



AEOLIAN POLICY ON WORKING WITH YOUTH

Statement of Purpose

A primary purpose of Youth Work at the Aeolian is to provide training and development for youth and children by teaching and supporting the formation of El Sistema orchestras. This will be accomplished by providing music training and social support which young people voluntarily engage in.

It will be external to the formal school education system yet complimentary to it. While recognising that personal and social education will vary tremendously from individual to individual the Aeolian will be a separate entity and not governed or controlled in any way by external formal institutions.

It will offer a variety of contexts, approaches and environments to enable young people to:

- make build decision making capacities
- acquire a range of practical and social skills
- confront their prejudices
- address issues of inequality
- learn about and experience relationships
- explore values
- take responsibility for their own lives
- respect others
- learn to communicate and express their views.
- Build skills which assist in the transition to adulthood

The Aeolian is committed to delivering the above program by reflecting the underlying principles of the:

1. Aeolian Youth Participation Policy
2. Adult Leaders Code of Conduct
3. Child Protection & Confidentiality Policy



AEOLIAN YOUTH PARTICIPATION POLICY

Introduction

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child states that [young people] have the right to have a say about decisions that affect them and to have their opinions heard. The Aeolian Extending Entitlement states that young people have “the right to be consulted, to participate in decision-making and to be heard on all matters which concern them or have an impact on their lives”. The Aeolian’s version of the **Ten Entitlements** states that young people are entitled to get information and advice about things that affect them and to have their say in things that affect them.

Youth participation is central to the principles and ethics of our program, and is implicit in the idea of informal social education through voluntary association. In this sense it is built into the purpose of the Aeolian youth program, which cannot be said of school systems. Participation is not just a matter of formal structures like youth committees within the Aeolian or wider youth forums; it should also be a thread running through the way we approach our work with young people.

At the same time, we should be mindful of the fact that participation is not an end in itself but a means towards providing more effective youth support and development that benefit young people and in which they have a say. The Aeolian is committed to consulting with young people, to encouraging their participation in planning and evaluating as well as the formation of a high quality and recognised youth orchestra.

Consultation

The Aeolian must have effective means of consulting with young people, including those who do not access its direct provision. These will include promoting a culture within the community that encourages young people to:

- individually and collectively, to voice and debate opinions appropriately and constructively
- develop skills within the arts
- encourage and support other clubs and projects to set up youth committees
- local Youth Forums made up of and representing the widest possible range of young people
- training for young people in committee- and related skills
- prompt an honest feedback to young people from the Aeolian Hall leaders



The Aeolian will promote youth development through the arts and culture available within the community.

Before membership into the Aeolian youth program the youth's guardian will be fully aware of the program and implications including commitment from both youth member and themselves.

Youth within the program are required to remain within the confines of the Aeolian at all times during the program session and not to leave the building without their guardians written consent or that of a leader.

It is the responsibility of the guardian to ensure the youth has suitable transportation to and from the Aeolian. The Aeolian is not responsible for any incidents outside the premises of the hall or premises in which the program operates. In the case of an accident to a youth member while within the premises, appropriate actions will be taken by the youth's leader and the guardian will be informed as soon as possible.

Leaders working within the Aeolian program will follow the guidelines as laid out in the adult Leaders code of conduct.

ADULT LEADERS CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

All contact that leaders have with young people has the potential to influence their values and behaviour. Your conduct also has an effect on how the Aeolian is viewed regardless of your employment status. The recommendations below are not exhaustive and should be used as a base line for conduct, not a maximum.

Conduct towards young people

- Do not swear at young people or use derogatory terms to or about them for any reason, or under any circumstances.
- Do not practice negative OR positive discrimination
- Never hit young people, although it may be necessary to restrain a young person for their own protection or for your own or others' protection.
- Never physically force a child to do anything against their will unless this action is for safety reasons.
- Leaders must inform management if they witness actions or behaviour by youth members or colleagues that is inappropriate.



Dress code

Others will judge the Aeolian by your appearance. While there is no dress code for leaders you must always dress appropriately for the meeting, event or activity you are attending:

- Casual and comfortable for youth work settings
- Smart casual/formal for meetings
- Leaders must maintain a high standard of hygiene, and clothing should be clean and tidy
- Young people give a high degree of importance to personal appearance. Therefore it is necessary to consider what your clothes are saying about you. For example, tight or revealing clothes or up-to-the-minute fashions may make you feel good about yourself, but they could give young people, colleagues and the wider community the wrong messages.

Alcohol and Substance Misuse

Young people often emulate the behaviour and actions of youth leaders.

Therefore leaders:

- Should not consume alcohol in the presence of young people, or where they might meet young people that they usually work with.
- Should not consume alcohol before going to work with young people.
- Should Not give the impression that excessive alcohol consumption is acceptable
- Should not condone the purchase of alcohol by or for people under the age of 18
- Personal opinion regarding the use of illegal substances is irrelevant when working with young people. The law must be seen to be upheld. The law does not require leaders to report incidents or alleged incidents of use or possession of illegal substances.

BUT, youth workers:

- Should not take illegal substances in the presence of young people, or where they might come into contact with young people that they usually work with.
- Should not take illegal substances before going to work with young people
- Should not give the impression that any involvement with illegal substances is acceptable

The points listed below are not intended to restrict smokers' freedom but to promote a healthy lifestyle to young people.



- Youth workers should not smoke in the presence of young people while working.
- Should not imply that smoking is not harmful to their health or implies maturity

Sex and Sexuality

While youth workers are encouraged, after suitable training, to engage in conversations and workshops about sexual health, sex education and sexual relationships, leaders:

- Should not actively promote sexual activity
- Should not engage in sexually provocative behaviour
- Should actively discourage sexually provocative behaviour and/or discussions
- Should not engage in intimate relationships with young people
- Should take action if they believe that a young person is being forced or cajoled into a sexual relationship with anyone
- Should support other leaders if provocative or suggestive statements are made about them
- Should, in the case of a complaint by either a youth or a leader of sexual impropriety conduct a full investigation and ensure the Board are involved at all times

Contact with the Media and/or the General Public

If a worker is approached by the press or a member of the public regarding an incident, procedures or security they should not comment but refer them to their supervisor.

Medication

Under no circumstances will leaders at the Aeolian administer medication of any kind to youth members without written permission from the youth's guardian, is trained to do so and has been briefed on existing conditions and symptoms.

Rights of Membership and Employment

The Aeolian reserves the right to expel youth members, volunteers or staff if it is seen that inappropriate behaviour has taken place.



CHILD PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Introduction

Youth work involves establishing trusting and supportive relationships with young people.

Youth Leaders work closely with young people, and are well placed to know when a young person may be at risk. Young people will more often confide in those in a position of trust if they do not see them as authority figures. Leaders need to be skilled communicators, as they can play a crucial role in supporting vulnerable young people.

The development of the relationship between the young person and the leader is underpinned by the principle of **confidentiality**.

Under most circumstances, it is appropriate for the leader to offer the young person complete confidentiality, and it is inappropriate for a leader to divulge information about a young person to anyone outside the Aeolian.

However, in a situation where a young person has provided information that suggests that they or another young person, is being harmed, is in danger of being harmed, or is harming themselves, *the normal rules of confidentiality do not apply*.

In such cases it is important that young people are aware that the leader will not be able to keep confidential any information of that nature.

Never say or suggest to a young person that you will keep secrets. If the young person is aware of your responsibilities to disclose information about abuse or suspected abuse, they will be able to choose whether to give the information.

Young people can be assured, however, that the information will only be shared in a situation where there is risk involved, and that the information will only be given to child protection professionals.

Leaders need to ensure that the young people they work with are and remain aware of situations in which confidentiality cannot be maintained.

Sensitive/confidential information must be stored in a secure place, such as a locked filing cabinet, in line with the Data Protection Act.



THE AEOLIAN COMMITMENT

The Aeolian is committed to safeguarding the welfare of the young people we work with by protecting them from physical, emotional and sexual harm, and from neglect, and creating and maintaining an environment in which young people are listened to and are encouraged to talk about any related concerns they may have. It is the responsibility of each person employed by or working with the Aeolian to help prevent physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and the neglect of young people, and to report any abuse that is suspected or discovered.

The Aeolian will promote youth development through the arts and culture available within the community.

Before commencement the youth's guardian is fully aware of the program and implications including commitment from both youth member and themselves.

I have read and understand the Aeolian Policy on Working with Youth and hereby agree to comply to the terms, conditions and requirements stated in this policy:

REVIEWED & ACCEPTED

NAME, the Employee

Date (MM/DD/YYYY)