

Norfolk County Music Festival – Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

The safety of children and members of vulnerable groups is paramount and all, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. All the Festival's trustees, staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns.

Norfolk County Music Festival is held in March each year and takes place in various venues. Other Festival events, such as Music Workshops and Concerts, may take place at other times of the year. Where the words 'child' or 'children' are used throughout this document it also includes vulnerable adults. Where 'parent' is used it includes guardians, teachers and carers.

1. Purpose and Function of the Festival

The Festival's mission is to provide a platform for the performing arts by amateurs of all ages and abilities in a non-competitive and friendly atmosphere. One of our key objectives is to provide an educational element and to encourage and maintain high standards through the expertise and integrity of the professional adjudicators we employ.

2. The Festival Environment

It is the Festival's policy to ensure that, in cooperation with parents and teachers, the annual Festival, together with any other official NCMF organised events, takes place in safe and secure environments as far as is reasonable and practicable. However, we expect parents to be responsible for the entrants in their charge. All Festival classes take place in public buildings, churches and schools. Members of the public are welcome to attend Festival performances. In the case of public buildings, other members of the public may be present.

The Festival will make reasonable adjustments to ensure accessibility and inclusion for children and adults with additional needs, where notified in advance. We will work with parents, carers, and schools to put appropriate support in place wherever possible.

3. To Whom Does This Policy Apply?

This policy relates to children under the age of 18 years and members of vulnerable groups of any age who are identified to the Festival organisers prior to arrival at the Festival. This should be done by notifying either the Administrator or Chairman through the contact details at the end of this document. The Festival actively seeks, wherever possible, to meet all special needs, but must be aware of such needs beforehand in order to make any necessary and practicable arrangements.

4. Festival Personnel

With the exception of the Administrator, adjudicators and accompanists, all personnel involved in the Festival including the Trustees and Stewards are volunteers. All Stewards are selected in accordance with their suitability for the duties of the required areas of supervision and all are fully aware of the Festival safeguarding policies and

procedure.

All trustees, adjudicators, and volunteers engaged in regulated activity will undergo appropriate safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks where required by law. Volunteers not in regulated activity will be appropriately supervised. Recruitment decisions will follow Charity Commission safeguarding guidance.

Festival Stewards are identified by lanyards. In the case of problems any Steward may be approached and will be able to refer to an appropriate person. All problems will be dealt with confidentially and in private and will be fully documented.

All stewards and volunteers will receive a safeguarding briefing or basic training prior to each Festival.

5. Preparation for Attendance at the Festival

Those submitting entries for the Festival will be notified of the Safeguarding Policy. In addition the policy will be printed in the Festival Programme and also available for downloading from the Festival website. All parents and guardians should be aware that should they not be personally attending with their children, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children are accompanied and adequately supervised at the Festival by responsible adults acting on their behalf. Neither the Festival nor Stewards are responsible for any children who attend the Festival.

6. Performance, Toilet and Exit Arrangements

Festival personnel do not supervise warm-up areas, nor toilets. It is the responsibility of teachers, parents, and accompanying adults to supervise children at all times. In public buildings, toilet facilities may also be used by members of the general public. Changing into costumes is not allowed. If you wish to wear a costume for your performance you must come dressed in the costume, you cannot change at any of our venues.

Toilet access arrangements vary between Festival venues and are detailed within individual venue risk assessments. Where reasonably practicable, separate toilet facilities will be identified for child participants. School groups must ensure that children are accompanied and supervised by their school staff when accessing toilets. Members of the public, including parents and carers, will be directed to use alternative toilet facilities where possible.

Groups attending the Festival are responsible for managing their own arrival and exit procedures. Where a school or organisation operates a signing-in or signing-out policy, this must be followed and managed by the group's accompanying adults. The Festival does not take responsibility for signing children in or out, and responsibility for children remains with their supervising adults at all times.

7. Photographs, Videotapes and Press Photography

An official Festival photographer may capture images, video or audio recordings during Festival events. These may be used on the Festival website, on social media and in promotional material, in accordance with the Festival's Photography Policy.

The taking of photographs or recordings during classes or performances by members of the public, including parents and carers, is not permitted unless explicitly authorised by Festival organisers and set out within the Photography Policy.

For school groups, the member of staff leading the group will act as the responsible adult for photography permissions. Schools remain responsible for managing their own photography arrangements and ensuring that children without consent are not photographed or filmed, in line with the Photography Policy.

8. Code of Conduct

All trustees, adjudicators, stewards, and volunteers are expected to:

- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.
- Use respectful and appropriate language and behaviour when interacting with children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
- Avoid being alone with a child wherever possible (follow “two adult” principles).
- Never use personal phones, emails, or social media to contact children.
- Report any safeguarding concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) following the ‘What to Do’ flow chart (*Appendix 1*) and using the Safeguarding Concerns Record (*Appendix 2*.)

9. Responding to Allegations or Disclosures

Any concern about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (contact details below). In an emergency, dial 999.

Step 1: Record the concern or disclosure factually on the Safeguarding Concerns Record (*Appendix 2*), using the individual’s own words where possible.

Step 2: Pass the record immediately to the DSL (or Deputy DSL).

Step 3: The DSL will decide on appropriate next steps.

Where the concern relates to the welfare of a child and does not involve an allegation against an adult in a position of trust, the DSL will make a referral to Children’s Services via CADS Norfolk.

Where an allegation or concern is made about the conduct of an adult working or volunteering with children (including Festival volunteers, adjudicators, trustees, or school staff), the DSL will refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay and will follow statutory procedures.

Where required, referrals will also be made to the Police and/or the Charity Commission.

10. Safeguarding Lead Role

The Festival has two Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs). Their responsibilities include:

- Acting as first point of contact for safeguarding concerns.
- Liaising with statutory agencies when necessary.
- Maintaining secure written records of concerns.
- Ensuring volunteers are briefed on safeguarding before the Festival.
- Reviewing safeguarding practice annually with Trustees.

A Deputy DSL will be appointed to cover in the absence of the DSL.

11. Legislation and Guidance that Supports this Policy

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974; The Children Act 1989; The Children Act 2004; The Police Act 1997; The Human Rights Act 1998; The Protection of Children Act 1999; The Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

Updated: The Care Act 2014; The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR; Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025); Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023); Charity Commission Safeguarding Guidance (2024).

12. Policy Review

The Festival Trustees will review this policy annually, revising and enhancing it as necessary.

The reviewed policy will be approved at a full Trustees' meeting, signed by the Chair, and published on the Festival website with the date of approval.

13. Contact Details of Safeguarding Officials

Festival Manager (Designated Safeguarding Lead): Michelle Bagnall. Tel: 07772 959689 info@norfolkmusic.org.uk

Safeguarding Trustee (Deputy DSL): Susanna Manrique: smanrique@norfolkmusic.org.uk tel: 07716 863330

Approved by the Trustees on: 7th December 2025

Signed: C Brett

(Chair of Trustees)

Next review due: 7th December 2026

(Reviewed annually.)

Appendix 1

Safeguarding at Norfolk County Music Festival – What to Do

You see or hear something that concerns you



Is a child or vulnerable adult in immediate danger?

- ➡ **YES** → Call 999 immediately, then inform the DSL
- ➡ **NO** → Continue below



Record the concern

- Write down exactly what you saw or heard
 - Use the person's own words if possible
 - Do not investigate or ask leading questions



Report immediately to the DSL (or Deputy DSL)

- Hand over your written record
- Follow any instructions given



DSL takes next steps

- Liaises with Children's Services / LADO / Police if required
 - Keeps secure records



You've done the right thing

Appendix 2

Norfolk County Music Festival – Safeguarding Concern Record

This form must be completed as soon as possible after a concern or disclosure and passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

1. Details of person reporting the concern

Name:

Role (e.g. Steward / Volunteer / Adjudicator):

Contact details:

Date and time of concern:

Venue / location:

2. Details of the child or vulnerable adult (if known)

Name:

Age / approximate age:

School / group (if applicable):

3. Nature of the concern or disclosure

(Record facts only. Use the person's own words where possible. Do not investigate.)

4. Immediate action taken

- Concern passed to DSL
- Emergency services contacted (999)
- No immediate action required

Details:

5. Names of witnesses (if applicable)**6. Signature of person completing form**

Signed:

Date:

For DSL use only

Action taken:

Referral made to (Children's Services / LADO / Police / Charity Commission):

Date and time:

DSL signature: