

City of London Festival Guidelines for Working with Children and Young People

Education projects are central to the work of the City of London Festival. We greatly value the hard work of artists and practitioners in developing and delivering projects to young people in schools and community groups. The following comprises a set of guidelines to inform work with young people. This is designed to support not to constrict your work. A full Child Protection document detailing how to recognise and respond to different issues that may be faced by young people is also available on request.

1. Aims

The following guidelines 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 following guidelines. The guidelines are scheduled to be reviewed and updated regularly at a period not exceeding 2 years.

2. Promoting good practice with young people

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

- Treat all young people equally, and with respect and dignity
- Always put the welfare of each young person first, before achieving project goals.
- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations)
- 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.

2.1 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).

2.2 Practice never to be sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned.

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
- 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 teacher in charge of the group, and to the child protection representative.

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 Criminal Records Bureau check.

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. City of London Festival child protection representative

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 representative is:
Ruth Oakley. Phone: 020 7583 3585

The designated child protection representative 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.

5. How to react and listen to a young person making allegations

- 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.

6. Confidentiality

All concerns should be shared with both the teacher/group leader responsible for the child AND The City of London Festival child protection representative. The reason to include both of these individuals is to make absolutely sure that the matter is followed up. However, please be aware 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.