

Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) Guidance for Applicants

(Section 37(3)(b) Children & Young Persons Act 1963)

What is a 'Body of Persons Approval'?

The Children & Young Persons Act 1963 gives a local authority the power to issue an exemption to an organisation which would normally have to license individual children taking part in a performance. This exemption is called a Body of Persons Approval (BOPA). The BOPA allows the children to perform without the need for individual licences to be issued.

Who issues a BOPA?

The BOPA is issued by the local authority where the performance is taking place, as opposed to a performance licence which is issued by the Local Authority in which the child resides.

Who can apply for a BOPA?

Any type of organisation can apply; it doesn't matter if they are a professional company, amateur group, stage or broadcast - as long as no payment (other than expenses) is made for the children to take part.

Does a performance still have to comply with the law?

Yes. The performance must comply with the Children & Young Persons Act 1963 and The Children (Performances and Activities)(England) Regulations 2014 in all respects, with the exception of having to obtain individual performance licences.

What are the criteria for applying for a BOPA from Bracknell Forest Council?

Bracknell Forest Council will consider a Body of Persons Approval for a specific performance.

The Organisation must have a Child Protection Policy - you will need to supply a copy with your application - and have a designated person responsible for Child Protection.

There must be no absence from school required in order for the children to perform or rehearse.

The production must comply with all legislative requirements that would normally apply had individual performance licences been issued for each child (with the exception of having to obtain those individual licences) including dressing room & toilet arrangements, performance times, breaks etc.

What conditions are imposed on a BOPA issued by Bracknell Forest Council?

The organisation applying for a BOPA from Bracknell Forest Council agrees that the performance will be conducted under the terms laid out in Bracknell Forest's BOPA Application Form Declaration & Contract of Agreement including:

- providing details of all children taking part & the number of days they will be performing;

- ensuring there are sufficient licensed Chaperones present at the performances and regulated rehearsals and providing details of those chaperones, including the Local Authority with whom they are registered;
- obtaining a parental health declaration for each child performing to confirm they are fit and well and detailing any medical conditions which may impact their ability to perform;
- ensuring a qualified First Aider is present at the performances and regulated rehearsals;
- that they will notify the Child Employment Officer of any changes to the performance details (date(s), venue, participants, chaperones etc) as soon as practically possible;
- that the Child Employment Officer will have the right to make any inspection deemed appropriate.

How do I apply?

A BOPA Application Form & Contract of Agreement can be obtained from the Child Employment Officer at the Education Welfare Service.

The application form & agreement should be signed by two officers who sit on the elected committee of the applying organisation and/or hold a senior role within the organisation which allows them to make decisions on the organisation's safeguarding & child protection procedures and on how the performance will be organised and managed.

The completed application form & signed Contract of Agreement should be returned to the Child Employment Officer along with a copy of your Child Protection Policy.

Child employment contact details:

Lesley Carter
Child Employment Officer
Education Welfare Service
7 Portman Close
Bracknell
RG42 1NE

Tel: 01344 464714

Email: child.employment@bracknell-forest.gov.uk