THE BRITISH AND INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF FESTIVALS CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT AS ADOPTED BY BEDFORDSHIRE FESTIVAL OF MUSIC, SPEECH & DRAMA

The British and International Federation of Festivals for Music, Dance and Speech work for amateur festivals everywhere to help create thousands of education 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 the safeguarding and welfare of the children by following the recommended best practice which protects them.

This policy applies to our Trustees, paid staff, adjudicators, volunteers, students or anyone working on behalf of the Federation and member Festivals.

We recognise that:

• The welfare of all people is paramount.
• All people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, identity, physical or mental health, 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 people's welfare.

The purpose of the policy is:

• 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, 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.

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: Lucy Copeman, Chairman

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 persons working with children/vulnerable adults have a responsibility to protect them. There are, however, key people within the Festival who will have specific responsibilities under safeguarding procedures and have been trained to deal with an incident.
All teachers/parents/guardians/carers are asked to report all incidents of any nature to anyone wearing a Festival badge who will direct you to a responsible person. 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.

All responsible persons will be wearing a **YELLOW** badge;
Mrs Lucy Copeman, Chairman – Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs Irina Ermakova, Chief Steward – Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs Elisa Tadiello, Festival Secretary – responsible person
Mr Robert Trunchion, Treasurer – responsible person
Mr Henry Vann, Vice chairman and Hon. Secretary – responsible person
Mr William Burton, Trustee – responsible person
Mrs Olivia Cooper, Trustee – responsible person
Mrs Sally Merryweather, Trustee – responsible person
Mr Manoj Gupta, Trustee – responsible person
Mrs Lucy Eggleton, Trustee - responsible person
Mr Neil Morgan, Trustee – responsible person
Mr Peter Blunt, Trustee – responsible person
Mrs Sheila Kaznowska, Deputy Chief Steward – responsible person
Mrs Margaret Mason, Deputy Chief Steward – responsible person
Mrs Sue Allen, Deputy Chief Steward – responsible person

During Festival week at least two of the persons named above will be on duty at all times that the Halls are open to the public.
All Festival Personnel will be required to wear a name badge. Responsible people will wear a yellow badge and all other volunteers will have white badges. Adjudicators will wear Federation I.D. badges.

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. This includes supervision throughout all Festival venues, practice and changing rooms that may be provided.
The Festival cannot take responsibility for any property left unattended.

7. The Festival takes place within the Corn Exchange Complex, St Paul's Square, Bedford.
Other venues in the Town may be used for specialist classes.
Restriction of public access cannot be guaranteed. Disabled access is available to all buildings.
The Festival cannot take responsibility for the supervision of children and vulnerable adults when moving between venues or at times when the Festival is not in progress.
Toilets, changing areas and practice rooms are available within the venues but they are NOT directly supervised by the Festival or venue staff.

8. No unauthorised photography, audio or video recording is allowed in the performance areas at our Festivals. The Festival may engage an official photographer. 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.

9. 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 prior to arrival. 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. If there is something the performer would like to make us aware of in confidence e.g. disability, mental health challenges, the performer or parent/carer in the case of a minor, should contact the Festival at point of entry and the Festival will, to the best of its ability, discuss and mutually agree with the performer/parent/carer the most suitable way for this to be managed to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

10. 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 entrants under 18 (or vulnerable adults of any age) 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.

Reviewed and re-adopted: June 2025