

	<b>Children, young people &amp; vulnerable adults safeguarding policy</b>
	<b>April 2026</b>

## Contents:

1. **Policy statement**
2. **Principles and assumptions**
3. **Policy aims**
4. **Dealing with a child or adult protection situation – guidance**
5. **Data protection / retention**
6. **Publication and review**

## App. Definitions

### 1. **Policy statement**

- 1.1 Stonehaven Folk Festival (SFF) is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. SFF considers it the duty of all trustees, volunteers and artists to promote the wellbeing and safety of all children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom they come into contact. The board will appoint a Safeguarding lead who will be appropriately supported in this role and who will maintain effective links with relevant agencies in Aberdeenshire.

### 2. **Principles and assumptions underpinning this policy**

- 2.1 The welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults is always the paramount consideration.
- 2.2 Protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility.
- 2.3 Every child, young person and vulnerable adult has the right to be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- 2.4 All suspicions and allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- 2.5 Every child, young person and vulnerable adult, regardless of their age, culture, disability, gender, gender identity, ethnic origin, religious belief or sexual orientation, must be treated as an individual and has a right to a positive sense of identity.
- 2.6 Everyone has the right to express their views on matters affecting them, and to expect their views to be taken seriously.
- 2.7 The board will ensure that all trustees, volunteers and artists are aware of this policy and are supported to ensure its full implementation.

### 3. Policy aims

To achieve this policy the SFF board will aim to ensure:

- 3.1 The potential risks of recruiting new trustees and volunteers without knowing their background are recognised. The board reserves the right to require a [basic disclosure](#) check through Disclosure Scotland, as well as taking up references.
- 3.2 By this policy's implementation, all trustees, volunteers and artists are enabled to understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- 3.3 At all SFF organised events where stewards are provided, a trustee or volunteer will be the "event designated lead". They are responsible for reporting any safeguarding concerns to the SFF Safeguarding lead and/or the chair of the board at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.4 Any SFF events organised primarily for children, young people or vulnerable adults are based in an environment where they feel safe and secure. Performers at SFF events aimed primarily at children and young people have at least a current basic disclosure check.
- 3.5 All children, young people or vulnerable adults attending any SFF organised event are accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult, who remains responsible for them at all times.

### 4. Dealing with a child or adult protection situation - guidance

- 4.1 Children, young people and vulnerable adults may find it difficult to disclose that they are being abused, including being bullied. This may be due to a number of factors such as fear of the consequences, the nature of the relationship with the person who is perpetrating the abuse or the power imbalance. It is therefore important to be alert to signs and symptoms. For further guidance, see Appendix.
- 4.2 If a trustee, volunteer or artist has any concerns or suspicions about individuals being abused or bullied at an SFF organised event, they should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with the event designated lead before the end of the event. The event designated lead will subsequently liaise with the SFF Safeguarding lead
- 4.3 The SFF Safeguarding lead will ensure that all allegations of abuse are notified as soon as practicable to relevant agencies within Aberdeenshire in line with their published procedures.
  - [Children and young people](#)
  - [Vulnerable adults](#)
- 4.4 If a child, young person or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or at risk of harm at an SFF organised event, the event designated lead must not delay taking necessary steps to ensure the individual's immediate safety and in reporting the concern to the police or social work.
  - Police Scotland – 999
  - Child protection – 01467 537111

- Adult support and protection – 01467 533100
  - Emergency out of hours – 03456 08 12 06
- 4.5 Concerns about a trustee, volunteer or artist must be reported immediately to the SFF Safeguarding lead, or if unavailable, the chair or another board member. The Safeguarding lead together with the chair are responsible for deciding whether to refer such concerns to relevant agencies in Aberdeenshire and/or Police Scotland for appropriate investigation.
- 4.6 All instances of alleged or actual harm of children, young people or vulnerable adults that are reported will be recorded. Written records of concerns, even where there is no need for immediate referral to outside agencies, will be retained for learning and to improve the safety and security of those attending future events. Any such records will be kept secure in line with the requirements of data protection legislation.

## **5. Data protection and retention**

- 5.1 In accordance with the Data Protection (Scotland) Act 2018, SFF has a legitimate interest in the gathering and sharing of information in order to report and prevent harm to individuals. Whilst this data must be recorded and shared timeously, care must also be taken to ensure that the data is protected and shared securely so as to prevent any harm occurring, or to prevent any further harm to an individual at risk. Successful and careful information gathering can be important in preventing further harm.
- 5.2 Information collected, used and shared is subject to the Data Protection (Scotland) Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

## **6. Publication and review**

- 6.1 All trustees, volunteers and artists will be made aware of this policy. The policy will be published on the SFF website. Paper copies will be supplied on request.
- 6.2 The policy will be reviewed no later than three months prior to each year's festival and approved by the board.

## Appendix One : Definitions

### Child

In Scotland a child can be defined differently in different legal contexts. However, for the purpose of this policy a child is defined in line with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 which defines a child as someone who has not attained the age of 18 years.

### Child abuse and child neglect

Child abuse, or neglect, occurs when someone inflicts significant harm to the child, or fails to act to prevent such harm. Children may be abused at home, in a family or peer network, in care placements or community settings, or in the online and digital environment. Those responsible may be previously unknown or familiar, or in positions of trust.

The following are ways in which abuse may be experienced by a child:

- **Physical abuse:** physical harm to a child or young person that may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, or suffocating. It may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms or deliberately causes ill health to a child they are looking after.

There may be variations in family, community or cultural attitudes to parenting, such as in relation to reasonable discipline. Cultural sensitivity must not though deflect from focussing on a child's essential needs for care and protection from harm, or on their need for support to reduce stress and associated risk.

- **Emotional abuse:** persistent emotional neglect or ill treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or exploiting or corrupting them. Emotional abuse is present in all types of ill treatment of a child, but it can also occur independently of other forms of abuse.
- **Sexual abuse:** an act that involves a child under 16 in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person, whether or not it is claimed that the child either consented or assented. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. It may involve physical contact or non-contact activities, using sexual language towards a child, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a person under 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact. It can also involve the use of technology.

- **Neglect:** 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 or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide a child with adequate food, shelter or clothing, to protect them from physical harm or danger, or to ensure access for them to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Further information is available in the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 \(updated 2023\)](#)

### **Adult**

For the purpose of this policy an adult is defined in line with the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 which defines an adult as an individual aged 16 or over.

### **Adults at risk**

For the purpose of this policy an adult at risk is defined in line with the “triple test” in Section 3, Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. This defines them as adults who:

- (a) are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests,
- (b) are at risk of harm, and
- (c) because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity they are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.

An adult is at risk of harm if:

- (a) another person’s conduct is causing (or is likely to cause) the adult to be harmed, or
- (b) the adult is engaging (or is likely to engage) in conduct which causes (or is likely to cause) self-harm.

### **Harm**

Harm is defined as:

- (a) conduct which causes physical harm (including sexual harm),
- (b) conduct which causes psychological harm (for example: by causing fear, alarm or distress),
- (c) unlawful conduct which appropriates or adversely affects property, rights or interests (for example: theft, fraud, embezzlement or extortion),
- (d) conduct which causes self-harm.

Further information is available in the [Adult Support and Protection \(Scotland\) Act 2007: code of practice \(updated 2021\)](#)