

**Chetham's School of Music**  
**Report of the Independent Safeguarding Commission**  
**for the School Year 2019-2020**

**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 website. This is the seventh such report.

**Composition**

The Commission's members are appointed by the Feoffees and by the Governing Body. Each member serves for three years, subject to possible reappointment.

During the academic year 2019-20, the Commission comprised five members, namely:

**Lindsey Kushner QC**, who was invited by the Chair of the Feoffees to take on the role of Chair of the Independent Safeguarding Commission following the untimely passing of Sir David Maddison who had chaired the Commission from its inception in June 2013. Lindsey Kushner is a retired Circuit Judge who, as a practising barrister and Queen's Counsel, and then as a judge, specialised in cases involving the care, welfare and protection of children;

**Mr Mike Devlin**, who attended his first meeting as a member of the Commission on 1 June 2020, has over thirty-five years' experience as a solicitor specialising in the law relating to children. He is also Chair of the Safeguarding Commission of the Catholic Diocese of Salford, a position which he has held since 2005;

**Ms Roz Hamilton CBE**, who has gained very considerable experience of child safety issues during her long career with the Probation Service. She is now Probation Deputy Director Courts in Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service;

**Mr John Kelly**, who 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; and

**Mr Paul Lee**, who is 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 served as the High Sheriff of Greater Manchester.

It is hoped that one further member will be appointed to the Commission in the coming months, and efforts in this respect are ongoing.

During the academic year 2019-20, the Commission met on 26 September 2019 and 1 June 2020, the latter meeting having taken place via Zoom in the light of restrictions applying at that time in relation to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Lindsey Kushner QC attended both meetings. Ms Hamilton, Mr Lee and Mr Devlin each attended one meeting. 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; Mr Nigel Shepherd, 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, Miss Smith and Ms Sinclair each attended both of the meetings referred to above, while Mr Shepherd attended one.

Mrs Barbara Owen, the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), also accepted a standing invitation to attend the meetings of the Commission to answer any questions that the members of the Commission may have of her. Mrs Owen attended both of the Commission's meetings referred to above.

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, Mr Shepherd 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.

### **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 its 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 because 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 its meeting on 26 September 2019 are set out in detail in the Commission's first six reports, and it is not proposed to repeat them here. Since then, 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 six reports referred to the documentation with which it had been provided prior to 26 September 2019. Since then, the Commission has received and considered further such documentation, including the following:
  - updated versions of the School's : Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy and Procedures; Off-Site Music Tuition Policy and Procedures (including private tuition), and Guidance; NMS Health-checks; Off-Site, One-to-One and Home Tuition Reports; Boarding Self-Evaluation Toolkit; and 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 4 April 2019, 17 June 2019, 2 December 2019 and by Zoom on 28 April 2020, together with a selection of the papers considered at those meetings, including :
    - the report arising from the inspection carried out by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) from 14-16 January 2020;
    - the DSL's reports to the Safeguarding Committee, including minutes of the meetings of the e-Safety Committee and minutes of the joint meetings of the safeguarding links from the School and Manchester Cathedral;
    - the Bursar's reports to the Safeguarding Committee, including governance matters, recruitment, DBS checks, Central Register of Appointments, residential courses, supervision of visitors;
    - reports generated through the Child Protection Online Monitoring and Safeguarding system (CPOMS), including behaviour statistics, incident reports and neutral notifications, together with anonymised case studies;
    - Off-Site, One-to-One and Home Tuition reports;
    - NMS Health Check reports;
    - reports concerning the early and final arrangements for Chetham's International Piano School (CIPSS) 2019 event, and the debrief report following that event;

- a report on arrangements for the partial reopening of the School on 1 June 2020 following the initial relaxation of regulations in relation to the Coronavirus pandemic;
  - documents concerning the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), including :
    - Principal's contemporaneous notes from the Inquiry during week commencing 30 September 2019;
    - Boarding Schools' Association (BSA) Briefing on IICSA, 30 September – 11 October 2019;
    - minutes of the meetings of the School's Governing Body and Senior Leadership on 8 October and 14 October 2019;
    - Vice Principal's report on Guardianship;
    - report on follow up to survivors;
  - the School's Mental Health Action Plan & Overview, prepared by the Vice Principal;
  - a report on the School's response to Substance Misuse, prepared by the Vice Principal;
  - a report on School's approach to teacher recommendations;
  - ongoing updates to the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF).
2. Having studied these minutes and documents, the members of the Commission have had the opportunity of questioning Mr Jones, Miss Smith, Mr Shepherd and Mrs Owen about them, and about a variety of other safeguarding issues. The matters covered have included :
- the inspection carried out by ISI 14-16 January 2020 which had found the School to be compliant in all areas;
  - the School's Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy and Procedures, updated on 15 January 2020 and signed off by the Chair of the Governing Body, together with an appendix to the policy relating to Covid-19 and a further insert concerning online activities during the pandemic, both of which had been approved at the Governing Body meeting held by Zoom on 6 May 2020;
  - the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) including potential follow up to survivors;

- 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;
- the robust safeguarding arrangements in place for Chetham's International Piano Summer School (CIPSS) 2019, a review of the debrief following that event and arrangements for CIPSS 2020 with particular reference to safeguarding measures around the online format of the event necessitated by the Coronavirus pandemic;
- plans for a partial reopening of the School following relaxation of regulations around lockdown;
- 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;
- progress in relation to the refurbishment of the Millgate Building boarding facilities;
- the role of Independent Listener and the appointment of a new Independent Listener following the retirement of the original incumbent; and
- the improving picture in relation to student behaviour, where the continuing focus on a restorative approach was clearly bearing fruit.

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 reassuring 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.

**Lindsey Kushner QC**

**Mike Devlin**

**Roz Hamilton CBE**

**John Kelly**

**Paul Lee**

**5 October 2020**