



Maroondah Symphony Orchestra Child Safety Policy 2023

Maroondah Symphony Orchestra Inc (MaSO) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Our community group recognizes the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our organization provides a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development and enjoyment of activities.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations.

The Maroondah 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 MaSO activities. It will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All members of the MaSO organisation involved in child-related interactions are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below.

Evaluation

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

Policy Statement

Our Child Safe Policy should be publicly available to help raise awareness about the importance of child safety in organisations and demonstrate our commitment to protecting children from abuse.

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as members and volunteers.

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 – C&YP are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Standard 4 – Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and Practice

- Standard 5 – Ensure that people interacting with C&YP are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice**
- Standard 6 – Members and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep C&YP safe through ongoing education**
- Standard 7 – Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for C&YP to be harmed**
- Standard 8 – Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved**
- Standard 9. – Policies and procedures document how the organisation provides a safe environment for C&YP**

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Maroondah Symphony Orchestra is a Child Safe organization, with zero tolerance for child abuse and a commitment to children's best interests.

All young persons 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 MaSO who reasonably believe they have witnessed such abuse must by legal obligation, report it to relevant authorities.

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

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- Awareness of Child Safety to deter inappropriate behaviour
- Listen if young persons report feeling uncomfortable
- Make sure young persons and adults know whom to go to, if they have concerns.
- Avoid, where possible, being solely responsible for others' young persons
- Where possible, design activities so there are clear sightlines and obstruct any hidden places that could conceal inappropriate conduct
- Promote Code of Conduct covering Child Safety to membership

EMPOWER YOUNG PERSONS

- Ask any young persons involved for their ideas, about what will make them, and other young persons feel and be safe.

CODE OF CONDUCT

MaSO Committee 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 all young persons and their parents or carers, and will be inclusive
- 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 site or email addresses with children.

REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

1. Ensuring the safety of the child is the first responsibility of those in the vicinity of a suspected incident.
2. If the situation is urgent, then the person in danger, parent or other responsible adult must contact police on 000 immediately
3. If not urgent, an email must be sent to childsafety@maroondah.vic.gov.au
4. If the contacted MaSO person feels that further support is required, then further input from others of the MaSO Committee may be requested

MaSO is committed to regularly educating volunteers on child abuse risks.

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

We promote diversity and tolerance in our organisation, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome.

We understand that when recruiting members and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

We actively encourage applications from Aboriginal peoples, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

Child Safety is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child must report such.