



Make Your Mark: Notes on Music Education

Series 3 Episode 1: Safeguarding (Part 1)

[Intro music]

Yusef Sacoor: Hello and welcome back to Make Your Mark: Notes on Music Education. Today we're covering quite a serious topic, which is safeguarding. And we've got two wonderful experts here today, who I'd like to invite to introduce themselves, starting with you, Sarah.

Sarah Bauman: Hi, I'm Sarah Bauman. I'm the interim CEO at Breastbands England. We work closely with Music Mark and also support our wonderful member bands, community music organisations, working, delivering education in their own communities to support them with their safeguarding and getting it right.

Yusef Sacoor: Amazing, super concise. And Kevin.

Kevin Hartley: Hi I'm Kevin Hartley. I'm a senior consultant with the NSPCC. I work doing policies, reviews, audits, training, webinars, podcasts, anything that help organisations to help them to keep children safer. My background is in education, so I've got a focus on schools particularly, but we work with all sorts of people, including Brass Bands England as well. As well, so we've done quite a lot of work with different people. So nice to be here. Thank you.

Lucy Davies: Great, welcome, guys. So we're going to start with a bit about what the most significant safeguarding responsibilities are for organisations and professionals when they're working with children and young people in a music education setting. So I'll start, I think, with Kevin, and then we'll come to Sarah.

Kevin Hartley: Yeah, one of the things to say is that the key principles of safeguarding are pretty common across different sort of settings. So having clear policies is really important, very clear procedures that everyone understands. And we work at the NSPCC around the four R's of safeguarding. So we talk first of all about people

recognising the signs and the indicators of harm and abuse and neglect. And once you recognise those signs, knowing

How to respond to those both in the moment and going further. So, in some cases, that's an emergency response, sometimes that's a how you respond to the young person, sometimes it's where you go next. and then of course, reporting those concerns to the right person in the organisation, and then finally recording the details of what you've seen. And then I think those kind of four R's are the principles which anyone would work to. And if you're someone in an organisation who has those additional responsibilities, like a safeguarding lead, for example.

Then you obviously need additional training, and I think more confidence to know what to do next, where to go next, how to seek advice, when to refer onwards, and so on. And then I think specifically with music, maybe one example might be if you're a peripatetic teacher, who you're going in different schools, for example, maybe visiting several schools in a different over a two-week period. Knowing who it is to talk to in each school is a really big, important responsibility, so that you don't have to go and then find out if you need to do so. Knowing before you work with the children is a very good

Things to do. So, it's kind of some general principles, I think. and I'm sure Sarah will be more specific about music things.

Sarah Bauman: Yeah, think that something that we advise our members on and talk about a lot is that dual balance of having shared responsibility and specific responsibility. Having your designated safeguarding lead, the person that everyone in the organisation knows that that's where that kind of guess referral stream is, and them having been really well supported and having the training that's really right for them in the context in which they're working in, but also that collective responsibility of anyone in the organisation who interacts with children being supported well enough to know what to do and know how to refer upwards, to know what your policies and procedures are.

And I think that so often, particularly in the landscape that many of us are working in, it's complex and requirements are high in terms of policies and procedures you need to have in place. You know that list grows and grows all the time, and it can be really tempting for it to just be a document that stays in a drawer, not looked at. And I think it's really important that your safeguarding policy is an active, visible document that you can see, that everyone knows where it is. And the example that I often give is that Children will disclose or raise an issue to people that they feel comfortable with. And that's not necessarily your DSL. It's the person within the organisation that they relate to, that they feel comfortable with. So you need to make sure that everyone is well enough prepared and well-armed to be able to manage that situation and do right by the child, but also to protect themselves as well.

And there's lots of brilliant resources out there to help you get to that place. Certainly, specifically, I guess, in the context that I work in, which is community brass bands, is there's lots of intergenerational working, which is a wonderful thing and so important for young people to be able to interact with a really big cross-section of people, just not just their school peers, but to be able to get that experience and that social interaction. But that creates different challenges in terms of your safeguarding practice. And often that means having adults around, not in a role of responsibility, but still in a situation with children. And that's something that I think often school contexts can find hard because that just feels so alien to the way that they're used to operating. There are safe and secure ways to do that. And there's lots of real advantages to the experience that can bring to young people.

But I think obviously a really, I guess, unusual context that's probably quite specific in music education is one-to-one peripatetic teaching and maybe informal settings, but particularly for those who are freelance teachers who teach in their own homes, who teach online, who teach in a different setting where they're not so well protected by an organisation's policies. I think it's more important than ever for those people to really, really understand what they need to do and reach out to the people that can help them most. People like MU and ISM and those kind of bodies who can give them the contact specific support and advice that they need.

Yusef Sacoer: Thank you. I suppose you touch on quite a sort of key discussion point around this conversation, which is how safeguarding interacts specifically with music with young people. And perhaps in a way that's different to other subject areas, potentially even other arts.

As you alluded to, there's a lot more capacity for situations where you are one-to-one with a young person, you're working across generations, you're taking people to live music situations where there are other safeguarding concerns. I know from my past in community music that that was often the case. A lot of the organisations and people listening to this will be people who partner with lots of other organisations and people. Do you find in your work that partners are sometimes uncomfortable around giving those opportunities to young people, because of the safeguarding risks and how do you reassure them that proper safeguarding can be done?

Sarah Bauman: Yeah, it's so challenging because, particularly for community music setups, our members are predominantly volunteers. There's increasing change in terms of legislative requirements of all sorts of things. And for them to be able to keep up is really challenging and requires a lot of time and resources. So that's why we try as hard as we can to provide so much of the baseline for them to make that easier. And that is specific to the work that they do that's relevant to how they interact. But some organisations just are not in a position where they have the capacity to do that. And that can be really, really challenging if they don't feel like they have that support body or

similar that can translate, I guess, a lot of the requirements and put that in place. But I think the balance of that is that safeguarding is an essential if you're working with children.

So, you know, it's about having that balance and that understanding that the baseline things need to be in place and that can be a non-negotiable that those things are in place. But having, I guess, the balance to support those organisations at the same time and be flexible with what's feasible to have in place. Things like a community band visiting a school to undertake a performance, for example. We've been in situations where its school has in or local authorities insisted that all of those people need to be DBS check for that opportunity to happen. And actually, that's just not that's not proportionate for the for the work that they're undertaking just to come and do a pop-up performance where they're not actually working with the children, that kind of thing. And it's prioritising safeguarding because it absolutely should be prioritised. But making sure that that's done in a reasonable and proportionate way to ensure that children aren't missing out on really, really valuable musical opportunities too.

Kevin Hartley: I think you touched on a good point that there when you're saying about people being a bit fearful. And I think there's a sense of demystifying safeguarding, and that people can sometimes feel quite fearful because they're afraid of getting it wrong. We're in a position now where, as you rightly said earlier on, organisations recognise that safeguarding is a shared responsibility. It doesn't just fall to the named person. Everyone's got a part to play. And I think if we encourage organisations to demystify, you know, reach out for advice, talk to people who do have safeguarding things in place. Come to people like ourselves, other organisations, who can advise you and guide you and just point you in the right direction and what it is you need to do and not to do. And DBS is a good one because DBS feels very complex, feels very challenging.

But it's in some places very fairly straightforward, and the DBS people themselves are fantastic at giving advice to how regional advisors go to those people if you're ever not sure, and the website is confusing; just ask them because they're really good at helping out with DBS stuff. So yeah. Demystify is what I like to do.

Yusef Sacoor: Definitely a thing, isn't it? So hopefully to give a start at demystifying, Sarah obviously mentioned some great circumstances there around one-to-one, mixed gen. I think I brought up the sort of, you know, taking people into a music venue potentially for the first time. I suppose there's a question for both of you. What kind of specific risks are there, and what are some easy mitigations in those circumstances?

Kevin Hartley: Well, I think Sarah and yourself mentioned that one to one work, which poses risk if you're working on a one to one. So good awareness of how you ensure that's safe, I think, in in terms of the environment, but also relationships and also who knows where you are and etc etc. and in those situations, because you're music

teachers, sometimes you're going to be using touch. You might have to put a child's hand and touch a child's hand and put it in the right place on an instrument. So being alert to issues of consent and boundaries, and awareness that that's going to be used at some point, is to be borne in mind. So everything's open and above board view is the key there. And if you're working with groups of children, so you might have an orchestra or a band in Sarah's case, being aware that harm can occur between children themselves, and I think having that alertness and awareness and understanding that that's one of those forms of harm which we sometimes need to be alert to and can sometimes overlook. Because what could say I was quite right, intergenerational work is really important and positive, but children between themselves can be very supportive, but sometimes things go wrong. So we need to understand those things as well. Sometimes you're going into homes. If you're going into people's homes, you have the privilege of teaching in those settings. Just being alert to 'what am I hearing?', 'what am I seeing?', are signs of domestic abuse, are there are other children in the home, and just being aware that when you're in that setting you've got an extra little possible role to play in keeping children safe, and obviously most of the time it's going to be absolutely fine. But you may see something that concerns you and knowing what to do if you do it is something there. And then I suppose just one other thought is about well-being rather than safeguarding. You guys probably know better than me that as a big event comes up or an exam comes up or it's last-minute rehearsals there's pressure and there's pressure to get things right. So that intensity, I think about any form of arts, but obviously music performance is one of those, it's worth being alert to young people's signs of how they are feeling and making sure that you put those well-being things in mind in place.

Sarah Bauman: Yeah, and I think that so much of our safeguarding work is about putting walls in place to do the best we can to prevent harm from happening. You know, child protection being a different kettle of fish to safeguarding work, which is that, you know, that preventative practice. And so much of that work starts at recruitment, starts at onboarding, who is going to be working with these young people. And I think, you know, in within a school setting where, you know, qualified teachers there is regulation in place if you are if you are struck off from teaching, there is a public record, etc. That's not really the case with people working even in schools, but in a different, different context. So if you're, you know, working as a musical director or as a peripatetic teacher, that's not always that same situation. So having really thorough recruitment practices is really important, and having that intellectual curiosity as well, ensuring that you're not taking everything for granted, that you are questioning, that you are challenging and not falling under the really, really easy challenge, I guess, of taking a DBS check to mean someone is safe, which is so, so easy to do. And that feels like a really safe tick box. Actually, you know, it's in all sorts of settings, and people can change roles, can change jobs, can change areas. And actually, that's not redone as a matter of standard practice. And it always should be because it's really only as effective as the day it was printed. So

it's really, really important to make sure that you really stand by those safer recruitment practices and be thorough about them because that preventative work and that questioning can actually really, really make the difference between something, you know, a serious safeguarding situation happening further down the line.

Yusef Sacoor: Just as a kind of quick-fire thing, Sarah, what would those concerns be if you're interviewing someone or doing the process of hiring?

Sarah Bauman: Yeah, it can go either way, I guess, and either someone who's displaying not caring about someone's welfare, a child's welfare, but also it can go the other way in being over-eager. And that can be a really, really tricky balance, but people who want to cause harm to children find ways to work with children, that you know, that it is an active process to do that. There are very simple things that we would recommend, you know, a simple social media search of a name can often just flag up police reports, for example, you, in situations that might not be visible on the DBS chart. That kind of thing. But the main thing is ensuring that you do what you have set out to do in your safer recruitment policy and follow through with it because it's amazing how often it doesn't happen.

Kevin Hartley: Yeah, and I think we would say that recruitment process and doing your checks and something, one thing, but included in that process. Should we question around values? You know, what are the per the values of the person wanting to join you? What are their motivations for wanting to work with children? So our training can some we've got training that extends beyond safety recruitment into values interviewing. So you're trying to explore why someone is applying for this job because, as Sarah rightly says, people will apply and try to work in settings where there are children.

We want to discourage those people and get the right people in post, really. So, yeah, recruitment checks and ongoing. Safe recruitment lasts until that person leaves your organisation. So you're always being vigilant, you're always being aware. And whilst there are things like DBS update service, Sarah's quite right that DBS is only one part of your armoury, and it's more like culture really, and also people noticing flags and being confident to pass those on, really. That's the that's the key thing.

Yusef Sacoor: Thank you. It sort of leads on to the next question that we have, which is around what's changed in safeguarding and what's changed I suppose for Sarah specifically in music education safeguarding over the last decade or so.

Kevin Hartley: Shall I start with the general changes? That'd be helpful if I kind of framework that

Sarah Bauman: Yeah, that would be great, Kevin. Thank you.

Kevin Hartley: A few years ago, I was working in teaching different contexts altogether. So I think in the over the years that I've been working in Safeguarding there's been a much greater awareness and more awareness of the responsibilities. And I've got a copy of Keeping Children Safe in Education from 2014, when it was first published, and it was eighteen pages long. And now it's 200 pages long with lots and lots of links. And twelve years ago when it was first published, I think there's only one or maybe two mentions of the word 'online'. So there was no consideration of online safety only twelve years ago in keeping children safe. And so that's a big shift in that quite a relatively short time, I think. Where I think we've moved to now is that, because of those changes, people have policies, procedures, training, and that's not unique to music education, I don't think, but it mirrors that sort of wider sense we've seen. So people now know everyone has a role to play, recognises that it safeguards that shared responsibility. And as I said, touched on earlier on, I think that increased awareness brings that extra responsibility, that worry about what if I get it wrong? You know, what if I'm not doing the right thing? And that's why those clear policies, not just documents that sit on the shelf, which Sarah mentioned earlier on, it needs to be something that people can access, understand, and that they use regularly.

And that the procedures are really clear and the training that in underpins that is really clear as well. So the people know what to do; they feel equipped with what to do. And that helps us to protect children, but it also makes us naturally think about how do we work in ways that keep us safe. In whatever setting you're in, that's obviously the case. And then in music education, there will have been changes, which I'm going to hand to Sarah to be specific about in the in the music world really.

Sarah Bauman: Yeah, I think Kevin's completely right, and it definitely mirrors my experience of the information growth and awareness growth has been really, really drastic. And certainly from my experience, I first started delivering safeguarding training around seven years ago and the general awareness of the community musicians that we work with. The general pool from when I first started that to now is vastly different. And I think for me, one of the biggest changes is the requirement and expectation that any organisation, voluntary or otherwise, a safeguarding policy, knows how to use it, and is ensuring that they have safe practices working with children. So obviously that impacts us from a community music point of view massively is that expectation. And that expectation is changing and growing. And I think one of the biggest changes for us is, I guess, the changes around inclusion as well, and that being part of your safeguarding practice. Because if anyone doesn't feel included, they don't feel safe either, and they don't feel safe to participate in what's happening.

So for me, one of the biggest changes is the merging of that, for that less and less to feel like it sits as two separate entities and for that to be brought much closely together to influence our safeguarding work. Again, I think the rate of change and information is

really great because people are taking this so much more seriously. It's also enormously overwhelming. And there's so much out there, you know, I've been updating our inclusion toolkit for bands this, you know, this, this week, and even just in the in the last 12 months, there's some significant legislative changes that makes a difference in terms of how they operate and how they work. So I think that's been, that's been really significant.

And for us as well, I guess the changes around child performance licensing are a big part of our work. People are familiar with the work of BBE; that shift to voluntary and community organisations also coming under those requirements has been really, really significant and has, in lots of ways, changed the way that people interact with safeguarding. And sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse in that for lots of people, is part of a process, they have a licensing process. And what we always try to pull back and to reiterate in our training is that this is part of cultural values work within the organisation. And that should be your driver to do this and to do this right. And we're very, very lucky that a majority of our members come to us because they want to do it right. You know, we're very happy to be here to support them.

Yusef Sacoor: Yeah, I was going to dial quickly back, Sarah, to the point you made around inclusion. I was wondering, really interesting, and obviously I suppose there's some obvious incarnations of where inclusion becomes a safeguarding issue like explicit discrimination, violence, et cetera, but what would be sort of a practical example of where those things intersect?

Sarah Bauman: Yeah, think specifically, I guess the changes, and I guess the clarity more than anything around gender rights. You know, we've had recent guidance that's come out in this; I think it started from September in terms of gender questioning children and approaches to that. That's school-based guidance, but that's something that we would adopt, translate, and support music education organisations with because, particularly going on touring and events where you need to provide changing facilities and ensure you're doing that in a safe way, those kinds of things. But also just that change in ensuring that those children are well protected and that they feel safe in this environment so that people feel aware and educated enough to support those young people and ensure that they can continue making music.

Lucy Davies: We've talked quite a bit now about changes to attitude and approaches around safeguarding awareness, those sorts of things, but kind of to drill down a bit more on how is the development of technology, things like AI, you know, other developments as well? How has that impacted safeguarding more directly? Kevin, and then we'll go on to Sarah.

Kevin Hartley: Yeah, I guess obviously a big part of the work that we do at the NSPCC. And as I said, you know, it's twelve years ago it wasn't mentioned in keeping children safe at all. And now we're it's a central part of the work that anyone in Safeguarding does. And I think the risks the various risks of harm are well documented, in in different ways.

And I think what AI has done is exacerbated some of those and brought some new concerns as well. I think probably the most prevalent in that's emerged in the last couple of years is the way AI can be used to generate sexualised images of children, either from scratch or to take existing images of young people and to use in your new AI apps and so on to create sexual images. And I think that not only concerns adults, but it concerns children themselves as well. And you know, when you listen to the voice of children, that's something they are very alert to and aware of and are experiencing. So that's one thing. And in terms of how that might impact organisations listening to this, you know, think about how you are using images of children on your websites. How are you using images of children on social media? Do you have an image policy, and has that been reviewed? Are you taking guidance on that? And alongside that is cybersecurity, because that's again something which organisations have suffered from, and people will target lots of organisations trying to find one that's got the weaknesses, and you don't want to be the one that has the weaknesses. So yeah, I think AI is still emerging, but what we're seeing is that the way it's been misused to create sexualised images is one thing there. And therefore advice to schools and other organisations is really around images, policies and protecting what you can, really.

Sarah Baumann: Yeah, I think for me, kind of thinking about interaction with technology in a more general sense, one of my favourite books, which I recommend, is 'The Anxious Generation' by Jonathan Haidt, which is just so brilliant in articulating how much the world has changed for young people; their experience of the world has changed. And I think sometimes people who grew up not in a situation where everything that they did and interacted with was through a screen or through social media, it can be quite difficult to comprehend what a different life the young people that we work with live and how their day-to-day experiences are. And I think it articulates so clearly the change in risk and how that how that really leads to anxiety and stress for young people in a really, really enormous way. We see it in kind of this dual balance of we want people to be safeguarded; we want clear, robust frameworks in place that prevents harm, but there is a reality that really, really wool-wrapping children, for want of a better term, causes its own different type of harm. And it's a tightrope walk for all of us who work with young people to do, because the rate of change of technology is faster than any of us can keep up with. And there's a reality to that. But it is how young people interact with the world.

And we will await with interest to see the specifics of the social media ban, for example, and what that's going to mean, how we manage and implement that, and what remits and restrictions will be alongside that. Because that will certainly make quite a big difference in terms of how we safeguard people and young people around technology.

Kevin Hartley: I think just to add to that, Sarah, I think that as people working in the music sector, music's one of those ways that people express themselves genuinely. And I think you've got an advantage in that world, and that you're allowing young people to learn how to express themselves in a way that's unique, creative, individual, and is not necessarily reliant upon the filtering we sometimes see. So yes, I think you guys are in a great position.

Yusef Sacoor: But interestingly, if you want to progress into contemporary music, social media has become more and more important. I did wonder, because we're sort of moving on to a separate part of the conversation, but there is new technology, social media, AI sort of the new big concern and are there others that are more prevalent. So sort of, you know, 5-7 years ago County Lines was a big was not necessarily a new thing, but was still the big new worry. I don't know if there's any sort of other things that people should be looking out for.

Kevin Hartley: Well, I mean do you mean specifically in the music sector, what do you mean online in the online space?

Yusef Sacoor: I think I mean both, and I think I mean sort of like in the way that the young people are, not just in terms of technology, but just are there new issues that you weren't or issues that you were seeing on a much smaller level a decade ago, five years ago, that you're now seeing in as a big deal.

Kevin Hartley: I think I mean the risks of harm to children, the ones that are most common are the same, you know, neglect, physical harm, sexual abuse, emotional harm. They are still there. They're not changing. The online spaces sometimes affect how that can happen. So online grooming, for example. And as you rightly say, there's you know, a few years ago, I know when I was working in schools, the County Lines would be more awareness of that and exploitation and that's still a concern and still continuing. I think one of the things we've sort of seen recently in our work is around the rise and growth of what's called Com Networks, and these are networks online where vulnerable young people are targeting other vulnerable young people to harm them, to perform acts online, to gain status. And they can be very extreme, and they often affect isolated young people and child young people that are struggling themselves. So you might have someone who's both causing harm to others but also a victim of harm themselves. And this is quite a new and emerging and complex area. There's some new guidance being published by COPS around this, which is quite useful for those professionals to understand it, but also different versions for parents to kind of

understand it in that context as well. So there are always things that are changing. And one of the benefits of being an organisation like NSPCC is that we were kind of alert to those things and we hear about things quite quickly because we hear from children. Children call us up and speak to us about the concerns that they've got.

And online concerns are definitely one of those. But we also have adults, so adults who can reach out there as PCC and helpline. And the sorts of things they talk to us about again are broadly similar, you know, neglect and harm to children, but often around online grooming, exploitation and those things as well. And obviously that's not unique to the music sector, but it is about being, you know, you have a relationship with young people. If you spot things are changing, you spot that they're worried about being online or so on. It's interesting that in one of our current training materials we have a scenario where the person that noticed something wrong is actually a guitar teacher, and it's actually in a music setting. And it's that relationship that he's developed with the young person which allows him to notice something is now different, and that allows the young person, because of the trusted relationship, to share what it is that's going on.

So I think music's a setting where, for obvious reasons, that connection is really powerful and can be used in a way which allows trust to develop and allows young people to speak about what's worrying. And I think, as Sarah's right said earlier on, people have been equipped and knowing what to do if they are in that situation is really important.

Sarah Bauman: Yeah, I think it definitely changes the communication routes, I guess, for lots of things. I think one of the most challenging things for me personally that I see is around misinformation and radicalisation and the way that people interact with social media; it serves them content that they have indicated that they want to see more of. So it can take people down a real rabbit hole really quickly and can get some really, really ingrained views from impressionable young people very, very quickly in a way that you just wouldn't have had access to that rate of information to do that. Or you've had to have had that quite close to home or within a network to be influenced in quite that way. And I think examples around the Manosphere and, you know, that kind of area, but also in other ways around, you know, Tradwife, kind of Instagram trends; these young people will be seeing these too and will be influenced by them, and social media will naturally take them down a track of seeing more of that and ingraining those views. But that can be hard, hard to challenge.

But as Kevin says, signs that young people display will be, you know, will be similar if they, if they become, very, introverted, don't want to talk about what's going on, or feel very concerned or anxious around technology and social media. These are all common things to raise a flag that something isn't right.

Lucy Davies: So thank you so much for those insights, Kevin and Sarah. That brings part 1 of our discussion about safeguarding to an end. Part 2 will be available in about a week, so make sure you follow us wherever you get your podcasts, so you don't miss out.