

## Belfast Musical Festival of Music, Speech and Drama - Child Protection Policy

The **British and International Federation of Festivals for Music, Dance and Speech** work 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.

### 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
- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and safe working practice for staff and volunteers
- 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 November in line with Safe Network guidance or sooner in light of any changes in legislation or guidance. All changes will be communicated to our member Festivals in time for the start of the new Festival year.

Delivered in partnership with



## Creating Safer Festivals for Everyone

The Federation and its member Festivals use the following policies and procedures to create **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. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Best practice advice in the form of **Safe Working Practice** and **Festival Child Protection leaflets**, with support and training for all Festival staff and volunteers. Including clear reporting procedures for anyone with a concern about a child.
4. Appropriate recruitment and induction procedures for all new Festival staff and volunteers responsible for providing safe environments for everyone attending / performing at a Federation Festival.
5. All Festival personnel wear an official Festival badge. All teachers/parents/guardians /carers are asked to report all incidents of any nature to anyone wearing a 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 responsibility for any property left unattended.
7. No unauthorised photography, audio or video recording of children and young people is allowed at our Festivals. Where parents/guardians/carers do not wish photos to be taken at all, then the responsible adult attending should ensure that their child is not included in official photos.
8. Some children and vulnerable adults may have specific needs in order to take part. If this is the case we ask the responsible teachers/parents/guardians/carers to contact the Festival Organisers at the time of entry. The Festival actively seeks wherever possible to meet these needs, 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 approach to Creating Safer Festivals for Everyone is published explicitly in our Syllabus, Programme and on our Website. By completing and signing the entry form all parents / guardians / carers and teachers of performers under 18 (or vulnerable adults of any age) confirm that they give (or have obtained) the necessary consents for the performers to take part in the Festival. Without consent the entry to the Festival cannot be accepted.