

AWSO

ALBURY WODONGA
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Child Safe Policy

The Albury Wodonga Symphony Orchestra (AWSO) is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people involved in our orchestra. We believe that every child has the right to feel safe, respected, and valued. AWSO promotes the wellbeing of children and young people and takes proactive steps to prevent harm, in accordance with the [Victorian Child Safe Standards](#).

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the Albury Wodonga Symphony Orchestra's (AWSO) commitment to child safety and provides clear guidelines for creating and maintaining a safe environment for children under the age of 18 who participate in our rehearsals and performances.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all AWSO members, committee members and appointed roles affiliated with the committee (e.g. orchestra manager and artistic director), volunteers, and anyone engaged or attending AWSO activities.

3. Glossary

To assist in understanding this policy, the following terms are defined:

- **Appointed Roles:** Individuals holding specific positions such as Orchestra Manager and Artistic Director
- **Audience:** Members of the public attending AWSO performances.
- **AWSO:** Albury Wodonga Symphony Orchestra
- **Child (or Children):** Any person under the age of 18
- **Committee:** Refers to the AWSO Committee, all appointed roles including the Orchestra Manager, Artistic Director and Public Officer, and the Member Protection Officer
- **Executive Committee:** Refers to the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary
- **Non-Playing Members:** Individuals who primarily assist with events and operational support and are members of AWSO
- **Playing Members:** Musicians who perform as part of the orchestra and are members of AWSO
- **Visiting Guest Artists:** External artists engaged for specific performances or events, or who attend rehearsals on an ad-hoc basis
- **Volunteers:** People who assist AWSO without receiving financial compensation

4. Commitment to Child Safety

AWSO is dedicated to fostering an environment where children feel secure and supported.

We are committed to:

- A zero tolerance for child abuse
- actively promoting child safety and wellbeing
- supporting the participation of children, and respecting their views.

5. Child Safe Code of Conduct

To ensure a safe environment, all AWSO members and volunteers must:

- Treat all children with respect
- Avoid one-on-one situations with children unless in an open, observable space
- Refrain from any inappropriate physical contact or behavior
- Report any concerns regarding child safety immediately to the AWSO Member Protection Officer (see AWSO Child Safe Procedure for details and reporting steps).

6. Recruitment and Training

AWSO ensures that all individuals working with children are appropriately screened and trained. This includes:

- Committee members and any appointed role that works directly with children must hold a valid Working With Children Check (WWCC) as required under Victorian law
- As a cross-border organisation, AWSO accepts a valid Victorian or New South Wales WWCC
- Committee members and appointed roles receiving basic child safety guidance during onboarding.

7. Supervision

To safeguard children during AWSO activities:

- Children under 18 will be supervised during all AWSO rehearsals and performances
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to be involved in ensuring their child's safety (e.g. parents/guardians are welcome to attend rehearsals)
- As AWSO rehearsals and concerts often finish late at night, no child will be left unaccompanied after these events. A committee member or an appointed role holding a valid WWCC will remain with the child until they are collected by a parent or guardian.

8. Reporting Concerns

We take all concerns seriously. Members should:

- Report all concerns, disclosures, or allegations of child abuse to the Member Protection Officer
- Contact the Member Protection Officer (MPO) for managing complaints related to child safety (see AWSO Child Safe Procedure for details and reporting steps).

9. Member Protection Officer

To raise a concern, please refer to AWSO's Child Safe Procedure.

10. Review

This policy was approved by the AWSO Committee on 24 February 2024, and will be reviewed annually or following any significant incidents.