APOLLO AUDIO HERTFORD • MUSIC TUITION & RECORDING STUDIO

MASTER POLICY & SAFEGUARDING HANDBOOK

Consolidated Statutory, Operational & Pastoral Governance for Pupils of All Ages (Under-18s, Young People & Adult Learners) • Effective: 2026–2027

Apollo Audio Hertford is a premier music school, rehearsal hub, and recording studio located in Hertford, Hertfordshire. We provide one-to-one instrumental and vocal tuition, ensemble coaching, music production courses, and holiday workshops to pupils of all ages—from early-years beginners and school-age students to adult learners and Vulnerable Adults. Because our studio operates across age groups and combines private acoustic booths with communal studio spaces, we maintain uncompromising standards of child protection, operational transparency, and inclusive musical education. This Master Handbook adapts and consolidates our eight core statutory and studio policies into one unified governance document.

Document Control & Policy Directory

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KEY STUDIO GOVERNANCE & HERTFORDSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

Studio Address: Apollo Audio Hertford, [Studio Street Address, Hertford, SG14] | **Tel:** [Studio Phone Number] | **Email:** [Safeguarding / Admin Email]
Studio Director & Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): [Name of Studio Director / DSL]
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): [Name of Deputy DSL / Senior Tutor]
Hertfordshire Children's Services (24/7 Referral): 0300 123 4043 | **Hertfordshire Adult Care Services (HSAB):** 0300 123 4042
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO - Hertfordshire): 01992 555480 / LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk | **Police Emergency:** 999 / 101

AT-A-GLANCE: WHAT EACH POLICY MEANS

ONE-PARAGRAPH PLAIN-ENGLISH BREAKDOWN

This standalone page breaks down each of Apollo Audio Hertford's eight policies into one simple, jargon-free paragraph so that adult learners, parents, carers, young musicians, and studio tutors can immediately understand how our rules protect and support everyone.

01 • Attendance **Attendance & Punctuality Policy:** Regular attendance and arriving on time are essential for building musical skill, confidence, and rhythm, whether you are a six-year-old learning piano or an adult mastering vocal production. At Apollo Audio Hertford, we take a register at the start of every individual lesson, band rehearsal, and workshop so we know every pupil is safe and accounted for. For children and teenagers, if a pupil does not arrive for their scheduled session and we have not heard from a parent or carer, our reception team will phone home within 15 minutes as a safeguarding check, and we report attendance directly to local schools for any daytime alternative-provision pupils.

02 • Behaviour **Behaviour & Studio Conduct Policy:** Apollo Audio Hertford is a creative, welcoming, and professional music studio where every pupil, tutor, and visitor deserves to feel respected, encouraged, and safe. Our behaviour policy means we treat each other with kindness, celebrate musical mistakes as part of learning, listen carefully to tutors, and take great care of expensive studio instruments, microphones, amplifiers, and recording consoles. We never allow bullying, discrimination, swearing, substance misuse, or aggressive behaviour; if someone struggles to follow studio expectations, we use calm, restorative conversations and work with parents or adult learners to put things right.

03 • Charging **Charging, Fees & Remissions Policy:** We believe in complete honesty and fairness around the cost of music lessons, studio hire, exam entries, and holiday workshops so there are never any hidden surprises. Tuition fees are agreed upfront and paid in advance, and because we reserve a dedicated tutor and soundproofed studio room specifically for your slot, we require at least 48 hours' notice to cancel or reschedule a lesson—otherwise the session fee remains payable, whereas any lesson cancelled by Apollo Audio will always be credited, refunded, or rescheduled. Through our Remissions scheme, we also offer discounted fees, bursaries, and free instrument use during lessons for families facing financial hardship or pupils referred through supported programmes.

04 • Safeguarding **Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy:** Keeping children, young people, and vulnerable adults safe is our absolute highest priority at Apollo Audio Hertford, above everything else we do. Because music tuition often happens one-to-one in closed acoustic rooms, all our studios have clear glass viewing panels, we enforce strict rules around physical contact when correcting instrument posture, and we never allow tutors to message under-18 pupils on private phones or social media. Every staff member is trained to spot signs of abuse, neglect, or distress and must report any concern immediately to our Designated Safeguarding Lead, who works directly with Hertfordshire Children's and Adult Services to protect learners.

05 • Prevent Duty **Prevent Duty & Counter-Extremism Policy:** As a community music hub teaching people of all ages, we have a duty under the national Prevent strategy to stop anyone from being drawn into extremism, radicalisation, or terrorism. In practice, this means our studio is a safe space where we promote British values—such as mutual respect, democracy, individual liberty, and tolerance of different faiths and backgrounds—while keeping a watchful eye out for any sudden changes in a pupil's wellbeing or extremist hate speech. We also ensure our studio Wi-Fi is safely filtered and that no rehearsal room, recording booth, or music production computer is ever used to create, record, or share extremist or hateful material.

06 • Equality (EEDI) **Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy:** Music is for everyone, and this policy guarantees that every learner at Apollo Audio Hertford is welcomed and valued regardless of their age, disability, neurodivergence, race, religion, gender, sex, or background. While equality means giving everyone the same opportunity to learn music, equity means we adapt our teaching and studio environment to meet individual needs—such as providing ear defenders for sensory-sensitive pupils, coloured sheet-music overlays for dyslexia, adaptive instrument straps, or step-free ground-floor studio rooms. We celebrate diverse musical genres from around the world and have zero tolerance for any form of prejudice or harassment.

POLICY 1: ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY & STUDIO SCHEDULING

REF: AAH-POL-01 • REVIEWED: NOV 2025 / OCT 2026

1.1 PURPOSE & MUSICAL ETHOS

Consistent attendance and punctuality are fundamental to musical progression, technical mastery, and safeguarding at Apollo Audio Hertford. Because our studio teaches pupils of all ages across structured 30-minute, 45-minute, and 60-minute slots—as well as group workshops and daytime alternative-provision sessions—every minute counts. Arriving on time ensures pupils have sufficient time to unpack instruments, tune up, warm up, and engage fully without encroaching on the next learner's booking.

1.2 STUDIO REGISTRATION & ARRIVAL PROTOCOLS

- **Mandatory Digital Register:** Tutors must record attendance on the Apollo Audio Studio Management System within the first 5 minutes of every individual lesson, group class, or studio session.
- **Arrival & Waiting Area:** Pupils should arrive 5 minutes prior to their scheduled start time and wait in the supervised reception waiting area until called by their tutor. Pupils must not enter studio booths uninvited while another session is in progress.
- **Safe Collection of Under-18s:** Parents/carers of pupils aged under 11 (or older pupils with specific SEND vulnerabilities) must escort their child into the studio reception and collect them promptly from inside reception at the end of the lesson. Pupils aged 11–17 may only arrive and depart independently if written parental consent is held on file.
- **Late Arrivals:** If a pupil arrives late, the tutor will deliver the remainder of the scheduled slot. Lessons cannot overrun into the next pupil's paid booking.

1.3 FIRST-CONTACT CALLING & UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE (SAFEGUARDING)

Where an under-18 pupil or Vulnerable Adult fails to attend a scheduled lesson without prior notification from a parent, carer, or commissioning school, Apollo Audio operates a strict "First-Contact" protocol to ensure the learner's safety. For daytime pupils commissioned by Hertfordshire schools or the Local Authority (e.g., Alternative Provision or EOTAS), absence is reported immediately to the home school's attendance officer.

LEARNER CATEGORY	ARRIVAL & REGISTRATION PROCEDURE	UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE / LATE ACTION
Daytime School / Alternative Provision Pupils	Signed in at reception upon arrival; attendance logged immediately on shared register.	Phone call to commissioning school and parent/carer within **10 minutes** of missed start time.
Under-16 Private & Group Pupils	Dropped off at reception by parent/carer (or signed in independently if written consent held).	Reception phones parent/carer within **15 minutes** if pupil has not arrived and no message was received.
Ages 16–17 Young Musicians	Check in at reception desk; tutor marks digital studio register at lesson start.	SMS/Phone check to pupil and parent/carer within **15 minutes** to verify safe whereabouts.
Adult Learners (18+)	Check in at reception desk; tutor marks digital studio register.	Courtesy SMS/email sent; welfare call made to emergency contact if adult is registered as vulnerable.
Persistent Absence (<85% Termly Attendance)	Monitored monthly by Studio Director and Administration Team.	Supportive review with parent/adult learner to adjust slot times, address barriers, or notify commissioning school.

MISSING PUPIL / UNCOLLECTED CHILD PROTOCOL

If a parent/carer is more than 10 minutes late collecting a child, reception will contact all emergency phone numbers on file while the child remains safely supervised by two DBS-checked staff members in reception. If no contact can be made after 45 minutes and the studio is closing, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact Hertfordshire Children's Services (0300 123 4043) or Hertfordshire Police (101) for safe care guidance.

POLICY 2: STUDIO BEHAVIOUR, CONDUCT & ACOUSTIC ETIQUETTE

REF: AAH-POL-02 • REVIEWED: 2026

2.1 POSITIVE MUSICAL CULTURE & MUTUAL RESPECT

Apollo Audio Hertford promotes a calm, inspiring, and disciplined studio environment where learners of every age can take creative risks, develop musicality, and collaborate safely. Our behaviour framework is rooted in positive reinforcement, trauma-informed understanding, and clear boundaries. Because we operate professional recording and rehearsal rooms containing high-voltage valve amplifiers, vintage microphones, mixing consoles, and acoustic instruments, exemplary behaviour is also a critical health and safety requirement.

2.2 THE FIVE GOLDEN STUDIO EXPECTATIONS (ALL AGES)

- **Respect People & Diversity:** Speak politely to tutors, reception staff, parents, and fellow musicians. Celebrate the achievements of beginners and advanced players alike; never mock someone's playing or vocal performance.
- **Respect Studio Equipment & Acoustics:** Never adjust amplifier volumes, phantom power (+48V), PA levels, or mixing desk faders without tutor permission. Food and open drinks are strictly prohibited near consoles, keyboards, and rack gear (capped water bottles only).
- **Protect Hearing Health:** Follow tutor instructions regarding safe monitoring levels (dB SPL) and wear studio ear protection during high-volume drum or full-band rehearsals.
- **Zero Tolerance for Bullying, Harassment & Substances:** Bullying (including cyberbullying in band group chats), discriminatory language, smoking, vaping, alcohol, or illicit substances are strictly prohibited anywhere on Apollo Audio premises.
- **Digital & Recording Consent:** Never photograph, film, or audio-record another pupil or tutor inside the studio without their explicit permission (and written parental consent for under-18s).

2.3 GRADUATED STUDIO RESPONSE TO UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Tutors are trained to de-escalate dysregulated behaviour calmly, recognising that frustration during practice or neurodivergent sensory overload requires patience and reasonable adjustments (such as a quiet 5-minute sensory break). Where deliberate misconduct occurs, Apollo Audio follows a four-stage graduated response:

STAGE	BEHAVIOUR TRIGGER / STUDIO INCIDENT	RESTORATIVE ACTION & CONSEQUENCE
Stage 1: Reminder	Low-level disruption, rough handling of instruments, ignoring volume safety, or off-task behaviour.	Clear verbal redirection from tutor; explanation of why the rule protects the pupil and equipment.
Stage 2: Reset	Continued refusal to follow instructions, unkind remarks in a group session, or unsafe cable/amp use.	2–5 minute supervised cool-down pause; restorative conversation; parent/carer informed at collection.
Stage 3: Studio Review	Persistent defiance, deliberate damage to studio gear, verbal abuse, or bullying another learner.	Session terminated early; formal meeting with Studio Director; Behaviour Support Agreement or repair invoice issued.
Stage 4: Exclusion	Physical violence, severe harassment, bringing weapons/drugs/alcohol onto premises, or safeguarding threat.	Immediate suspension or permanent termination of studio membership; referral to Police/DSL as required.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION & EQUIPMENT LIABILITY

Apollo Audio staff do not use corporal punishment under any circumstances. Reasonable, proportionate physical intervention is used *only* as a last resort to prevent immediate physical injury to a pupil/staff member or serious danger (e.g., pulling a child away from falling heavy PA equipment). Deliberate, malicious damage to studio equipment caused by reckless misconduct will be billed to the adult pupil or parent/carer under our Terms of Enrolment.

POLICY 3: CHARGING, TUITION FEES, CANCELLATIONS & REMISSIONS

REF: AAH-POL-03 • REVIEWED: NOV 2025 / OCT 2026

3.1 TRANSPARENT FEE STRUCTURE & PAYMENT TERMS

Apollo Audio Hertford is committed to fair, transparent pricing across all private music lessons, group classes, recording sessions, and school-commissioned placements. Tuition fees cover tutor remuneration, soundproofed studio maintenance, licensing, and use of in-house instruments during lessons. Fees are billed either via monthly recurring subscription or termly in advance, and must be settled prior to the first session of the billing cycle.

3.2 CANCELLATION, RESCHEDULING & NOTICE PERIODS

- **48-Hour Cancellation Rule (Individual Lessons):** Because your tutor and studio booth are reserved exclusively for your slot, we require a minimum of **48 hours' notice** to cancel or reschedule an individual lesson. Cancellations made with less than 48 hours' notice (including on-the-day absences) are charged in full and cannot be refunded.
- **Make-Up Credits (48+ Hours' Notice):** Where at least 48 hours' notice is given, pupils are entitled to reschedule the lesson using a Make-Up Credit (up to 2 per term, valid for 60 days, subject to tutor/room availability).
- **Studio-Cancelled Sessions:** If an Apollo Audio tutor is unwell or unavailable, we will first offer a qualified DBS-checked cover tutor. If no cover is available and Apollo Audio cancels the session, a 100% fee credit, refund, or priority rescheduled lesson is guaranteed.
- **Discontinuing Termly/Monthly Tuition:** Four weeks' written notice is required to terminate an ongoing regular weekly lesson slot.

SERVICE / ACTIVITY	STANDARD CHARGING BASIS	CANCELLATION & REMISSION RULE
1-to-1 Instrumental, Vocal & Production Tuition	Billed monthly by direct debit or termly in advance (30, 45, or 60-minute slots).	48 hours' notice required for make-up credit; <48 hours charged at 100%.
Group Ensemble, Band & Theory Classes	Fixed termly course fee per enrolled pupil.	Non-refundable for individual missed weeks (as the group class still runs).
Graded Music Exams (ABRSM, Trinity, Rockschool)	Exam board entry fee + accompanist/studio hosting fee passed at cost.	Payable upon registration; subject to exam board withdrawal deadlines.
In-Studio Instrument & Gear Use	**Free of charge** during all lessons at Apollo Audio Hertford.	Take-home instrument hire subject to separate refundable deposit agreement.
School / Local Authority Commissioned Placements	Invoiced termly or monthly under Service Level Agreement (SLA).	Governed by commissioning SLA notice terms with Hertfordshire schools/LA.
Supported Learners & Financial Remissions	Eligible for 25%–100% fee remission via Apollo Access Fund / HAF / Pupil Premium.	Assessed confidentially by Studio Director; zero stigma or differentiation in provision.

REMISSIONS, BURSARIES & INCLUSIVE ACCESS COMMITMENT

Apollo Audio Hertford believes financial hardship should never lock a talented or enthusiastic learner out of music. Our **Remissions Policy** provides: (1) subsidised or free holiday spaces through Hertfordshire's *HAPpy (Holiday Activity and Food)* programme where applicable; (2) discounted rates for pupils funded via School Pupil Premium, Looked After Child (LAC) Virtual School funding, or EHC Plans; and (3) discretionary payment plans and hardship bursaries for families experiencing sudden income shocks, upon confidential application to the Studio Director.

POLICY 4: CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING (PART 1 — STUDIO PRACTICE)

REF: AAH-POL-04A • REVIEWED: 2026–2027

4.1 STATUTORY FRAMEWORK & ALL-AGE SCOPE

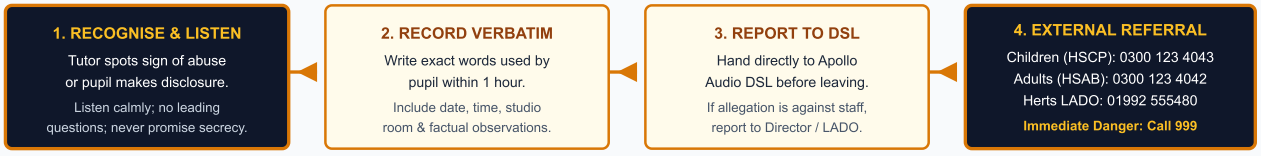
Apollo Audio Hertford fully recognises its moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children (under 18) and Vulnerable Adults (18+) attending our studio. This policy is written in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026)*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, the *Children Acts 1989 and 2004*, the *Care Act 2014*, and *Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP)* and *Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB)* procedures. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: every tutor, sound engineer, administrator, and volunteer must act on the principle that **"it could happen here."**

4.2 MUSIC STUDIO SAFE WORKING PRACTICE (1-TO-1 TUITION & RECORDING BOOTHS)

One-to-one music tuition and vocal recording present unique safeguarding dynamics that require strict environmental and behavioural controls across Apollo Audio Hertford:

- **Line-of-Sight Visibility:** All teaching studios and recording booths must have unobstructed vision panels in doors or internal studio windows. Blinds or curtains must never be covered during a lesson. CCTV operates in communal corridors and reception (never inside toilets).
- **Physical Contact & Posture Correction:** Music tuition occasionally requires demonstrating hand position, embouchure, breathing posture, or bow hold. Tutors must always Prioritise verbal explanation and self-demonstration first. If brief physical adjustment is pedagogically necessary, the tutor must: (a) ask the pupil's explicit permission first, (b) explain what they are doing, (c) touch only safe areas (hands, wrists, forearms, upper shoulders) and **never** touch the chest, diaphragm, waist, or legs, and (d) respect an immediate "no" without question.
- **Multi-Age Studio Separation:** Because Apollo Audio teaches children alongside adult learners, under-18s are never placed in unsupervised 1-to-1 groups with unvetted adult learners. Studio toilets are single-occupancy lockable cubicles to ensure complete privacy across age groups.
- **Digital, Social Media & Phone Boundaries:** Tutors and staff are strictly forbidden from sharing personal phone numbers, personal email addresses, or connecting with under-18 pupils on WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, or gaming platforms. All scheduling, backing tracks, and practice notes must be sent exclusively via official Apollo Audio email accounts or parent/carer accounts.

Figure 4.1 — Apollo Audio Hertford Immediate Safeguarding Escalation Flowchart



HANDLING A DISCLOSURE IN A MUSIC LESSON

Pupils often form trusted bonds with their music tutor and may disclose abuse through conversation or even through song lyrics they have written. If a pupil discloses harm: listen calmly, reassure them they have done the right thing by telling you, **never promise confidentiality**, do not ask leading questions, and report to the DSL immediately after the session.

POLICY 4: CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING (PART 2 — CATEGORIES & ALLEGATIONS)

REF: AAH-POL-04B • REVIEWED: 2026–2027

4.3 RECOGNISING CATEGORIES OF ABUSE & SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING RISKS

All Apollo Audio personnel receive annual safeguarding training covering the four core categories of abuse alongside specific contextual safeguarding risks affecting children, teenagers, and adults with care and support needs in Hertfordshire:

CATEGORY OF HARM	DEFINITION & INDICATORS	MUSIC STUDIO CONTEXTUAL VIGILANCE
Physical Abuse	Hitting, shaking, burning, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult.	Unexplained bruising on wrists, arms, or neck noticed during instrumental posture or sleeve adjustment.
Emotional Abuse	Persistent emotional maltreatment causing severe adverse effects on emotional development and self-worth.	Extreme fear of making a wrong note, severe anxiety about parental reaction to exam/practice progress.
Sexual Abuse & Exploitation (CSE)	Forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable person to take part in sexual activities (contact or online).	Age-inappropriate sexualised behaviour or lyrics, unexplained expensive gifts/phones, older "boyfriends/managers" waiting outside.
Neglect	Persistent failure to meet basic physical, medical, nutritional, or emotional needs.	Arriving consistently hungry, unwashed, in inadequate winter clothing, or left uncollected late at night.
Child-on-Child Abuse	Bullying, sexual harassment, non-consensual sharing of images, or initiation/hazing between peers.	Monitored closely during group band workshops, holiday rock camps, and waiting-room interactions.
Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) & County Lines	Coercing young people into moving drugs, cash, or weapons across county borders.	Sudden truancy, burner phones, gang-affiliated drill/rap threats involving real-world local violence.

4.4 MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST TUTORS OR STAFF (LADO & LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS)

- **Threshold Allegations (Hertfordshire LADO):** If an allegation is made that any tutor, engineer, volunteer, or staff member at Apollo Audio Hertford has: (1) behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child or vulnerable adult; (2) possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; (3) behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; or (4) behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including transferable risk in their private life), it must be reported **immediately** to the Studio Director/DSL. The DSL will contact the **Hertfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01992 555480 within 24 hours** before undertaking any internal investigation. If the allegation concerns the Studio Director, staff must contact the Hertfordshire LADO directly.
- **Low-Level Concerns:** Any behaviour by a staff member that does not meet the harm threshold but is inconsistent with the Studio Code of Conduct (e.g., overly familiarity, favouritism, or forgetting to keep a studio door viewing window clear) must be shared with the DSL and logged in the confidential Low-Level Concerns Record to identify patterns early.
- **Whistleblowing Protection:** Staff who raise genuine safeguarding concerns in good faith are protected from victimisation. External whistleblowing advice is available via the **NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line (0800 028 0285)**.

> **INFORMATION SHARING WITH COMMISSIONING SCHOOLS**
> Where a pupil attends Apollo Audio Hertford during the school day under an Alternative Provision or peripatetic arrangement, any safeguarding concern or disclosure is logged on our secure system and shared immediately by phone and encrypted email with both the commissioning school's DSL and Hertfordshire Children's Services.

POLICY 5: PREVENT DUTY & COUNTER-EXTREMISM POLICY

REF: AAH-POL-05 • REVIEWED: SEPT 2026

5.1 STATUTORY DUTY & STUDIO CONTEXT

In accordance with Section 26 of the *Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015* and the revised *Prevent Duty Guidance*, Apollo Audio Hertford exercises due regard to the need to prevent pupils of all ages (children, teenagers, and adults) from being drawn into terrorism, radicalisation, and extremist ideologies. Because music, lyricism, digital audio production, and subcultures play a powerful role in identity formation, our studio maintains vigilant oversight over both pastoral wellbeing and studio facility usage.

5.2 PROMOTING FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH VALUES THROUGH MUSIC

Apollo Audio actively embeds Fundamental British Values into our everyday teaching culture:

- **Democracy:** Encouraging collaborative decision-making in band rehearsals, ensemble setlists, and group workshops where every musician's voice is heard equally.
- **The Rule of Law:** Teaching respect for studio safety rules, copyright law, intellectual property, and UK legislation.
- **Individual Liberty:** Supporting learners to express their personal creativity, musical identity, and artistic voice safely within respectful boundaries.
- **Mutual Respect & Tolerance of Different Faiths and Beliefs:** Exploring diverse musical traditions from across the globe (Classical, Jazz, Gospel, West African percussion, South Asian classical, Folk, Hip-Hop, Electronic, and Rock) and challenging all forms of antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism, or sectarian hatred.

5.3 STUDIO RECORDING VETTING, IT FILTERING & REFERRAL

Apollo Audio Hertford strictly prohibits the use of its rehearsal rooms, vocal booths, mixing suites, or studio computers to write, record, mix, master, or distribute lyrics, podcasts, or audio material that promotes terrorism, proscribed organisations, neo-Nazi/far-right extremism, Islamist extremism, or incitement to hatred.

PREVENT RISK AREA	VULNERABILITY INDICATORS & STUDIO SIGNS	APOLLO AUDIO CONTROL & ESCALATION
Behavioural & Ideological Shift	Sudden withdrawal from peers, fixation on extremist symbols/conspiracies, dehumanising language towards other groups.	Tutor logs concern using the **Notice – Check – Share** procedure with the Studio DSL immediately.
Lyrical & Recording Content	Attempt to record vocal tracks, spoken word, or samples glorifying terrorist acts, extremist violence, or hate speech.	Session engineer/tutor halts recording immediately, preserves evidence if unlawful, and alerts DSL.
Studio Wi-Fi & Production Macs/PCs	Accessing extremist forums, terrorist propaganda, or violent material on studio DAWs or guest Wi-Fi.	Content-filtered studio firewall; screen visibility during music tech lessons; zero unsupervised internet access for U18s.
External Studio Hire & Visiting Artists	External bands, promoters, or workshop leaders booking rehearsal or recording space at Apollo Audio.	Booking terms prohibit extremist content; background due diligence conducted on visiting guest speakers/clinicians.

HERTFORDSHIRE PREVENT & CHANNEL REFERRAL CONTACTS

All Prevent concerns are reviewed by the Studio DSL using the **Notice – Check – Share** framework. Where a radicalisation risk is identified, the DSL will make a referral to the **Hertfordshire Prevent Team** (*prevent@herts.pnn.police.uk* / Police 101) and Hertfordshire Children's/Adult Safeguarding. In an immediate terrorist threat, call **999** or the **Anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321**.

POLICY 6: PUPIL EQUALITY, EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION (EEDI)

REF: AAH-POL-06 • REVIEWED: 2026

6.1 COMMITMENT TO THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

Apollo Audio Hertford is an inclusive musical community serving pupils from early childhood to older adulthood. In full compliance with the *Equality Act 2010*, we eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations across all nine Protected Characteristics: **age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation**.

6.2 EQUALITY VS. EQUITY IN MUSIC EDUCATION

We distinguish clearly between *Equality* and *Equity* in our studio rooms. **Equality** means every learner has the right to high-quality musical instruction, safe facilities, and performance opportunities. **Equity** recognises that learners have different starting points, neurotypes, physical needs, and life experiences, and requires our tutors to make proactive reasonable adjustments so every pupil can thrive.

INCLUSION DIMENSION	BARRIERS PUPILS MAY EXPERIENCE	APOLLO AUDIO EQUITABLE STUDIO ADJUSTMENTS
Neurodivergence (Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia)	Sensory overload from loud instruments, difficulty reading black-on-white notation, executive functioning fatigue.	Acoustic ear defenders, dimmable booth lighting, tinted notation/tablet overlays, chunked 10-minute lesson activities, visual schedules.
Physical Disability & Mobility Needs	Stairs, heavy doors, standard instrument ergonomics, or prolonged standing during vocal/guitar sessions.	Ground-floor accessible studio allocation, adjustable ergonomic stools/stands, lightweight/3-quarter size instruments, adaptive straps/switches.
All-Age Inclusion (Young Children to Seniors)	Adult beginners feeling self-conscious alongside younger learners, or age-inappropriate repertoire.	Age-appropriate repertoire choices, tailored adult-learner coaching pace, respectful adult waiting and scheduling zones.
Cultural, Faith & Linguistic Diversity	Eurocentric repertoire bias, religious observance/prayer clashes, or English as an Additional Language (EAL).	Global musical repertoire, flexible rescheduling around religious festivals (e.g., Eid, Yom Kippur, Diwali), visual/aural demonstration.
Gender & LGBTQ+ Inclusion	Gender stereotyping of instruments (e.g., drums/tech as "male") or misgendering.	Active promotion of female and non-binary producers/instrumentalists; single-occupancy gender-neutral toilets; respected pronouns.

6.3 SEND PARTNERSHIP & CHALLENGING PREJUDICE

- **Individual Musical Learning Plans:** Upon enrolment, parents/carers and adult learners are invited to share any SEND, medical, or accessibility requirements on our confidential Learner Profile so tutors can prepare adaptations before Lesson 1.
- **Alternative Provision & EHCP Support:** For pupils referred by schools or Hertfordshire County Council with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), Apollo Audio aligns tuition targets directly with the pupil's EHCP outcomes and provides termly progress reports.
- **Responding to Discriminatory Incidents:** Any racist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, sexist, or ageist remark made in the studio is challenged immediately, recorded on the Studio Incident Log, and addressed with restorative education and formal sanctions under our Behaviour Policy.

ACCESSIBLE EXAM & PERFORMANCE ARRANGEMENTS

When entering pupils for graded music exams (ABRSM, Trinity, Rockschool), Apollo Audio coordinates all Special Consideration and Access Arrangements—including extra time for sight-reading, enlarged/Braille notation, ear-test modifications for hearing-impaired pupils, and rest breaks.

POLICY 7: SAFER RECRUITMENT, DBS VETTING & TUTOR CHECKS

REF: AAH-POL-07 • REVIEWED: SEPT 2025 / OCT 2026

7.1 DETER, REJECT, AND PREVENT

Apollo Audio Hertford operates a rigorous Safer Recruitment framework aligned with Part 3 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026)*. Because instrumental tutors, vocal coaches, and studio engineers frequently work in 1-to-1 acoustic studios with children and vulnerable adults, every stage of our hiring process—from job advert to induction—is designed to deter unsuitable applicants, reject candidates who pose a risk, and maintain a vigilant safeguarding culture.

7.2 END-TO-END SAFER RECRUITMENT VETTING STAGES

All permanent employees, self-employed peripatetic music tutors, freelance sound engineers, reception staff, and volunteers must complete the following mandatory checks before teaching or working unsupervised at Apollo Audio Hertford:

RECRUITMENT STAGE	MANDATORY APOLLO AUDIO REQUIREMENT	VERIFICATION & SCR RECORDING
1. Advert & Application	All adverts state our safeguarding commitment and Enhanced DBS requirement. Standardised application form required—**CVs alone are never accepted**.	Full chronological work history audited; all employment gaps explored in writing.
2. Shortlisting & Online Search	Two senior staff shortlist against objective criteria. Shortlisted candidates undergo a lawful public online/social media check (Per KCSIE) for safeguarding red flags.	Candidate notified in advance; any public concerns explored at interview.
3. Self-Disclosure & References	Signed criminal record self-disclosure and **two independent professional references** (including most recent employer/education setting) obtained prior to interview.	Open "to whom it may concern" references rejected; referees verified by phone.
4. Face-to-Face Interview & Audition	Panel includes at least one Safer Recruitment trained lead (Studio Director). Includes practical teaching audition plus scenario-based safeguarding questions.	Assesses professional boundaries, attitude to child protection, and emotional maturity.
5. Enhanced DBS + Barred List	**Enhanced DBS Certificate with Children's Barred List check** (and Adult Barred List where applicable) required before starting regulated activity.	Original physical certificate inspected; certificate number and date logged on SCR.
6. Overseas, ID & Right to Work	Photographic ID, proof of address, Right to Work in the UK, musical/teaching qualifications, and Overseas Criminal Record Certificate (if lived abroad 3+ months in 5 yrs).	Originals copied, signed, and dated by Studio Director; stored in secure staff file.

7.3 SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD (SCR), INDUCTION & VISITING CONTRACTORS

- **Single Central Record (SCR):** Apollo Audio maintains a secure, up-to-date Single Central Record logging identity, Enhanced DBS number/issue date, Barred List clearance, right-to-work, references, overseas checks, and safeguarding training dates for all staff and freelance tutors. The SCR is audited termly by the Studio Director and made available (via a Letter of Assurance) to commissioning Hertfordshire schools.
- **Mandatory Safeguarding Induction:** No tutor may teach their first lesson until they have read this Master Policy Handbook, signed the Staff Code of Conduct, and completed KCSIE Part 1 & Prevent training.
- **Visiting Technicians, Piano Tuners & Guests:** External contractors (e.g., piano tuners, amp repair technicians) and visiting session musicians who do not hold a verified Enhanced DBS check must sign in at reception, wear a red **VISITOR** lanyard, and be supervised at all times when under-18s are on site.

POLICY 8: COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE & DISPUTE RESOLUTION

REF: AAH-POL-08 • REVIEWED: 2026

8.1 CONSTRUCTIVE RESOLUTION & SCOPE

Apollo Audio Hertford prides itself on exceptional musical tuition, customer care, and community partnerships. However, if a pupil, parent/carer, adult learner, commissioning school, or neighbour has a concern or complaint, we treat it seriously, respectfully, and without defensiveness. This policy applies to all studio operations, tuition quality, billing disputes, and staff conduct (note: any complaint involving a child protection or safeguarding allegation bypasses this procedure and is escalated immediately under **Policy 4** to the DSL/Hertfordshire LADO).

8.2 THREE-STAGE COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION TIMELINE

Complaints should be raised within **3 months** of the incident occurring. We aim to resolve the vast majority of concerns swiftly at Stage 1 without the need for formal correspondence:

STAGE	WHO HANDLES THE COMPLAINT	PROCESS & ACTION	TARGET TIMESCALE
Stage 1: Informal Resolution	Tutor, Reception Manager, or Studio Coordinator.	Complainant speaks or emails reception/tutor directly. Issue discussed calmly; practical solution (e.g., tutor swap, credit, room change) agreed.	Acknowledge within **24 hours**; resolve within **5 working days**.
Stage 2: Formal Investigation	Studio Director (or Deputy Lead if complaint concerns Director).	Written complaint submitted to Studio Director. Full investigation conducted (reviewing registers, billing logs, and interviewing staff). Formal written outcome issued.	Acknowledge within **3 working days**; written outcome within **15 working days**.
Stage 3: Independent Appeal Review	Independent Senior Reviewer / Advisory Panel (uninvolved in Stages 1–2).	Written appeal requested within 10 working days of Stage 2 outcome. Reviewer examines all evidence and issues a final binding determination.	Review completed and final letter issued within **20 working days**.
School / LA Commissioned Pupils	Studio Director + Commissioning School Headteacher/SENCO.	Where a complaint relates to a daytime school-commissioned pupil, the commissioning Hertfordshire school is notified and invited to co-review at Stage 2.	Aligned with Hertfordshire County Council SLA timescales.

8.3 SERIAL, VEXATIOUS OR ABUSIVE COMPLAINTS & CONFIDENTIALITY

All complaints are recorded in the confidential Apollo Audio Complaints Log, including whether they were resolved at Stage 1, 2, or 3, and any policy improvements made as a result. While we welcome robust feedback, Apollo Audio will not tolerate aggressive, threatening, or abusive behaviour towards studio staff; in such cases, communication will be restricted to written correspondence only.

Master Policy Approval & Annual Review Sign-Off

This consolidated Master Policy & Safeguarding Handbook has been formally approved by the leadership of Apollo Audio Hertford and applies to all staff, freelance tutors, engineers, volunteers, pupils, and visitors.

Approved by Studio Director & Senior DSL:	Counter-Signed by Deputy DSL / Governance Lead:
Name: [Studio Director Name] | Date: [Date]	Name: [Deputy DSL Name] | Next Review: October 2027