City of Birmingham Brass Band

Guidelines for the use of Social Media and Online Technologies

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It is recognised that the internet provides unique opportunities to promote the band including vacancies and performances using a wide variety of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. It is also recognised that online platforms can provide the means to make teaching, webinars, rehearsals and events accessible when direct, face to face contact may be difficult for all or some participants. Nonetheless the use of social media and online technologies can also present safeguarding risks that need to be mitigated as far as possible. These guidelines aim to protect individuals within the band and to encourage them to take responsibility for what they write, exercise good judgement and common sense. Inappropriate use of social media can pose risks to the band's reputation, and can jeopardise compliance with legal obligations. The guidelines also aim to enable bands to take advantage of the many opportunities offered by online technologies whilst at the same time remaining committed to the safeguarding of members and others.

Band websites and social media pages

It is important that you have permission prior to posting images of band members on official websites and social media pages. This permission can be obtained through the membership form. Be clear on the consent form about what the images are to be used for, how long they will be kept, and the fact that they will be stored and, in due course, disposed of securely

Personal details such as phone numbers and email addresses should not be posted on the internet without the permission of the individual.

It is important to consider the age range of band members when posting images, and comments on pages and ensure that these are appropriate and in keeping with the band ethos.

A note on social media groups

There is a difference between, on the one hand, informal social media groups set up and used by groups of friends who happen to be part of a band, and, on the other hand, official band social media groups, coordinated by someone in an official role, and used as part of the band's methods of promotion, networking and support. Informal social media friendship groups are not required to abide by this guidance, although their members should bear in mind the need to use the same personal standards of behaviour in their online communications as in their face to face contact. Informal groups should also avoid calling themselves by a name which could give the impression that they are official band groups. These official social media groups should:

- Be agreed in advance by the committee, who should be made aware of the name and purpose of the

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group and outlining how it will be effectively risk managed.

- Have a nominated individual who will be responsible for monitoring it and moderating its content.
- Confirm in writing to the committee that it will operate in accordance with band safeguarding policy and procedures and will use safe settings and restrictions

The band should keep a list of all its social media groups, together with their moderating person. This list should be reviewed on an annual basis.

Use of electronic communication with children, young people and adults at risk

Communication by electronic means or by texting will not be used with individual children (i.e. under 18 year olds). All communication in these forms will be via their parents/carers. The rest of the principles relate to group communication or to individual communication with adults at risk and young adults aged 18 and over. The key point is that communication should be in a context of transparency and accountability.

- Leaders, staff and volunteers should not share their personal phone numbers with anyone under 18; communication that needs to be made electronically should be via email and parents should be copied in
- Electronic communication should only be used for reasons relating to band business and not for general socialising purposes
- Other members of the band leadership team should be aware of the situations in which these means of communication are being used
- Leaders, staff and volunteers should not invite young adults and adults at risk to their personal social networking page and should politely decline requests from any young person under the age of 18, explaining that this is band policy
- Where possible, group pages should be used on social media for communicating
- Care should be exercised in posting to Facebook, Twitter etc as comments made on the spur of the moment may not always come out as intended and can be passed on extremely quickly around a large audience
- Communication by electronic means with young adults should never take place during school hours and should be kept within the hours of 9am – 9pm
- Where possible, email and messaging should take place to and within groups rather than individuals
- Webcams will not be used where an online platform is used for one to one conversations
- Records of communications will be kept just as they would be for written communication. If a staff member's or volunteer's mobile phone does not allow text messages to be saved then a written record should be kept

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- The principles for the use of social media will be communicated to children, young people and adults
- Any content which raises a safeguarding concern should be reported to the band's Safeguarding/Welfare Officer using the procedure outlined in the band's safeguarding procedures.

Use of online platforms to run group and one-to-one sessions, and events

The following guidelines should be observed.

See also the following for further advice and guidance:

https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/social-media-and-online-safety

https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/

Sessions and activities run on online platforms, e.g. Zoom

- Only use approved band accounts for Zoom or other platforms, not personal accounts of committee members, staff or volunteers.
- Meetings should be accessed from a parent's account not a child's.
- Ensure privacy settings are adjusted to protect both leaders and participants
- Ask participants to let you know in advance the names that they will be using to access the session. If someone enters the waiting room whose name you don't recognise, make sure that you check out who it is before admitting them; and report any unauthorised attempts to join a call to your band's Safeguarding/Welfare Officer
- Ensure that the registration/consent form signed by participants and/or parents specifies that the sessions will be run online, and that those involved are aware of the risks involved and who to talk to if they need to do so
- Any activities that are live streamed need to be done with cameras off if they involve children or adults at risk
- Ground rules need to be agreed
- Participants and leaders should not be in revealing clothing / nighttime attire.
- Deliver sessions from a neutral area; if it is from a person's home, use the blurred background function if possible. If not possible, ensure that there is nothing inappropriate in the background and no identifying information, and ask that participants do the same
- Remember that the child or adult at risk may not have any privacy during the session
- Avoid using the person's bedroom as a place from which they participate in the session, unless a parent is also present in the room

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- Ensure that there are at least two adults present as session leaders – more if using break-out rooms
- Be aware of additional family pressures and pressures upon children and young people in the aftermath of the pandemic; take account of this when preparing and running the sessions.