rehearsals and performances
- b. Manage the borrowing or hiring of music from outside sources
- c. Manage and maintain the Orchestra's music library
- d. Arrange for the library to be accessible to a nominated alternative person when the librarian is away for an extended period (e.g. more than two weeks).

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- e. The Librarian is entitled to claim reimbursement of direct and reasonable indirect expenses.

6. HIRING AND LENDING OF MUSIC

Only original music owned by the orchestra or music which is out of copyright may be lent to other groups and should be ratified by the Committee.

7. HIRING AND LENDING OF INSTRUMENTS

The Orchestra will have an instrument register to document hiring and lending of instruments and equipment.

Each request for borrowing of instruments or equipment (e.g. amplifiers, keyboards, other instruments) should be put to the entire committee to seek their approval for the loan. Minor items such as music stands do not need Committee approval.

The register is to be maintained and held by a Register Holder who is a nominated orchestra member. Currently the register is kept in the filing cabinet with the percussion instruments, and borrowings are entered directly into it.

The register is to contain the following information:

- a. Name of item
- b. Borrower: name, telephone number, email address
- c. Location
- d. Date out
- e. Date return
- f. Other comments

If items are normally in the care of a particular orchestra member (such as with some percussion instruments), they should advise the Register Holder if there is any movement in the location or management of any of the equipment or instruments.

8. SOLOISTS AND GUEST PLAYERS

The choice of soloist is decided by the Musical Director.

Remuneration is made on a case-by-case basis.

Soloists will receive a small number of free tickets for the concert, and if thought appropriate by the Committee, a gift, or flowers at the end of the performance.

Guest players are selected with the approval of the Musical Director and in deference to the waiting list.

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9. ELIGIBILITY TO PLAY IN CONCERTS

- a. It is important that the Conductor is kept informed of players who will not be available for each concert so that their places can be filled in adequate time if necessary. A register of proposed attendance is kept, and players are responsible for advising their availability for the forthcoming season of rehearsals and concert to the Attendance Nominee.
- b. It is also important that, in the weeks leading up to a concert, the players who will be performing in that concert are available as much as possible for rehearsals, and that no other players are present, so that the balance and strength of the parts of the orchestra can be judged by the Conductor.
- c. The Committee has agreed that, if a player is not available for a concert, they should not come to the last three rehearsals (which includes the morning of the concert) to achieve the previous requirement.
- d. Players who are unexpectedly unable to attend rehearsals should contact the Attendance Nominee who will advise the Conductor, Orchestra Leader, and the setup manager each week.

10. MINOR MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Members under the age of 18 years require special consideration by the Association that is consistent with its Child Safety responsibilities as set out in the Rules of Association. All minor members who rehearse and perform with Whitehorse Orchestra have a right to be safe and feel safe. The welfare of our younger members is our priority and we have a zero tolerance approach to abuse and harm. We aim to create an environment where all members are safe and secure, whilst enjoying making music.

As part of this process, information is sought initially on membership and updated annually in regard to specific details about the minor member. This includes a Parental Consent form which provides:

- Contact details of Next of Kin (NOK) and an alternate Responsible person
- Medical information about the member in the event of an emergency
- Contact details of the member's doctor
- Consent for a senior person of the Association to make decisions regarding the welfare of the member in an emergency and in the absence of availability of NOK
- Consent for inclusion of minor member in publication material.

Information collected by the Association about a minor member is strictly confidential with access by selected Committee members only.

Selected people within the Association will hold appropriate qualifications for 'Working with Children'. Minor members will be informed of the identity of these people and encouraged to approach any of those people if they hold any concerns.

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CHILD SAFETY POLICY

Whitehorse Symphony Orchestra Inc (WHO) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our community group recognizes the importance of, and its responsibility for, ensuring our organization provides a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and maintaining self-esteem of young people, enabling them to thrive in their learning and development and enjoyment of activities.

11. EVALUATION

This policy for Child Safety will be reviewed every 2 years as required by legislation.

12. POLICY STATEMENT

Our Child Safe Policy should be publicly available to help raise awareness about the importance of child safety in any organisation and demonstrate our commitment to protecting minors from abuse. This approach will ensure minor members feel safe, happy and empowered. The Policy adheres to the principles set out in the Standards regarding the relevant legislation. Namely:

Standard 1 – Strategies to embed an organizational culture of child safety where the diverse and unique identities and experience of all children and young people, including of aboriginal origin are respected and valued.

Standard 2 – Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

Standard 3 – MINORS are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Standard 4 – Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

Standard 5 – Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

Standard 6 – People interacting with MINORS are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

Standard 7 – Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.

Standard 8– Members and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep MINORS safe through ongoing education and training.

Standard 9 – Physical and online environments promote safety and well-being while minimising the opportunity for MINORS to be harmed.

Standard 10 - Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

Standard 11 – Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for MINORS.

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13. WHO CODE OF CONDUCT

The WHO Code of Conduct aims to protect minor members and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risk associated situations involving all members.

The Whitehorse Symphony Orchestra will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide an inclusive, safe and orderly environment for all WHO activities. It will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively. All members of the WHO organisation involved in child-related interactions are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour.

Committee members, association members and volunteers

- will take all reasonable steps to protect young persons from abuse
- will model appropriate adult behaviour
- will listen to young persons and respond to them appropriately
- will welcome and be inclusive with all young persons and their parents or carers
- will respect privacy of young persons and only disclose information to people who need to know
- will not ignore or disregard any complaints, concerns, or disclosures regarding child safety
- will not develop 'special' relationships with specific young persons or show favouritism with gifts or inappropriate attention
- will not exchange personal contact details such as phone numbers, social networking sites or email addresses with children.

14. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Whitehorse Symphony Orchestra is a Child Safe organization, with zero tolerance for child abuse and a commitment to children's best interests. All children who participate in our activities have a right to feel and be safe. We encourage young persons to express their views and we listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. Physical or sexual abuse of a child, including grooming for sexual conduct with a child under the age of 18 years, is a crime. Members of WHO, who reasonably believe they have witnessed such abuse must by legal obligation, report it to relevant authorities.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

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15. KEY RISKS

- Physical or Sexual abuse
- Grooming (abuse of trust usually occurs where there is an ongoing relationship)
- Inappropriate child-to-child or adult-to-child contact

16. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Management of WHO should have strategies in place to avert and/or prevent risk of harm to minors. These include but are not limited to:

- having an awareness of the Child Safety policy to deter inappropriate behaviour
- listening to the young person if they report feeling uncomfortable
- ensuring young persons know which adults they can go to if they have concerns.
- avoiding, where possible, being solely responsible for a young person
- where possible, designing activities so there are clear sightlines to the young person and obstruct any hidden places that could conceal inappropriate conduct
- promoting the Code of Conduct covering Child Safety to include all membership.

17. EMPOWERING MINOR MEMBERS

The Association should ask any minor members involved for their ideas about what will make them and other similar persons feel, and be safe.

18. REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

- a. Ensuring the safety of the child is the first responsibility of those in the vicinity of a suspected incident.
- b. If the situation is urgent and the person is in danger, a parent or other responsible adult must contact police on 000 immediately.
- c. If the situation is not urgent, an email must be sent to childsafety@Whitehorse.vic.gov.au
- d. If the contacted WHO person feels that further support is required, then input from others of the WHO Committee may be requested.
- e. WHO is committed to regularly educating volunteers on child abuse risks.