

2021 Watford Festival – Speech and Drama Section

Useful Information for Competitors, Parents and Teachers

While the Rules and Regulations give detailed information about the running of the Festival, you may find it useful to look at the following practical points which will hopefully make your first on-line Festival experience even more enjoyable.

Competitors

- Make sure that, if your class requires a script, your teacher/parent have submitted it on or before 24th February. Details of how to submit scripts are shown in the Rules and Regulations which have been sent to Teachers and Parents and which are also on the Watford Festival website.
- Sometimes, scripts that you use during practice can get dog-eared and hard to read because of highlighting, crossings out, or handwritten changes to wording from the original. This makes the adjudicator's job even harder, and they only have a limited amount of time to mark the entries and compose feedback to help you improve. So please ask your teacher/parent to submit a printed copy of the script which is easy to read and in good condition.
- Make sure you have the appropriate dress / costume for the class in which you will be performing. More details are in the Rules and Regulations.
- This year's Festival will be on-line using Zoom. It will be a new experience for all of us.
- If you are not already familiar with Zoom, please download it beforehand and make sure you are comfortable with its terminology, such as "Join with Computer Audio". Make sure you test your Video and Audio settings with your Zoom client well before your first class and know how to switch your video and audio on, if they do not come on automatically, when announced to perform.
- We will send a link to each class to all Teachers and Parent Teachers a few days before the Festival starts. Make sure they have provided you with those details and ensure that you have them to hand before the day of the class.
- Before joining each meeting, make sure the name of the participant in Zoom is that of the person competing in the class and that their name is preceded by their number in the class, e.g., "6, Jane Smith"
- Your parent or responsible adult must click on the Zoom link to your class. When they have done this, you enter the Zoom waiting room. When it's time to start the class, the host will let all the competitors into the Zoom meeting.
- Please be patient if your class appears to be starting late. It may be that the previous class is overrunning.
- Except when you are performing you will be on mute the whole time.
- **Don't start your performance until asked to do so by the host.** This allows the host to check the adjudicator is ready to watch the performance and also that your video and audio are working properly.

- So that everyone can concentrate on the performances the chat facility will also be turned off.
- You can, of course, watch the performances of your fellow competitors.
- At the end of the class the adjudicator will take some time to decide on the medallists. Your parent should then re-join you so that you can watch the adjudicator together when he talks to everyone in the class about the performances and announce the medallists.
- After the end of the Festival, we will arrange for all teachers/parents to be posted competitors marks sheets, which will include the adjudicator's comments on their performance, as well as the Watford Festival Certificate and a medal for those who have been awarded one.
- As there are almost 500 performances it will take us a couple of weeks (perhaps longer) before you receive these in the post. Don't worry we will get them to you.
- Finally, the most important thing is to relax and have fun when you perform.

Parents

- Before the Festival starts, teachers (and parents who enter their children for the Festival themselves) are sent a copy of the timetable. Please read this carefully and make sure that you and your child will be able to take part at the relevant times. If your child's teacher entered them for the Festival, ask them for a copy of the timetable if they don't provide one to you.
- Please don't ask for last-minute changes to the running order.
- The timetable will show the names of your children as they are held in our system. Watford Festival Certificates and mark sheets, which will be posted to teachers/parents after the end of the Festival, will have these names exactly as shown in the timetable. If there are any spelling mistakes or the names are not correct in some other way (e.g., missing a middle name), please inform your teacher or the Section Head (katherine@watfordfestival.co.uk) as soon as possible. Although we do issue corrections for certificates, it's better to get it right first time as this avoids delays and unnecessary wastage.
- As the parent or responsible adult for a competitor you must click on the Zoom link to your class. We suggest you do this about 15 minutes before the scheduled start of the class so you can make sure everything is working OK.
- Apart from accepting the Zoom meeting host's request to unmute you can choose to leave other Zoom settings unchanged.
- The speech classes will use the "spotlight view" which will be remotely managed by the Zoom meeting host.
- For the drama classes we suggest the audience use "speaker view" and the performer uses "gallery view".
- When the host has checked video and audio are correctly set up and working they will ask your child to start their performance.
- We suggest you watch your child's performance away from their immediate vicinity so as to minimise the chances of distracting them.
- At the end of each class participants will remain muted so you can listen to the adjudicator's comments. We suggest you have your video on and make sure you are somewhere you can see your child and hear the adjudication, so everyone can see each other, and wave!

- As this is the first time we have ever had an on-line Festival we are all getting used to the experience and there may be the occasional delay in starting the class, so let your child know that if there is a delay just wait as patiently as they can!
- And if for any reason you are a little late, don't worry - your child can usually be accommodated at the end of the class.
- We are NOT recording the performances and would ask you not to record your own child's performance or that of any other competitor for child safety and copyright reasons.

Teachers/ Parent Teachers

- The original timetable for your entries was sent out to you on 15th January. A revised timetable with links to the Zoom classes is included in the same email as this document
- **Please check the revised timetable** for your entries. Please also ensure that the spelling of all entrants' names is correct, and if necessary, double-check with the entrants or their parents.
- Can Teachers please ensure that parents and children receive their copies of the timetable in good time, so they have the Zoom links. Parents can also plan to help on the day of the class with the Zoom set-up, if needed, and watch the on-line class.
- Double check that children have been entered for the correct class and inform the Section Head if you notice any mistakes.
- Where needed please provide scripts for own choice verse, prose and acting classes, as requested in the Rules and Regulations, by 24th February at the latest.