

INNERLEITHEN PIPE BAND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS POLICY.

Innerleithen Pipe Band recognizes that we live in a society where discrimination still operates to the disadvantage of many groups in society.

Innerleithen Pipe Band believes that all persons should have equal rights to recognition of their human dignity, and to have equal opportunities to be educated, receive services and to participate in society.

Innerleithen Pipe Band is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities within the Pipe Band, and affiliated organizations, through the way we manage the organization and provide services to the community. In order to express this commitment, we develop, promote and maintain policies that will be conducive to the principles of fairness and equality.

The objective of Innerleithen Pipe Band is that no person should suffer or experience less favourable treatment, discrimination or lack of opportunities on the grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or philosophical beliefs, health status, HIV status, age, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, political beliefs or trade union membership, class, responsibility for dependents, physical attributes, or any other grounds which cannot be shown to be justifiable within the context of this policy.

All members of Innerleithen Pipe Band will follow the code of conduct as laid out below.

Protection of Vulnerable Groups policy and procedure

Innerleithen Pipe Band is committed to creating a safe environment for children, young people and adults. We recognize our moral and legal obligations under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 and will ensure that Band Members will take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect vulnerable groups and individuals from harm, abuse and exploitation.

All members of the committee and tutors will have an up to date PVG.

Definitions

Types of Abuse

The following are the main types of abuse. There are others e.g. institutional abuse, Human Rights abuses however they are unlikely to be encountered within the day to day running of the Band:

1. Physical Abuse
2. Sexual Abuse
3. Psychological Abuse
4. Financial or Material Abuse
5. Discriminatory Abuse actions (or omissions) and/or remarks of a prejudicial nature focusing on a person's age, gender, disability, race, colour, sexual or religious orientation.

Who is a Vulnerable Adult?

A person 16 years or over who is, or may be, disadvantaged by physical or emotional frailty, old age, intellectual impairment caused by a disabling condition or illness, mental illness or other mental health problems; and who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself, or is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Who is a Child?

Those aged less than 16 years.

An adult aged between 16 to 18 may still be legally defined as a child if they are subject to a current supervision requirement issued by a Children's Hearing.

Our policy is based on the following principles:

- The welfare of vulnerable groups and individuals is always the primary concern.
- All vulnerable groups and individuals have the right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- Protecting vulnerable groups and individuals is everyone's responsibility.
- All Band Members have a right to express their views on matters affecting them.

We will:

- Treat everyone with respect.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of Band Members.
- Provide time for vulnerable groups and individuals to talk to us and listen to what they say.
- Encourage all Band Members to respect and care for others.
- Keep a register of every Child or individual who is considered to be vulnerable and is involved with the Band including relevant medical details and have a contact name and number close to hand in case of emergencies.
- Respect confidentiality and only share information/concerns with the people who need to know in order to protect the child or vulnerable adult.
- Take action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour including bullying.
- Take all concerns/allegations seriously and respond appropriately in line with Scottish Borders Council's Child Protection Procedures and Adult Protection Procedures. We will refer not investigate.
- Encourage parents to become involved in the organization and, when requested, provide them with copies of all guidelines and procedures.

In our Band, if we have suspicions about a child's or vulnerable adult's physical, sexual or emotional well-being, we will take action.

All Band Members are encouraged to share concerns with the Pipe Major, Child Protection/Vulnerable Adult Lead or other nominated Band member. If the situation is clearly an urgent case, the child or Adult is too frightened to go home or we have very serious doubts about the persons safety we will contact Social Work Resources or the Police immediately.

If our concerns are of a more general welfare concern, then we will discuss these with the Pipe Major, Child Protection/ Vulnerable Adult Lead, or other nominated Band Member who will then make a referral to an appropriate professional for assessment of the individual's needs. It is important that all Band Members communicate concerns accurately. To this end, Band Members will follow the procedures below:

1. Upon receipt of any information from a child/vulnerable adult or suspicions of abuse towards a child/vulnerable adult, it is necessary to make an accurate and detailed written record of what they have seen, heard or know, at the time the event occurs.
2. Share their concerns with the Pipe Major, Child Protection/ Vulnerable Adult Lead, or other nominated Band Member and agree what action to take.
3. Avoid asking any more questions than are necessary to clarify whether there is a concern. Always **REFER** to statutory services to undertake in depth **INVESTIGATION** of any suspicions or allegations of abuse.

If we have concerns we must act – it may be the final piece of the jigsaw that is needed to protect that child/vulnerable adult. We may also prevent further children/vulnerable adults from being hurt.

Review

This Policy and Procedures will be regularly monitored and reviewed:

- When there is a change in legislation or guidance on the protection of children/vulnerable adults or changes within Innerleithen Pipe Band.
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the protection of children/vulnerable adults in this organization
- In all other circumstances, at least annually at the committee meeting prior to the AGM.

Code of Conduct

Band Members should:

- Always put the care, welfare and safety needs of a child first.
- Respect a child's or vulnerable adult's right to be involved in making choices and decisions which directly affect them.
- Respect a child's or vulnerable adult's culture (e.g. faith and religious beliefs) and right to privacy and personal space.
- Respond sensitively to children/vulnerable adults who seem anxious about participating in certain activities.
- Speak to someone in charge immediately if you are worried about a child/vulnerable adult or any Band member.
- Be aware of and sensitive to the vulnerabilities of some children or adult's e.g. those with a disability; those from different cultural or religious backgrounds or from other minorities within the community.
- Avoid being alone with children and when appropriate with vulnerable adults. Ensure that when working with children or with vulnerable adults you are at least within sight and hearing of other adults.
- Listen carefully to any child or other individual who 'tells you' they are being harmed and report immediately to the person in charge/Child Protection/Vulnerable Adult Lead.
- Never dismiss what a child or other vulnerable person tells you as 'lies' or exaggeration.
- Always give constructive feedback and not negative criticism.
- Always ensure that first aid is administered by people who have relevant training and qualifications.

Band Members should not:

- Exaggerate or trivialize another Band Member's concern about a child/vulnerable adult or ignore allegations of suspicion of abuse.
- Discuss personal issues about a child/vulnerable adult or their family with others except the Child Protection/Vulnerable Adult Lead or other nominated Band Member where you are concerned about the individual's well-being.
- Make derogatory remarks, gestures or use inappropriate language in front of children/vulnerable adults.
- Allow a child/vulnerable adult or other Band Member to be bullied or harmed by anyone in the organization.

Band Members must never:

- Hit, push or grab a child or young person or other Band Member.
- Engage in sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allow others or yourself to engage in touching a child/vulnerable adult in a sexually provocative way.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child/vulnerable adult, even in fun.
- Engage in rough physical contact with a child/vulnerable adult unless it is permitted within the rules of the game or activity.
- Form intimate physical or emotional relationships with children/vulnerable adults.
- Harass or intimidate a child/vulnerable adult or Band Member particularly because of their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, socio-economic class or disability.

In addition:

- Any Band Member who is charged with or convicted of an offence - against a child/vulnerable adult, the use or supply of illegal drugs, a violent offence or an offence of a sexual nature must report this to their Pipe Major, Lead Signatory or Child Protection/Vulnerable Adult Lead. This will be reported to the appropriate Band Committee Members who will decide upon what action is to be taken and will treat such information as confidential. The committee's decision will be communicated to the Band Member concerned.

- When representing the Band, whether in or out of uniform, Band Members must be mindful that we wish to project a positive image. It is therefore essential that Members' behaviour does not bring the Band into disrepute e.g. use of inappropriate language, discriminatory behaviour etc.

I have read, understood and agree to abide by the Band Code of Conduct and Protection of Vulnerable Groups Policy. I also understand that failure to abide by the Code of Conduct or Policies may result in action being taken against me by the Band committee and any criminal actions will be reported to the police.