

Chetham's School of Music

Report of the Independent Safeguarding Commission for the School Year 2018 - 2019

Introduction

An Independent Safeguarding Commission was established by the Feoffees and what was then the School Committee (now the Governing Body) of Chetham's School of Music in June 2013. The Commission's full Terms of Reference are available for inspection on the School's web-site. These require the Commission to prepare a report to the Feoffees and Governing Body at least once during each academic year. The Commission's current policy is to prepare a report towards the end of each such year, incorporating a summary of its meetings during that year, and to make the report available on the School's web-site. This is the sixth such report.

Composition

From its inception in 2013, the Independent Safeguarding Commission was immensely fortunate in having as its Chairman retired High Court judge, Sir David Maddison. Sadly, Sir David passed away at the end of June 2019, having chaired the Independent Safeguarding Commission for six years with diligence, skill and sensitivity, ensuring the fulfilment of its central tasks.

The Commission's members are appointed by the Feoffees and by the Governing Body. Each member serves for three years, subject to possible re-appointment. To ensure compliance with the provisions of the Terms of Reference of the Independent Safeguarding Commission, the appointments of the members of the Commission were confirmed and ratified by the Feoffees at their meeting on 25 June 2019 and by the Governing Body at its meeting on 16 May 2019.

During academic year 2018-19, the Commission comprised five members, namely:

Sir David Maddison, Chair of the Commission. He was the Recorder of Manchester from 2003 to 2008, and a High Court Judge from 2008 until his retirement in 2013. As a barrister and then as a judge he was concerned in many cases involving the abuse of children, both familial and institutional.

Ms Roz Hamilton CBE, formerly the Chief Executive Officer of the Greater Manchester Probation Trust, gaining considerable experience of child safety issues during her career with the Probation Service. She is now Probation Divisional Director, North West, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service.

Mr John Kelly served in the Greater Manchester Police for over thirty years, retiring in 2013 with the rank of Detective Chief Superintendent. His work included the investigation and prevention of major crime, including homicide and kidnapping, and he worked extensively in safeguarding and dealing with suspected child abuse.

Judge Lindsey Kushner QC, a retired Circuit Judge. As a practising barrister and Queen's Counsel, and then as a judge, she specialised in cases involving

the care, welfare and protection of children, and thus brings to the Commission a wealth of relevant experience.

Mr Paul Lee, Chairman of the Feoffees of the Hospital and Library in Manchester, founded by Humphrey Chetham. For approximately forty years, until his retirement in 2013, he was a partner and ultimately Senior Partner in the law firm of Addleshaw Goddard. From 2014 to 2015 he was the High Sheriff of Greater Manchester.

During the academic year 2018-19, the Commission met on 27 September 2018 and 28 March 2019. Ms Hamilton and Mr Lee attended both meetings. Sir David Maddison and Judge Lindsey Kushner QC each attended one. Mr Kelly was unable to attend either meeting.

To ensure the independence of the Commission, its Terms of Reference provide that no member of the Governing Body may be a member of the Commission. However, it is obviously important that the Commission should maintain channels of communication with the School, to which end the Terms of Reference also provide that the Commission may invite any non-member to attend its meetings. Mr Alun Jones, Principal of the School; Mrs Pauline Newman, Chair of the School's Safeguarding Committee; Miss Nicola Smith, Vice Principal of the School; and Ms Karen Sinclair, the Commission's Secretary, have received and accepted standing invitations to attend the Commission's meetings. Mr Jones and Ms Sinclair attended both of the meetings referred to above, while Mrs Newman and Miss Smith each attended one.

The Commission also invited Mrs Barbara Owen, the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), to attend the Commission's meetings to answer any questions that the members of the Commission may have of her, and Mrs Owen attended each of the Commission's meetings referred to above in that capacity. The Commission regards itself as fortunate to be able to draw on the combined wealth of experience of safeguarding matters at the School which Mr Jones, Miss Smith, Mrs Newman and Mrs Owen are able to offer. However, the Commission reserves the right to ask any other member of staff to attend any of its future meetings to answer any questions that may arise about safeguarding issues within that member of staff's particular area of responsibility.

In the spring of 2019, Mrs Newman (Feoffee, Governor and Chair of the Safeguarding Committee) announced that, with effect from the end of the school year, she would be stepping down from her commitments with Chetham's in order to spend more time with her family overseas. Governing Body member Mr Nigel Shepherd has agreed to take on the role of Chair of the Safeguarding Committee, his first meeting as Chair being that to be held on 2 December 2019. Mr Shepherd will attend future meetings of the Independent Safeguarding Commission on an ex-officio basis as Chair of the Safeguarding Committee, as Mrs Newman has done in the past. With a view to replacing Mrs Newman's specific skills and expertise in relation to child protection and safeguarding, the Principal is also considering the possibility of co-opting external specialist guidance on to the Safeguarding Committee.

Following the sad passing of Sir David Maddison, the members of the Independent Safeguarding Commission will in the coming months seek to confirm the appointment of a new chair.

Aims and Objectives

The Commission's Terms of Reference provide that the Commission must meet at least twice during each academic year.

The Commission's central aims are to advise, scrutinise, question, monitor, challenge, oversee and provide quality assurance to the School in matters relating to child protection and the safeguarding of children in the School's care. It should be noted, however, that the Commission is not a decision-making body and takes no part in the management and running of the School. In this regard it differs from, for example, the Governing Body and the Safeguarding Committee of the School.

The Commission is well aware of the need for the School to maintain the highest standards of safeguarding for its students, not least given that many of the students are boarders and/or receive individual tuition. The Commission is also well aware of the parental and public concern that would arise in the event of any shortcomings in this regard. It therefore aims to ensure that the School has in place and properly implements appropriate and effective policies for the care of its students.

Actions of the Commission

The steps taken by the Commission to achieve its aims and objectives prior to 27 September 2018 are set out in detail in the Commission's first five reports, and it is not proposed to repeat them here. Since that date, the following further steps have been taken.

1. The Commission has been provided with substantial documentation bearing on safeguarding matters in general and at the School in particular. The Commission's first five reports referred to the documentation with which it had been provided prior to 27 September 2018. Since then, the Commission has received and considered further such documentation, including the following:
 - up-dated versions of the School's Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy and Procedures; the School's Policy for the Care and Supervision of Choristers; NMS Health-checks; Off-Site, One-to-One and Home Tuition Reports; the Boarding Self-Evaluation Toolkit; and the Quality Assurance Framework;
 - revised regulatory requirements, check-lists, updates and forms of the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI), and updates to Statutory Guidance for Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE);
 - the minutes of the meetings of the School's Safeguarding Committee held on 7 June 2018 and 29 November 2018, and a selection of the papers considered at those

meetings, including : the DSL's reports to the Committee; minutes of meetings of the e-Safety Committee; minutes of the joint meetings of the Cathedral and School safeguarding links; the Bursar's reports to the Committee, covering governance matters, recruitment, DBS checks, Central Register of Appointments, residential courses, supervision of visitors; and arrangements for the 2018 Piano Summer School and the debrief following that event.

2. Having studied these documents, the members of the Commission have had the opportunity of questioning Mr Jones, Miss Smith, Mrs Newman and Mrs Owen about them, and about a variety of other safeguarding issues. The matters investigated have included :

- revisions to the School's Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy and Procedures approved by the Governing Body on 25 September 2018, and confirmation that those revisions addressed both KCSIE updates effective September 2018 and the concerns raised about certain aspects of the policy by former Independent Safeguarding Commission member Gillian Irving QC;
- the School's continuing focus on the provision to all members of staff, visiting tutors, Governors and Feoffees of induction and refresher training in relation to student safeguarding matters;
- continued efforts, through discussions with Manchester City Council and Greater Manchester Police, to protect pupils at the School from drug dealing activities and anti-social behaviour by certain members of the public in close proximity to the School;
- the School's response to issues around substance misuse;
- confirmation of "safe haven" arrangements in place for Chetham's pupils in the event of any major incident occurring in close proximity to the School;
- safeguarding arrangements in place in relation to students participating in activities with the Scout Movement;
- safeguarding arrangements in place between the School and the Cathedral, and liaison between the safeguarding links of the two institutions;
- the School's awareness of, and actions to minimise, online threats to students via their own personal devices;
- the role of Independent Listener;
- the roll-out of the Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS);
- updates in relation to the ongoing Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA); and

- progress updates in relation to the refurbishment of the Millgate Building boarding facilities.

Detailed accounts of the Commission's proceedings in relation to these matters and generally can be found in the minutes of its meetings.

The Commission regards the answers it has received to its extensive enquiries as being of a consistently high and re-assuring standard.

Conclusion

The Commission appreciates the need to remain strictly independent and vigilant, and to avoid complacency. That said, it is right to add that the Commission has continued to be highly impressed by the School's attitude and approach to student safeguarding matters. The number and nature of the School's safeguarding policies and the manner in which they are implemented indicate clearly how importantly the School regards the safeguarding of its students. As last year, the Commission's enquiries and observations have detected a thoughtful, thorough and caring approach on the School's part. There is every reason to expect that the current very high standards will be maintained.

Roz Hamilton CBE

John Kelly

Lindsey Kushner

Paul Lee

14 October 2019