



Music Partnership North Northumberland

Ensembles Policy

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MISSION STATEMENT

“Music Partnership North is committed to enriching the lives of all children and young people through engagement and participation in quality music activities; enabling progression to excellence through a variety of musical pathways”

Aims

- To provide a wide range of high quality musical activities for all children and young people, including those in challenging circumstances
- To support and develop progression routes for all students to enable them to achieve their full potential
- To be a progressive music delivery provider within Northumberland, working with local communities and educational establishments to support and enrich musical opportunities for all
- To support the aims of The Importance of Music: A National Plan for Music Education, ensuring that every child aged 5-18 years:
 - has the opportunity to sing and learn a musical instrument
 - has the opportunity to perform as part of an ensemble or choir
 - has the opportunity to progress and take their talent to the next level
- To provide continuing professional development and training to both school based and Music Partnership North (MPN) staff to ensure consistent standards of access are achieved
- To be committed to the support of musical activities in early years settings

Introduction

This policy applies to all activities taking place through the “off site visits” criteria. This relates to a situation where employees and subcontracted employees of Music Partnership North (MPN) are directly responsible for the young people they are working with. However all MPN employees or those employed on contract to support any activities that involve young people have a duty of care to ensure that all young people are in a safe environment at all times.

For the purpose of this document “off site visits” refers to any situation where the students are taken out of their school environment and the students are not the responsibility of their school staff.

MPN provide off site visits to support and underpin the aims highlighted on the previous page. While it is important that there are many musical opportunities within the school day, and that MPN support these, it is also essential that students have the opportunity to progress beyond their school setting to gain a greater and broader experience.

In this policy LO indicates the Lead Officer of the department, the EVC is the Education Visits Co-ordinator for that department.

NCC policies and the OEAP National Guidance

MPN are part of Children’s Services for NCC and as such fall under the guidance of all NCC policies and guidelines. These guidelines include “Evolve” which is NCC off site visit management database and the Northumberland County Council Educational off-site visit Code of Conduct. A link to this can be found [here](#)

All parents/carers are directed to the parental guidance on the MPN [Website](#) when signing up for any activities.

MPN adhere to all NCC and relevant LA chaperone requirements as set out by legislation [click here for full details](#)

Clarification of roles

Educational Visits Co-ordinator

The EVC, working with all relevant parties to ensure that :

- Educational visits follow the policies and procedures of the LA and the establishment
- The site has been visited, if possible, prior to the event and an appropriate risk assessment has been created
- Evolve has been completed and approved for each activity
- Staff have access to advice and information
- A checklist has been completed and discussed with the course leader prior to the activity and evidence of public liability cover has been seen (if required)
- Leaders and staff meet identified standards and are competent to lead and support practical visits and activities

- Relevant training, induction and other continuous professional development opportunities are provided
- Any external providers have given written confirmation that they hold public liability, professional indemnity cover and DBS clearance and have provided copies of these documents
- Procedures are in place to inform parents and provide informed consent
- Emergency arrangements are in place for visits and off-site activities
- There is a system to store and review records of visits, accident and incident reports
- Systems are monitored and reviewed
- All chaperone requirements have been reviewed and met
- Be proactive in supporting and assisting in the delivery of an enriching activity in a safe and proactive environment

The EVC has a duty to advise and assist the management team in the authorisation of visits taking place.

Course Leader/Assistant Course Leader

The course leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity and should be approved by the EVC and Lead Officer.

In particular, but not solely, the course leader should:

- Get approval from the LO and the EVC before any off-site visit or activity takes place
- Follow policy guidelines and regulations of the LA
- Ensure that pupil to staff ratios are correct for the activity at all times
- Ensure that chaperone requirements have been met and the performance sheet has been completed if required
- Ensure that clear targets and educational aims have been identified and are measurable
- Ensure Evolve has been completed and approved for each activity within the timelines stated by NCC (Category one visits 2 weeks in advance, category two visits 4 weeks in advance)
- Inform students regarding areas of concern at the venue and give instructions for their behaviour. Reassess risk while the visit or activity takes place and act on that assessment
- Complete the register at the beginning and end of each event, ensuring they are accurate at all times
- Carry out regular headcounts as required
- Keep the ensemble H&S file (Red File) with them at all times, ensuring the confidential information is secure and not clearly visible to others
- Ensure that a parental consent form (SV5) is held at the central office and a copy in the red file for each pupil attending. Pupils will not be allowed to stay at events without a completed SV5
- Take note of paperwork (medical needs and pick up times)
- Deal with enquiries from parents before and during events
- Direct staff in conjunction with the musical director
- Ensure all staff involved in the activity have full knowledge of any areas of

- concern relating to both the location, students and staff
- Preparing projected costs for the year, and then present a termly spreadsheet of running costs to the LO
- Be proactive in supporting and assisting in the delivery of an enriching activity in a safe and proactive environment

An additional staff member should be available to take over from the Course Leader if they are unavailable for any reason or in an emergency.

Musical Director

The Musical Director of each ensemble will be responsible for:

- Layout and positioning of students in ensemble in collaboration with other staff members
- Programming, including choosing the repertoire, arranging performance opportunities and entering festivals and competitions where appropriate
- Discussing and selecting staff with the LO and the course leader
- Ensuring that instruments and equipment have been requested well in advance of the day required in order to organise delivery.
- Be aware of all NCC and OEAP guidelines to provide support to the Course Leader
- Have liaised with the Course Leader to ensure all requirements are in place regarding H & S, Child Protection and Chaperon
- Be proactive in supporting and assisting in the delivery of an enriching activity in a safe and proactive environment

Additional Staff Members

Additional members of staff should:

- Assist the course leader to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all young people and adults on the visit
- Be clear about their roles and responsibilities while taking part in a visit or activity and carry out that role in an appropriate manner
- Ensure they are aware of any areas of concern relating to both the location, students and staff
- Be proactive in supporting and assisting in the delivery of an enriching activity in a safe and proactive environment

Ensemble staff will receive a list of dates they are requested to attend throughout the year. Once these dates have been agreed then attendance is expected. In smaller ensembles both the course leader and musical director may be the same individual. In this situation an assistant course leader may be identified.

Procedural Requirements

Prior to each activity the following items are required to be completed:

- Risk assessment is undertaken using the current standard NCC risk assessment and an activity specific risk assessment is completed and submitted on Evolve
- Approval of staff to lead/be involved in the activity
- External providers are approved (if required)
- Objectives and outcomes are identified for the activity
- Parents and students are fully aware of the activity and parents are providing informed consent
- All medical information, behaviour and special needs of participants is reviewed and taken into account for both students and staff
- Full details regarding the activity is discussed with the EVC and leadership team to ensure that there is appropriate cover and support within the team and an overall knowledge of the activity is known within the administration team
- Evolve is completed and approved within the required time scale for both category 1 and 2 visits
- Either 1 or 2 home emergency contacts (depending on activity) are identified and are provided with full information on the activity
- All relevant information is included in MPN red file in preparation of the event with a copy of the information stored off site from the activity
- Red file to include all emergency procedures
- A first aider is present at the activity at all times and has prior knowledge of any medical issues
- There is a monitoring process in place throughout the activity to ensure that all procedures are appropriate for the activity and the intended outcomes are being achieved
- Following each activity an evaluation is undertaken to help inform future events and activities and to ensure that the ensembles policy is kept relevant.

Monitoring / Training

All activities will be monitored by the EVC to ensure that a consistent and safe standard is maintained across the organisation. This will include ongoing training and peer to peer support.

This will include:

- Each activity, if taking place regularly will have at least one site visit to monitor all procedures and an evaluation form completed, shared with staff and uploaded onto the system
- EVC will continually review all staff involvement and investigate any complaints or areas of concern
- If a complaint is received it will be dealt with in accordance with MPN complaint procedure. This will also include discussions with the LA Health

- and Safety Advisor for off site activities
- EVC will ensure that all staff get regular CPD and first aid training as required
- Throughout the year each course leader will receive an off site visit to review policies and procedures which will inform all training and CPD requirements

Managing Risk

Each activity MPN run will have a specific risk assessment taking into account current legislation and requirements. Due to the nature of the activities these tend to be of a low risk category. All risk assessments must take into account the latest [OEAP](#) guidance.

Each risk assessment must:

- Take into account any current areas of concern such as a heightened terrorist threat
- Include any special needs or medical concerns for the group
- Be specific to the activity taking place
- Be discussed with all relevant staff taking part in the activity
- Clearly show a strategy for events such as fire or terrorist threat
- Clearly identify if there are other groups of people using the same venue (if required) highlighting any stranger danger issues
- Be included in the planning of the activity
- Link to specific risk assessments such as coach travel where required
- Clearly show that, where possible, the venue has been visited and reviewed in advance of the activity
- Identify if any chaperone volunteers are been used in the staffing ratio

Chaperones

All key MPN staff are registered with their appropriate LA as chaperones. MPN will follow the national guidelines for all chaperone required activities and all required performances will be registered with NCC. Where required the pupil to chaperone ratios will be observed.

If parent/carer chaperones are used they must be included in discussions regarding the activity and have a clear outline of their responsibilities and the key points of contact within the activity team and the home based team.

Emergency procedures and incident reporting

All staff and home based emergency contact personnel must have the emergency procedures clearly explained to them by the Course Leader and/or the EVC.

Within the information both at the activity and with the home emergency contact the NCC emergency procedure guidance and the OEAP guidance must be present. When monitoring visits take place at activities the EVC will check that the emergency procedure systems are known and the home emergency contact can be easily contacted on the phone number provided and is fully aware of emergency procedures.

Behaviour

MPN hold their own code of conduct for all activities and these are shared with all parents, staff and support staff. Any areas of concern must be reported to the Course Leader straight away so they can be addressed.

If the situation can not be resolved then the parent or carer will be contacted and requested to collect the student. As soon as possible the Course Leader will complete an incident report form and take appropriate action depending on the severity of the behaviour issue.

All families and students to be advised that no alcohol or drugs are to be consumed by students or staff at any activities or events.

Inclusion

MPN are committed to ensuring that all activities are inclusive for all young people we work with. Every student has an entitlement to participate in all activities and when assessing each venue or activity these must be taken into account.

MPN endorse the following principles:

- A presumption of entitlement to participate
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- Integration through participation with peers

Insurance

MPN are covered by NCC insurance policy for all their activities. For all “off site visits” Evolve must be completed to ensure that the correct insurance is in place.

Finance

While many of MPN activities do have a charging system in place there are also many that are funded through grants received etc. Where charges are applied all families have the opportunity to apply for a reduced fee or for a free place and bursaries are available. Full information on this can be located on our website [here](#)

All charges are kept to a minimum and are clearly displayed prior to any student signing up for an activity.

County Ensembles

Applications

An ensembles booklet and application form will be produced in the summer term highlighting which ensembles are available for the coming year. All students must reapply each year to join an ensemble even if they are currently a member.

Upon receipt of a completed application form students will be issued with details of an audition, if required.

Auditions will be held during July and students should ensure that they are

available during the given audition week when applying. Students will only be auditioned in September if they cannot attend the scheduled audition week due to illness or previously booked holiday commitments. This will be carried out at the discretion of MPN.

Audition procedure

- Auditions will be held once a year, usually in July, at a central venue
- Auditions staff (2 for each audition) shall be selected by the LO according to expertise and experience
- Ensemble lists will be compiled by the LO according to audition results
- If agreement over the entry of a particular pupil into an ensemble cannot be reached through discussion the LO's decision will be final.
- Each candidate's performance will be assessed by staff with comments and marks being recorded on a standard mark sheet
- An audition report for each candidate will be filed centrally

Ensemble Acceptance

In July notification of ensemble places will be issued along with an acceptance form, parental consent form, parent guidelines and a full list of rehearsal dates and venues. Payment will be requested at this time. We ask students to review their workload for the coming year prior to accepting their ensemble place.

It is expected that if a place is offered and accepted, the commitment to the ensemble will be for the whole year and every effort should be made to attend all rehearsals and events. No refunds will be given if a student cannot attend rehearsals once a place has been accepted and paid for.

Successful applicants will be allocated places depending on numbers of places available and indicated preference.

The actual costs of all ensembles are supported by the Music Education Grant and membership fees are kept to a minimum.

If insufficient applications are received or places accepted in ensembles then it may not be financially viable to run that particular ensemble.

In the event that an applicant was not successful, parents can seek information as to why, and advice can be given as to what improvements may be needed for future auditions.

Membership places being offered later in the year will be at the LO's discretion and students will be expected to pay the outstanding costs on a pro rata basis.

Any parents who have concerns or grievances with regards to the running of the ensembles can write to the LO in confidence.

Musical Tours/ Residential Courses

MPN recognise the importance of pastoral care and where at all possible the staff attending these activities will be known by the students and will have worked with

them before. Parents will have the opportunity to meet the staff at either the parent meeting prior to the tour or through previous rehearsals.

A new parental consent form will always be requested for musical tours and a detailed itinerary forwarded to parents prior to the tour which will include emergency contact details for the course leader and the accommodation.

All H & S requirements listed in this document will be completed for all musical tours and if traveling abroad then full discussions and approval is sought from the health and Safety advisor at NCC.

MPN staff are responsible for students in their care at all times while on musical/residential tours and courses. It is the responsibility of the course leader to plan with all accompanying MPN staff the evening and overnight monitoring/pastoral care. However all MPN staff have a duty of care to ensure the safety of all the students at all times.