



BIG CHURCH FESTIVAL SAFEGUARDING POLICY 2024

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Section 1 – Introduction to Big Church Festival

Address:

PO BOX 3340

LITTLEHAMPTON

WEST SUSSEX

BN16 9FP

Tel No: 01903786890

Event Manager Name: Becky Stevens

Event Manager Contact Email: becky@bigchurchfestival.com

Event Safeguarding Leader (ESL) Name: Emily Hassan

Event Safeguarding Leader (ESL) Email: safeguarding@bigchurchfestival.com

Charity Number: 1127987

Company Number: 06794709

Regulators: Charities Commission

Insurance Company: Tysers

Big Church Festival is a Christian music event held over two days in the grounds of Wiston Estate. The event attracts over 30,000 participants enjoying the music of Christian artists.

The event is attended by young and old across various Christian backgrounds and those that attend, camp in the grounds of the estate and retain responsibility for themselves and those who they bring. The events, music and marketplace are open to all.

The following Safeguarding Policy and Statement aims, to not only meet the requirements of ensuring a safe environment at our festival and within our organisation, but to also build an open culture where the purpose is:

- To provide protection for all attending the Big Church Festival including children, young people, adults at risk of harm and those staffing the event.

- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures to follow in the event that they suspect a child, young person or adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of harm.
- This policy applies to all staff, and anyone working on behalf of Big Church Festival whether paid or voluntary.

Our Commitment

As an organisation we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for all those attending our event.

We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”.

We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s) legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.”

As an organisation we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

We will endeavour to safeguard children, young people and adults by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Adopting appropriate guidelines for the safety and wellbeing of children, young adults and adults at risk through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Committing to a thorough and safe recruitment process for all of its activities in line with the Big Church Festival safer recruitment policy.

- Sharing relevant information about child and adult protection and good practice with children, young people, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.
- Making relevant agency referrals and involving the individual and other relevant parties appropriately adhering at all times to the Big Church Festival Confidentiality Policy and to the boundaries of the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision and support.

Section 2 - Prevention

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue.

- A child is any individual under the age of 16 years.
- A young person is any individual between the ages of 16 years and 18 years.
- An adult that requires safeguarding is one that is considered to be over the age of 18 who has need of care and support, is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect (Care Act, 2014).

The events at Big Church Festival are open for all to attend and individuals are responsible for themselves, their children and those in need of care and support.

We have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in and these are attached or in the appendices but Big Church Festival recognises that in the course of an event the following may happen:

- Children, young people or adults may disclose alleged abuse to staff or volunteers.
- Signs of possible abuse may be observed by staff or volunteers.
- Concerns or allegations may arise about the behaviour of a staff member or volunteer towards a child, young person or adult.

- Concerns or allegations may arise about the behaviour towards a child or children of others on site, who are not staff or volunteers.
- Children, young people or adults may disclose that they are or have a desire to self-harm or signs of possible self-harm may be observed by staff or volunteers.
- Children may disclose that they have caused harm to another child or may pose a future risk to other children.
- Adults may disclose past abuse or ongoing abuse.

Safer Recruitment

Big Church Festival undertakes to ensure all staff and volunteers are appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment.

This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the role
- Those applying have completed an application form
- Those applying for roles working directly with children, young people or vulnerable adults will have an appropriate level of knowledge and expertise to fulfil their role.
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate.
- A self-declaration form and disclosure and barring check (DBS) has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information).
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified.
- A suitable training programme is provided for all staff and volunteers taking into account the requirements for different role profiles.
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.
- All staff and volunteers will be required to read and sign to confirm that they will adhere to our code of conduct.

Safeguarding Training

Big Church Festival leaders recognise the importance of good quality safeguarding awareness, training and development opportunities for all staff and volunteers thus developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone.

All our staff and volunteers receive induction training appropriate to their role at the Big Church Festival.

A suitable training programme is provided for all staff and volunteers taking into account the requirements for different role profiles.

Big Church Festival leaders will also ensure that anyone attending the event can access on our website information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Management of Staff and volunteers – Codes of Conduct

Big Church Festival leaders are committed to supporting all staff and volunteers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All staff and volunteers have been issued with a code of conduct for working on site with other staff, volunteers and members of the public including children, young people and adults with care and support needs, and will be given clear expectations about what is expected of them both within their role and when not working/volunteering. They will also receive further training as necessary.

Positions of Trust

All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in a position of trust. All those in positions of trust need to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they have because of this relationship.

It is vital that all workers ensure they do not, even unknowingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. They should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted.

As of April 2022 it is illegal (England and Wales)(Northern Ireland) for those in Positions of Trust in a faith setting to engage in sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old under their care or supervision (Sexual Offences Act, 2003).

Section 3 - Responding to allegations of abuse

How to respond

Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

Recognise:

- Accept and take seriously what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Let the person tell their story and don't push for information or ask leading questions.
- Do not interrogate or decide if they are telling the truth.
- Be alert to signs and symptoms of abuse.

Respond:

- Reassure the individual they have taken the right step in sharing this information and they are not to blame.
- Be honest; never make promises to keep what you are being told confidential. If abuse is involved, you will need to tell someone.
- Tell them what you will do with the information they have shared and that they will be kept informed.
- Do not introduce personal information or from either your own experience or that of others.
- Do not investigate the matter any further for yourself, or approach the person about whom allegations may have been made.

Record:

- Write down, concisely, exactly what is seen, said or heard and make clear where you have added your views or interpretation.
- You may find it helpful to use the 4 W's, as follows:
 - WHO was involved? Name the key people
 - WHAT happened? Facts not opinions
 - WHEN did it happen? Date and time

- WHO have you referred the issue on to?

Refer:

- Pass the information to the event Safeguarding & Welfare team immediately. It may be that you need to contact the team initially and then record the details of the incident/disclosure so that action can be taken.
- If necessary, seek help for yourself. Don't feel you need to carry how the incident has affected you by yourself. Please speak to your team leader or directly to a member of the safeguarding & welfare team.

Contact details for Event Safeguarding & Welfare Lead

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to a member of the Safeguarding and welfare team. Team members will ensure that the event Safeguarding and welfare lead is updated in order to plan a response.

Name: Emily Hassan

(hereafter the "ESWL - Event Safeguarding & Welfare Lead")

Tel: 07776412130

Email: safeguarding@bigchurchfestival.com

The above is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

- In the absence of the ESWL or, if the suspicions in any way involve the ESWL, then the report should be made to:

Name: Becky Stevens, Event Manager

Email: becky@bigchurchfestival.com

If the suspicions implicate both the ESWL and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

Thirtyone:eight PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.

Tel: 0303 003 1111. Option 2

Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

Contact details for Statutory Agencies

Name of local authority: West Sussex County Council

Children's Services

Tel: 01403 229900.

Out of hours Tel: 033 022 26664

Website Address: [Request support or raise a concern about a child - West Sussex County Council](#)

Adult Services

Tel: 01243 642121 (not to be used by professionals, use link to referral form below)

Out of hours Tel: 033 022 27007

Website Address: [Raise a concern about an adult - West Sussex County Council](#)

Police – Emergency 999 / Non emergency 101

The ESWL may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern

- Chair or trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.
- Designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

Suspicious must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.

Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the ESWL, the absence of the ESWL or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.

The Leadership will support the ESWL/ Deputy in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.

It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight, although the Leadership hope that individuals will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the ESWL/ Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the ESWL as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the ESWL/ Deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

Procedures where there is a concern about a child:

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the ESWL/ Deputy will:

- Contact West Sussex Children's Services for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the paramedic of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services directly for advice.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the ESWL/ Deputy will:

- Contact the West Sussex Children's Services Department. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.

Procedures where there is a concern that an adult needs protection:

Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is a concern about any of the above, the ESWL/ Deputy will:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse the ESWL will:

- Identify support services for the victim i.e., counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the ESWL, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a decision in consultation with the LADO, police and other statutory agencies regarding the potential suspension of the worker whilst an investigation can be undertaken.
- Determine whether a referral should be made to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.
- Inform the Chair or trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the ESWL will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Services to determine whether suspension of the worker is required whilst an investigation can be undertaken.
- Determine whether a referral should be made to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with adults with additional care and support needs.

The Care Act places the duty upon Adult Services to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Services to decide not Big Church Festival.

Section 4 – Practice Guidelines

Removal from Team on site

The decision to remove a volunteer or staff member from their role must be made in consultation with the Event Manager. Where a member of team has been removed from team duties due to their behaviour, a report will be completed by the relevant team lead and sent to the Event Manager and ESWL as soon as possible. The report will be retained by ESWL office for future reference.

Where a member of Team is required to leave site, this should be discussed with the Event Manager (who holds overall responsibility for the safety on site) and the ESWL.

Where their conduct brings into question their suitability to work with children or adults, a referral may need to be made to the DBS to consider whether the individual should be barred. If the matter has been referred to a statutory agency, the ESWL must be informed.

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

If a known offender wishes to attend the Big Church Festival event they should ensure they comply with any conditions imposed on them by the police, probation, court or, if appropriate the Sex Offenders Registration.

Any application for a known offender or person considered to pose a risk to others, who wishes to attend the Big Church Festival event or work on Team, will be risk assessed on a case-by-case basis. Risk Assessments will be carried out by Big Church Festival ESWL. This will be treated as confidential information and only shared with agencies as required. The risk assessment must include advice from the Big Church Festival ESWL where the recommendation is to allow an individual with criminal convictions on Team. All risk assessments should consider communication with the police, church and other relevant authorities and a clear reason recorded for any decision not to liaise with any identified organisation.

Where an application is declined on safeguarding grounds, the reasons will be explained to the applicant (and backed up in writing) by the Big Church Festival ESWL who will retain a record of any decision made for future reference in accordance with the record retention policy.

If a Registered Sex offender is identified at the event, then the ESWL or Event Manager should be notified immediately, and that person may be asked to leave the event and contact with the police considered.

Partnership working

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines with regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding.

We believe good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, and to everyone involved in working with children and adults.

Section 5 - Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Leadership team is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and offering assistance to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or attend Big Church Festival.

Adoption of the policy

This policy was agreed by the leadership and will be reviewed annually on:

Signed



Name: Emily Hassan

Position: Event Safeguarding & Welfare Team Lead (ESWL)

Date: 08/04/2024



Name: Becky Stevens

Position: Big Church Festival Event Manager

Date:

Signed:



Name: Leigh Hill

Position: On behalf of the Big church Festival board of Trustees

Date: 16 — APR — 2024

APPENDIX 1:

Big Church Festival - Statement of Safeguarding

The following statement was agreed by the trustees of Big Church Festival.

- Big Church Festival is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults with care and support needs and ensuring their well-being.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent harm or abuse to children and adults with care and support needs in all their recognised forms.
- We recognise that the personal dignity and rights of adults and children and will ensure all our policies and procedures will reflect this.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with children and adults with care and support needs.
- We believe every child and adult should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that all those we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are experiencing significant harm.

We are committed to:

- Following statutory, denominational and specialist guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults and will ensure that at the Big Church Festival all workers will work within the agreed procedure of our safeguarding policy.
- Implementing the requirements of all relevant legislation including, but not limited to; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, Equality Act 2010 and referring concerns about adults with care and support needs to the local authority under the Care Act 2014.
- Supporting, resourcing and training those who undertake this work.
- Ensuring that we are keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.

We recognise:

- Children's Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

If you have any concerns for a child or adult, then please contact the Safeguarding & Welfare lead.

We will review this statement and our Safeguarding policy annually.

Appendix 2:

Big Church Festival – Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Purpose

This behaviour code outlines the conduct expected of all workers (staff and volunteers).

The code of conduct aims to help protect adults at risk of harm, children and young people from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from those in positions of trust, and to reduce the risk of unfounded allegations of abuse being made.

The role of workers (staff and volunteers)

When working with children and young people or adults at risk of harm, you are acting in a position of trust for Big Church Festival. You will be seen as a role model and must act appropriately.

Good practice

- Treat everyone with dignity, respect and fairness, and have proper regard for individuals' interests, rights, safety and welfare
- Work in a responsible, transparent and accountable way
- Be prepared to challenge unacceptable behaviour or to be challenged
- Listen carefully to those you are supporting
- Avoid any behaviour that could be perceived as bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, spiritual abuse or sexual abuse (including inappropriate physical contact such as rough play and inappropriate language or gestures)
- Seek advice from someone with greater experience when necessary
- Work in an open environment – avoid private or unobserved situations
- Follow policies, procedures and guidelines and report all disclosures, concerns, allegations, and suspicions to the Safeguarding Lead.
- Don't make inappropriate promises particularly in relation to confidentiality
- Do explain to the individual what you intend to do and don't delay taking action.

Unacceptable behaviour

- Not reporting concerns or delaying reporting concerns
- Taking unnecessary risks
- Any behaviour that is or may be perceived as threatening or abusive in any way
- Passing on your personal and/or social media contact details and any contact that breaches Big Church Festival's social media policy
- Developing inappropriate relationships
- Smoking and/or consuming alcohol during shifts. Staff and volunteers may smoke or consume alcohol outside of shifts however staff and volunteers are expected to ensure that they do not arrive for shifts under the influence of alcohol or suffering the effects of alcohol consumption.
- Consuming Illegal substances
- Favouritism/exclusion – all people should be equally supported and encouraged.

Breaching the Code of Conduct

If you have behaved inappropriately you will be subject to disciplinary procedures (particularly in the case of paid staff where the line manager will consult the Safeguarding Lead as appropriate). Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may be asked to leave Big Church Festival. We may also make a referral to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority children's or adult's social care departments or DBS. If you become aware of a breach of this code, you should escalate your concerns to the safeguarding coordinator or line manager (in the case of a paid staff member).

We will review this Code of Conduct and our Safeguarding policy annually.