

WORCESTERSHIRE CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL 2026

SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Review Date: 01/09/2025
Next Review Date: 01/09/2026
Festival Safeguarding Officer (FSO): Phillip Ray

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

This Policy aligns with the British and International Federation of Festivals 'Creating Safer Festivals for Everyone document'.

The British and International Federation of Festivals and Worcestershire Creative Arts Festival are committed to ensuring a safe environment for children and young people and recognise our responsibility to safeguard their welfare by a commitment to recommend best practice which protects them.

This Policy applies to all personnel working on behalf of Worcestershire Creative Arts Festival.

We recognise that:

The safety of children and members of other vulnerable groups is paramount. All children and **vulnerable adults 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. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously, responded to swiftly and appropriately and all the festival's organisers and volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns.

THE PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

To provide protection for the children and young people who participate in our Festival, including the children of festival members.

To provide Festival personnel 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 all Festival staff.

We will provide effective management for Festival personnel through supervision, support and training.

Any concerns will be documented, signed and dated and passed to the FSO.

We will share information about child protection and safe working practice with parents and volunteer staff

If deemed necessary, we will share information about concerns with appropriate agencies.

TO WHOM DOES THIS POLICY APPLY

This policy relates to children under the age of 18yrs and members of vulnerable groups of any age whose needs are identified to the Festival organisers by parents/guardians/and /or teachers prior to their arrival at the Festival. Our Festival actively seeks, wherever possible, to meet these needs (including those with physical disabilities) but must know beforehand in order to provide assistance.

THE FESTIVAL ENVIRONMENT

The object of the Festival is to provide a safe environment for amateur performance in Music and Drama, combined with an educational element from professional adjudicators. Competitors up to the age of 18yrs are the responsibility of their parents, guardians, carers or teachers whilst at the Festival. Public areas, practice rooms, toilets and changing areas will NOT be supervised by Festival Stewards on the days of the Festival.

Where parents/guardians /carers/teachers are not personally attending with their children, this Policy requires them to be satisfied that their children will be accompanied to the festival and adequately supervised by responsible adults acting at all times on their behalf.

A copy of this Policy is available online on our website[wcaf.org.uk], in the Festival Syllabus, Festival Programme and displayed publicly in the Reception area on Festival days. All stewards are made aware of this Policy at their training sessions.

THE FESTIVAL PERSONNEL

All Festival Personnel are volunteers.

Names and addresses of all members of the Festival committee and Stewards are held securely by the FSO and used solely for the purpose of the Festival. The Adjudicators and Festival committee are DBS checked and stewards are required to complete the required British and International Federation of Festival's recruitment form. All stewards attend a 2-hour Training session prior to the Festival Day including Safeguarding and Fire Evacuation Procedures.

Adjudicators, Committee members, Stewards, Photographer, First Aider will sign in/out on Festival days and wear an identifiable badge.

MOBILE PHONES, PHOTOGRAPHS, VIDEO RECORDING

An official photographer will be appointed to take photos. They will be required to wear an identity badge.

It is the responsibility of the parent/teacher/carer/guardian to give permission on entry form for official photographs to be taken which may subsequently be used by the Press or on the Festival website.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer/guardian/teacher to notify the FSO of any child not able to be included in a photograph for social/legal reasons.

All mobile phones must be switched off during classes.

No videoing or photography will be allowed during classes except for the official photographer. Any person infringing this rule will be asked to leave the room where the class is being held.

UNACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE THRESHOLDS

The Festival aims to celebrate the best and highest forms of literature and language, and therefore reserves the right to refuse entries that are made up of continuously bad language, sexual inferences and/or gratuitous expletives. We ask that you present your work in a manner that respects the "family" orientated nature of the Festival and avoids the unnecessary exposure of younger children to inappropriate themes and language.

ONLINE SAFETY - ONLINE CLASSES

This policy covers the use of social media by the Festival. Permission must be given on the entry form by the parent/guardian to allow a video performance if required to be used. This permission will be held safely by Festival personnel. The Festival will be using a third-party platform: Play and Perform (www.playandperform.co.uk) to ensure the secure delivery of the best virtual event possible. The video performance will be distributed only to Festival Personnel and the appropriate Adjudicator and deleted once adjudication has taken place. Access to the video will be by protected password.

If recording for online submission, this is the responsibility of the host of the location at which the recorded performance takes place (i.e. parent/guardian/teacher). Hosts should ensure the space used is appropriate for the performance and is free from Health and safety risks such as slip or trip hazards. It is the responsibility of the teacher/parent to assess the suitability of the location for recording the video and to follow the Government Guidelines on Covid -19 regarding social distancing, sanitisation, masks, in place in that area at the time of recording. The Festival is not responsible for any injury that may occur because of a video performance being made.

DATA PROTECTION

We only use the data you supply to us for the purposes of running the Worcestershire Creative Arts Festival. Information is not shared with any other organisations. The Festival uses a third-party platform Play and Perform [www.playandperform.co.uk]

Personal data is used to manage only your Festival involvement with Worcestershire Creative Arts Festival Entry Forms will be stored securely in an encrypted form and deleted 18 months after the closing date of entries.

RISK ASSESSMENT

A full Risk Assessment is carried out by the FSO in collaboration with any host venue prior to the Festival days. This will include disabled access and toilet provision.

We will follow Government guidelines on Covid -19 in place at the time of the Festival.

CONCERNS

Any concerns must be documented, dated, signed and sent to the FSO.

We will seek to share information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involve parents and children if appropriate.

THE LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE SUPPORTING THIS POLICY

Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2015). The Children Act 1989, 2004; The Protection of Children Act 1999; The Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006; The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974; The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000; The Policy Act 1997; The Data Protection Act 2018, The Human Rights Act 1998; Protection of Freedom Act 2012. BIFF Online Safety Policy Guidelines; and Child Protection Company 2022.

By submitting your entry form, you consent to the Worcestershire Creative Arts Festival processing and storing your contact details for specific use by the WCAF Committee (UKGDPR May 2018), The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

POLICY REVIEW

The Festival Committee will review this Policy annually. Child Protection accreditation will be renewed every two years. In doing so the FSO will look to the British & International Federation of Festivals for support and that body, in turn, will look to other agencies for good practice, most notably the NSPCC and Arts Council of England policy guidelines.

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