

Group Policies: Overview

 makingmusic.org.uk/resource/group-policies-what-do-you-need-have

Policies aren't necessarily the most exciting thing to think about when you're running a music group. But they are important and will help you run your group more efficiently and effectively. We have provided a list of the most common policies you might consider having, together with links to further resources and some template documents. But first, a quick word on why you should have policies in place.

A policy sets out your commitment to a particular area. This can:

- Help shape the character and ethos of your group. For example an equal opportunities policy can help build an open and inclusive culture. Just taking some time to sit down and write a policy can help focus your thinking – and having a written document helps to emphasise the message.
- Give confidence and provide assurance to members, supporters and funders that you take your responsibilities seriously and have your house in order when it comes to governance.

A policy sets out your approach to dealing with a particular area: This can:

- Help with decision making – providing a framework for fair and effective decisions.
- Be a good reference point for people interested in joining your group – so they know what to expect and what is expected.
- Provide clarity of procedure for dealing with any issues that occur.
- Help with succession planning – as new people join the committee, documented policies can help with the consistent and smooth running of your group.

What policies should you have?

You could have policies for many different areas. Exactly what you need and the level of detail required will vary from group to group and depend on your activities. Some areas to consider are:

Recommended

- Safeguarding – whatever your level of involvement with children and/or adults at risk a policy is a good idea.
 - [Child safeguarding: what are your responsibilities?](#)
 - [Template policy](#).
- Data protection – most music groups are likely to hold data on individuals. Having a clear policy about how you store and use this data is important
 - [GDPR Toolkit](#)
- Conflict of Interest – they are common in community groups and don't need to be a problem – as long as you have a policy to say how they will be dealt with
 - [Conflict of Interests guidance](#)
 - [Template Policy](#).
- Equal opportunities – a policy will help avoid discrimination and help make your group a safe and inclusive environment.
 - [How to create an equal opportunities policy](#).
 - [Template policy](#).

Suggested

- Health and Safety – often a simple policy and risk assessment can make a big difference to safety.
- Organisational risk - an internal policy to identify and manage risk, and help plan strategically
- Complaints - when you are charging members and the general public for services and events you should have a way for them to offer feedback. If the feedback is negative having a policy will help you deal with it. More resources to follow
- Reserves – even small charities should think about their level of reserves and having a simple policy - and it's good practice for non-charitable organisations too. More resources to follow

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