

Child Protection Policy

The British and International Federation of Festivals for Music, Dance and Speech (BIFF) works for amateur festivals everywhere to help create thousands of educational performance opportunities for children and young people each year.

The Federation and our member Festivals are committed to ensuring safe environments for children and young people and believe that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind.

We recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to recommend best practice which protects them.

This policy applies to our Board of Trustees, paid staff, Adjudicator members, volunteers, students or anyone working on behalf of the Federation and our member Festivals. It has been drawn up on the basis of relevant law and guidance that seeks to protect children and young people, and its purpose is to set out the overarching principles that guide our approach.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare

The purpose of the policy:

- to provide protection for the children and young people who participate in our festivals, including the children of festival members
- to provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a Federation Head of Safeguarding and, for each festival, at least one Festival Safeguarding Officer
- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and safe working practice for staff and volunteers
- working within the legislation and guidance that specifically addresses the needs of young performers (specifically, the Children and Young People Acts 1933 and 1963, and the Children (Performance and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- adopting a safe and balanced approach to the issue of creating and using photography and images of children and young people at our festivals and in our communications
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child protection and safe working practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

The Federation will review this policy each year in line with NSPCC guidance or sooner in light of any changes in legislation or guidance.

Creating Safer Festivals for Everyone

The Federation and its member Festivals use the following policies and procedures to provide safer festivals for everyone:

1. A single, definitive Child Protection Policy adopted by all Federation Festivals.
2. One or more designated Festival Safeguarding Officers (FSO) appointed for each Federation Festival:

For South Cumbria Musical Festival:

Name: Peter Kent Phone: 07896 811337

Name: Robert McClean Phone: 07771 422117

The above people can also be contacted during Festival week on mobile 07773 403686

3. Best practice advice in the form of Safe Working Practice leaflet, Festival Child Protection leaflet, and any other guidance produced by the Federation. This advice is supported by support and training for all Festival staff and volunteers. Guidance includes clear reporting procedures for anyone with a concern about a child.
4. Appropriate recruitment and induction procedures for all new staff and volunteers responsible for providing safe environments for everyone attending/performing at a Federation Festival.
5. All Festival personnel wear a badge to identify their roles. All teachers/parents/guardians/carers are asked to report all incidents of any nature to anyone wearing a Festival badge. All reported incidents will be handled in accordance with the Safe Working Practice and Festival Child Protection best practice advice. In addition, we will ensure the availability of a quiet area / room where concerns can be expressed in private.
6. For the duration of a Festival all teachers/parents/guardians/carers are responsible for the continuous care and supervision of their own children/pupils. If they are unable to attend personally, they must delegate their responsibilities to an identified adult and ensure that their children/pupils are aware of the identity and name of the person responsible for their care. This includes supervision throughout all Festival venues, practice and changing areas that may be provided. The Festival cannot take any responsibility for property left unattended.
7. We do not permit any unauthorised photography at our Federation Festivals. For further information on what is and is not authorised, please contact the Festival Safeguarding Officer or anyone wearing a festival badge. If any child, young person or parent/carer is concerned about any photography or recording taking place at an event, please contact the Festival Safeguarding Officer, who will be pleased to discuss this matter with you.
8. Some children and adults with support needs may need help in order to take part. If this is the case, we ask the responsible teachers/parents/guardians/carers to contact the Festival Organisers prior to arrival. The Festival aims to meet these needs wherever possible but must know beforehand in order to prepare support – or to advise that help cannot be provided on this occasion.
9. The Festival's Child Protection Policy and its approach to Creating Safer Festivals for Everyone are published explicitly in our Syllabus, Programme and Website. By completing and signing the entry form all parents / guardians / carers and teachers of entrants under 18 (or adults of any age who may require additional support) confirm that they give (or have obtained) the necessary consents for the entrants to take part in the Festival. Without consent the entry to the Festival cannot be accepted.