

Policy on Child Protection

1. All involved in the work of Viva are called to recognise the unique status of children¹. There is a special need to respect them as individuals and protect them in their vulnerability. All children matter in their own right and are to be taken seriously.
2. The organisation should endeavour to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness. All who work with children within the group in any paid or voluntary capacity need to operate within a carefully thought-out framework of good policy and practice, which will ensure that children are safeguarded and nurtured physically and emotionally. All are expected to exercise the greatest care in their use of power and authority, and must avoid taking advantage of trust. All groups will have adequate adult leadership and supervision and adults will not work alone with children.
3. The highest professional standards will therefore be maintained in all pastoral, counselling, educational, rehearsal and recreational situations. The exploitation of any relationship for self-gratification will not be tolerated.
4. Viva accepts the principle enshrined in the Children Act 1989 that the welfare of the child is paramount.
5. Allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and appropriate steps will be taken.
6. Viva will collaborate fully with the statutory and voluntary agencies concerned with child abuse. It will not conduct investigations on its own.
7. All those working or seeking to work with children will be properly recruited, trained and supported, and will be subject to whatever supervision is appropriate.
8. All candidates for employment will be asked to declare whether they have any criminal convictions or whether certain types of orders of the civil courts have been made against them, and whether they have caused significant harm to a child or put a child at risk of significant harm.
9. The following will be asked to complete and submit the confidential declaration form², which forms part of the Child Protection Folder:
 - All paid staff and volunteers working or seeking to work in a capacity which involves work with children or which is likely to involve opportunities for unsupervised contact with them.
10. A search with the Criminal Records Bureau will be made for all candidates seeking work as paid staff or volunteers, and will be a condition of their employment.
11. In the case of all those seeking to do paid or unpaid work, references will be obtained which satisfy the recommendations in the Home Office's Guidelines, Safe from Harm.
12. The procedures under paragraphs 9 to 11 above will be repeated on the person concerned seeking to move to a new appointment or position or new work.
13. Any person wishing to engage in photography of any description, including video, at a Viva event must register their details with a Viva manager or trustee before carrying out such photography. Persons other than parents, Viva employees, trustees, or bona fide members of the press must give evidence of their identity and satisfactory reasons for wishing to engage in such photography. Though permission will not be unreasonably withheld, Viva reserves the right to refuse permission to any person who is unable or unwilling to meet and abide by these conditions.

14. Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which adults can voice their concerns about Viva adults or staff and their dealings with Viva members. Viva's designated Child Protection Officer is Ann Roberts (anngranroberts@gmail.com) and any persons with such concerns should report them to her, without fear of repercussion on themselves.

Notes

1. The Children Act 1989 defines a child as a person under eighteen for most purposes.
2. The form includes questions as to whether the person concerned has any criminal convictions, whether certain types of orders of the civil courts have been made against them and whether they have or have been alleged to have caused significant harm to a child or put a child at risk of significant harm.