

Complaints and Reporting Procedure

Approved January 2025

Policy title	Complaints and Reporting Procedure
Scope	This Complaints Procedure applies to any person (child or adult) involved with the organisation including: • Committee members • Cast • People in leadership roles such as production team; including but not limited to Director, Musical Director, Choreographer, Assistants, Stage Manager etc • Volunteers both in front and back of house roles • Contractors and their sub-contractors including but not limited to lighting and sound technicians, orchestra • Children and young people • Work experience students /interns/ secondments • Families; parents and carers and extended family member • Relevant government agencies.
Reporting Procedures	Our Complaints Procedures Document outlines the organisational procedures for minors and adults to raise concerns or complaints. It is not the responsibility of anyone working with/for Engadine Musical Society, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child neglect or abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns, through contact with the appropriate authorities. The Society assures members that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports concerns of neglect or abuse. • Any person who has a child safety concern or complaint should report their concerns directly to the relevant Child Safety Officer or Committee Member. • We will investigate the complaint and report findings to relevant bodies, which may include the Department of Family and Community Services, the NSW Ombudsman, NSW Police and the Office of the Children's Guardian. • Any complaints made are accepted and addressed in confidence, with respect to both parties involved.

Making a Complaint	Who can make a complaint? Any person including volunteers, contractors, parents, carers, legal guardians and children should promptly raise their concerns or lodge a complaint about: 1. conduct not in keeping with the organisation's child safe policies and procedures 2. suspicion of child abuse or neglect. If a person suspects or witnesses an incident of unacceptable behaviour towards a child, they are obliged to report the incident to the appropriate contact (Child Safety Contact or Committee Member) as a matter of urgency. In addition to reporting the incident the person should ensure that the child is safe from any immediate risks. Any person that believes a child is at immediate risk of abuse should call 000. Engadine Musical Society will provide children and parents with clear information on who to contact (and how) if they have any concerns or complaints. What type of concerns should be raised? Any of the following should be reported to the appropriate contact promptly: • alleged, suspected or observed incidents of abuse or neglect (as a matter of urgency) • conduct not in keeping with our child safe policies and procedures • perceived risks in the organisation's environment (e.g. inadequate working conditions). Abuse and neglect includes: • Physical abuse: purposefully injuring or threatening to injure a child • Emotional abuse: an attack on a child's self-esteem e.g. through bullying, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating the child • Sexual abuse: any sexual act or sexual threat imposed upon a child • Neglect: harming a child by failing to provide basic physical or emotional necessities.
Who should complaints be made to?	Complaints or concerns should be lodged with the Society's Child Safety Officer or other Committee member using any method (verbally, email, call, etc.) that the member, parent (including carers or legal guardians) or child feels comfortable with. If an act of criminal activity has been alleged, such as physical or sexual abuse, the police will be informed and the child will be kept safe from any immediate risks.

Investigating Complaints	How will complaints from children be handled by the first point of contact or Child Safety Officer? Engadine Musical Society will inform children of who to talk to if they need to raise an issue. Engadine Musical Society management Committee members that receive a complaint from a child will: • let the child talk about their concerns in their own time and words, as well as give the child the necessary attention, time and space to raise their issues • be a supportive and reassuring listener • tell the child that raising their concerns was the right thing to do and let them know in plain language the process by which their concerns will be addressed and acted upon • record the nature of the complaint in the child's own words • contact the child's parents (including carers or legal guardians) if appropriate.
How will complaints be handled	Engadine Musical Society is committed to being responsive to concerns raised by volunteers, children and parents (including carers or legal guardians) and seek to resolve issues with the welfare of children as our first priority. The appointed Child Safety Officer or relevant Committee member will investigate the nature of the complaint raised in a timely fashion, allowing the person against whom the complaint has been made the opportunity to respond. If a complaint has been made in regard to the actions of another child, their parents (including carers or legal guardians) will be informed. If appropriate and in the best interests of the child, the Child Safety Officer or relevant management will seek to resolve the complaint and rectify any issues raised to the satisfaction of all parties in the first instance. Any complaints or concerns about perceived risks in the organisation's environment (e.g. unsafe conditions, exposure to adult themes) will be addressed by Engadine Musical Society and rectified promptly. If Engadine Musical Society becomes aware of, or has been alerted to, a risk of child abuse by someone involved with the organisation, we will act to reduce or remove the risk and protect the child as our first priority. We will promptly contact police when a child or adult alleges any criminal activity has occurred, such as physical or sexual abuse of a child. The child and (if appropriate) parent/s, carer/s or legal guardian/s will be informed of the steps the organisation is taking to address the complaint. Engadine Musical Society may also provide support for the child by referring and assisting children and/or parents, carers or legal guardian to access other appropriate services.
Outcomes	In the event a complaint is proven to be accurate, the Child Safety Officer or relevant Committee management member will inform the relevant leadership position (e.g., director, stage manager, etc.) of the allegation and the outcomes of the investigation. The Child Safety Officer or relevant management may also recommend an appropriate course of action.

Resolution	How will the complaint be resolved? The relevant leadership position Child Safety Officer in consultation with the management Committee of Engadine Musical Society shall determine if: • a person should be disciplined in accordance with the misconduct committed and within the organisation's means as per disciplinary processes under constitution • the matter should be referred to an appropriate authority for further investigation and action pursuant to the law. For procedural fairness, any person involved in a complaint about unacceptable conduct towards a child is encouraged to seek support from any other relevant person. All complaints about unacceptable conduct shall be documented, including: • record of action taken • any internal investigation conducted • any reports made to statutory or external bodies. In accordance with security and privacy requirements, these records will remain confidential unless otherwise requested to be released by law. With due consideration of confidentiality and fairness in regard to any person whom a complaint is made against, the risk of harm to children is our primary concern.
Publication	This document will be made available to all stakeholders including but not limited to: The policy will be publicised on: • social media • website • noticeboards at our venues • newsletters
Review	Engadine Musical Society reviews and updates all procedures and policies annually and makes adjustments as regulatory issues arise. This document and its guiding Child Safe Policy will be reviewed and incorporate comments and suggestions from a range of our stakeholders (minors and adults). Date of Policy Implementation: January 2025 Version: 3 Written By: Meredith Laverty, Secretary and Public Officer (reviewed by members and committee)