

City of London Festival Child Protection Policy

1.1 Policy statement

The City of London Festival believes that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount;
- All children have the right to be safeguarded from harm and exploitation whatever their:
 - race, religion, ethnicity, or first language
 - gender or sexuality
 - age
 - health or disability
 - location or placement
 - any criminal behaviour
 - political or immigration status
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and neglect will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All artists, staff and volunteers working with the City of London Festival have a responsibility to report concerns about issues relating to children to the relevant teacher or group leader, and to the City of London Festival child protection officer

1.2 Policy aims

The child protection policy of the City of London Festival will provide City of London Festival staff, volunteers and consultants with an understanding of child protection issues. This aims to serve two primary purposes:

- To ensure that when working with groups of young people, none of the actions of City of London Festival staff, volunteers or consultants result in child protection issues or allegations
- To enable City of London Festival staff, volunteers and consultants to be vigilant in recognising and reporting child protection issues when working with groups of young people.

All members of staff, partners and artists working on the education programme have a responsibility to read the City of London Festival's child protection policy. This policy is scheduled to be reviewed and updated regularly at a period not exceeding 2 years.

2. Child Protection Officer for the City of London Festival

In pursuance of its duty to safeguard children from harm, the City of London Festival has a designated member of the board of management/staff who has responsibility for child protection. The current child protection officer is:

Ruth Oakley

Tel: 020 7583 3585

The designated child protection officer is responsible for ensuring that:

- All artists, staff, and volunteers who are working on projects wherein they will have substantial access to children or young people have been checked for suitability for working with children and are sensitive to the possibility of child abuse and neglect
- All artists, staff, and volunteers know how to report any concerns they have about possible abuse and neglect and are aware of their responsibility to report all allegations, however minor
- Any child protection issues disclosed to artists, staff, and volunteers are reported promptly and clearly to the relevant teacher or group leader responsible for the child
- All staff, consultants and volunteers are vigilant of their own actions so that they cannot be misinterpreted
- Accurate and secure child protection records are maintained

The designated child protection officer is provided with relevant ongoing training on child protection issues.

3. Recruitment and selecting staff and volunteers

The City of London Festival recognises that it has a responsibility to take all reasonable steps to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children in their capacity as a paid employee, volunteer for or consultant to the organisation. Where it is deemed that the consultant, volunteer or staff member is likely to have substantial access to children or young people, that person will be required to:

- Complete a personal profile form (see Appendix A).
- Complete a Criminal Records Bureau check.
- Provide the names of two referees who will provide a reference. Each referee will be telephoned in order to discuss the individual's suitability to work with children.
- Evidence of identity (Passport or driving license with photo).

Any volunteer, consultant or member of staff who on receipt of a CRB check is deemed unsuitable to work with children will under no circumstances be allowed to be employed by or take part in or attend activities with children on behalf of The City of London Festival.

4. Promoting Good Practice with Young People

The following comprise specific guidelines for all staff, consultants and volunteers working with young people:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment).
- Treat all young people equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always put the welfare of each young person first, before achieving project goals.
- Ensure that if mixed groups are taken on trips, that they should always be accompanied by a male and female volunteer or member of staff.
- Ensure that at the end of activities, the child is released into the care of the

relevant school teacher or group leader or his or her parent or carer. In cases when another individual arrives to pick up the child without prior notice, ensure that the relevant teacher, parent or carer is contacted for permission before the child is released into that individual's care.

4.1 Practice to be avoided

The following should be avoided except in emergencies:

- Avoid taking children anywhere where they will be alone with you.

If cases arise where this situation is unavoidable it should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the organisation or of the consent of the child's parents/carer. (For example, if a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent/carer fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session.)

4.2 Practice never to be sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- Allow any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unrecorded or not acted upon (see section 5.3)
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to the Child Protection Officer and record the incident (see section 5.3).

5. Recognition of and Response to Child Abuse and Neglect

Children may be abused or neglected through the infliction of harm, or through the failure to act to prevent harm. Abuse and neglect can occur in a family or an institutional or community setting. The perpetrator may or may not be known to the child.

Working together to safeguard children sets out definitions and examples of the four broad categories of abuse which are used for the purposes of registration. These categories overlap and an abused child does frequently suffer more than one type of abuse:

Neglect - neglect involves the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. This may involve failure to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failure to protect from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of a child's basic emotional needs;

Physical abuse - physical abuse may take many forms; hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child. It may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child (fabricated or induced illness);

Sexual abuse - sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening and includes penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways;

Emotional abuse - emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development. It may include conveying to a child that he/she is worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person, imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations, causing children to feel frightened or in danger (e/g. witnessing domestic violence), or exploitation or corruption of children.

5.1 Risk Indicators

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but they must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm that justify the need for careful assessment and discussion with the child protection officer and may require consultation with and/or referral to the appropriate Social Services Department

In an abusive relationship the child may:

Appear frightened of the parent/s

- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different cultural norms)

The parent or carer may:

- persistently avoid treatment of the child's episodic illnesses
- have unrealistic expectations of the child
- frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)
- be absent or misusing substances
- be involved in domestic violence

5.1.1 Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation from a parent or carer for a physical injury which is inconsistent with that injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- An unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- The parents / carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a 'cry for help' and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury)

Bruising

Children can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided:

- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally
- The outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Bruising around the face without a satisfactory explanation
- Grasp marks on small children

Bite Marks

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child. A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

Burns and Scalds

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds, and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine)
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water of its own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks)
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation

Fractures

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental fractures and they will always require experienced medical opinion. Non- mobile children rarely sustain fractures. There may be grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent or inconsistent with the fracture type
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement.

5.1.2 Recognising Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Sudden speech disorders
- fear of making mistakes or fear of parent being approached concerning behaviour
- Low self esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a 'loner' – difficulty relating to others

5.1.3 Recognising Sexual Abuse

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. Recognition can be difficult, unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional / behavioural. Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse

are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self mutilation and suicide attempts
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners

Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Pain or itching of genital area
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed

5.1.4 Recognising Neglect

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting. Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- Child thrives away from home environment
- Child frequently absent from school
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods

5.2 Responding to suspicions or allegations

It is not the responsibility of anyone working with the City of London Festival in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However all volunteers and staff have a responsibility to act on any concerns through communicating with the relevant teacher or group leader and the City of London Festival Child Protection Officer.

5.3 Reporting Procedures

It is important that all staff, volunteers and consultants communicate concerns accurately by speaking in the first instance to the relevant teacher or group leader and also to the City of London Festival Child Protection Officer. The process of informing both of these parties is necessary in order to ensure that the issue is addressed and properly documented.

Important aspects to remember about any disclosure are:

- Date and time of what has occurred and the time the disclosure was made
- Name of child
- The names of the people involved
- What is the nature of the allegation? Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Behavioural signs indirect signs?
- Witnesses to the incidents.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.

As soon as practicable, the Child Protection Incident Form (appendix B) should be completed and the child protection officer should be alerted. The incident form should

be submitted to the Child Protection Officer to keep in a safe place to ensure confidentiality.

5.4 How to React and Listen to a Child making Allegations of Abuse

- In the first instance please tell the child that you cannot keep it a secret and that you will have to talk to someone else that can help
- Always refer, never investigate any suspicions or allegations about abuse
- Do not interrogate or question other than to clarify your understanding. If the matter is to be investigated further it will be done by trained professionals.
- Reassure the child that you are glad they have told you what has happened and that it was the right thing to do.
- Never trivialize or exaggerate child abuse issues

6. Confidentiality

All concerns should be shared with the teacher or group leader responsible for the child and The City of London Festival Child Protection Officer, but remember that any disclosure is a confidential matter between you and the child and that every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only as involving anyone else in the situation could prove dangerous to the child concerned.

8. Action if Bullying is suspected

All allegations or suspicions of bullying should be reported to the relevant teacher or group leader, recorded in the manner outlined in section 5.3 and reported to the Child Protection Officer.

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the relevant teacher or group leader and to the City of London Festival Child Protection Officer.

Action towards the bully

- Talk with school teacher or group leader about imposing sanctions as necessary.
- Keep a written record of action taken.

9. Action in cases of Racist Remarks

All allegations or suspicions of racial or religious harassment should be reported to the relevant teacher or group leader, recorded in the manner outlined in section 5.3 and reported to the Child Protection Officer.

- Take all signs of racism and religious harassment very seriously.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the relevant teacher or group leader and to the City of London Festival Child Protection Officer.

Action towards the perpetrator of racial or religious harassment

- Talk with school teacher or group leader about imposing sanctions as necessary.
- Keep a written record of action taken.

Appendix B: City of London Festival's Child Protection Incident Form

YOUR NAME: POSITION WITHIN OR CONNECTION WITH THE CITY OF LONDON FESTIVAL: TODAY'S DATE:	DATE AND TIME AT WHICH INCIDENT IS OCCURRED BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE OF THE INCIDENT:
CHILD'S NAME:	CHILD'S AGE: DATE OF BIRTH: __/__/----
NAME OF SCHOOL / GROUP WORKING WITH:	NAME OF TEACHER / GROUP LEADER:
HAVE YOU REPORTED CONCERNS TO THE TEACHER / GROUP LEADER? WHAT WAS THE RESULT OF THIS CONVERSATION?	
HAS ANYONE ELSE BEEN CONSULTED? IF SO RECORD DETAILS:	

PLEASE CONTINUE OVERLEAF

**EXACT ACCOUNT OF WHAT HAS BEEN SAID TO YOU, OR WHAT YOU HAVE OBSERVED:
PLEASE CHECK YOUR ACCOUNT TO ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE RECORDED (please tick):**

- 1) The names of the people involved
- 2) The nature of the allegation? Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- 3) A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Behavioural signs indirect signs?
- 4) Names of any witnesses to the incidents.
- 5) The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- 6) Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

(Please make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay).

PLEASE CONTINUE OVERLEAF

**YOUR SIGNATURE:
DATE:**

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Islington Police Child Protection Team:	020 7421 0307
Out of hours Social Work Emergency Service:	020 7226 0992
NSPCC:	0808 800 5000
NSPCC Textphone for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing:	0800 056 0566
Childline:	0800 1111