

Islington Council. Parks Service. Guidance on Face Painting.

Face painting is a popular activity at community events. This guidance sets out some of things that should be considered:

- 1. Public Liability Insurance.** It is essential that face painters have their own public liability insurance or that they are covered by the policy of the company or organisation they are working for. Many insurers require a certificate to show they have undergone some training in face painting and the related health and hygiene in order to be covered or that they have attained a certain standard of work. This is not usually asked for until a claim is made and cannot be retrospectively attained. Check with the insurer on what and who is covered.
- 2. Risk Assessment.** To ensure that this activity is done safely, it is important that a **risk assessment** is carried out. Ideally, this should be undertaken by the person who will be face painting.

The Parks Service will require a copy of the face painting risk assessment.

The following **risks** should be considered:

- Allergic reaction and rashes from the paints / brushes / sponges used.
 - Bacterial infection due to a lack of adequate hygiene measures.
 - Skin and eye damage caused by a paint brush, paint materials, or unsuitable glitters.
 - Cross-contamination and spread of contagious diseases from one client / child to another.
 - Damage to sensitive or already injured skin.
- 3. A pre-assessment** of each client / child should be carried out. This should cover:
 - Allergies
 - Skin conditions / sensitivities,
 - Infections (such as conjunctivitis, cold sores),
 - Open wounds or bruises on the face
 - Runny nose (which could indicate a virus or allergy)
 - Any sickness (which could be contagious)

You may not always be able to see a condition or illness, so it is important to ask. The face painter should **not** work on a client / child if there is such a condition / illness. However, if this is due to a temporary facial condition (such as an open cut on the face), the face painter may wish to offer an alternative (such as painting the client's arm- as long as this is deemed suitable and safe).

4. Hygiene

- a) The client's face should be cleaned before face painting. In the case of a child, this should be done by the parent / carer. The face painter should not paint over dirt or food.
- b) The face painter should wash their hands in-between clients. Please ensure that hand washing facilities are close by (some operators will have portable wash hand basin which enables them to wash their hands on the spot). Hand washing facilities should include hand-hot water, hand soap and paper towels. Sanitising hand gel should also be available but is **not** a substitute for hand washing.
- c) There must be a good supply of clean, fresh hand-hot water, clean bowls, sanitising solution / soap for the cleaning and rinsing of brushes.
- d) There should also be provision to store waste water (for example in a screw top container- using a funnel). Waste water should be hygienically disposed of after use.
- e) Brushes should be hygienically cleaned and rinsed after each client. Practicably, this may mean that the face painter will need more than 1 set of brushes and possibly a helper to assist them with this task. At the end of the session, brushes should be thoroughly washed and air dried.
- f) There should be a clean pot of water for brushes, for each client / child.
- g) A new sponge should be used for each client / child (they should not be used more than once). Used sponges should be stored away from new sponges. If using washable / re-usable sponges, these should be placed in a net bag and laundered at 60°C.
- h) A spray bottle of clean water is a good way of wetting sponges (and avoid dipping sponges into brush water).

- i) It is good practice to decant paints for each client (as opposed to repeatedly dipping brushes- for different clients into the same pot).
- j) There should be anti-bacterial / sanitising spray and paper towels to wipe down surfaces.
- k) There should be a dustbin to hygienically dispose of used sponges, paper towels, cotton buds etc.

5. Safety

- a) The face painter should have some basic health & safety training.
- b) Face painting should not be conducted on children under the age of 3 years.
- c) Consent for face painting should be sought from the parent and **also** the child.
- d) Seating should be stable and suitable for the age of the child.
- e) Ensure that the face painter's working space is free of obstacles and people. The client / child should also sit still while their face is being painted (this is something that should be checked with regard to younger children). Injuries can be caused to the client / child where the face painter is knocked or the client moves suddenly (especially if they are using a paint brush!).
- f) Only approved **cosmetic grade** face paints (European CE marked) should be used. They should be within their expiry date and in good condition. The use of hypoallergenic paints may also wish to be considered.
- g) Glitter paint should **not** be used near the eyes, nostrils and mouth. Metallic glitter (usually used for craftwork) should **not** be used as they are not safe to use on the body. Only paints that are suitable for the face / body should be used.
- h) Paint brushes should be made of materials which consider the sensitivity of a child's skin. Cosmetic grade sponges should be used.

- i) The instructions provided (for example on paints, brushes, sponges and sanitising solutions) should be strictly adhered to.
- j) The face painter should be able to advise the client / adult on the best way to remove the face paint and when by.
- k) All paints, equipment, cleaning materials and solutions should be kept out of reach from members of the public.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive, and you may identify other risks and necessary control measures which should be included in your risk assessment.

6. Further information

- **FACE** The UK Face Painters Association
[FACE : The Face Painting Association – UK Face Painting \(uk-facepainting.co.uk\)](http://uk-facepainting.co.uk)
- **COVID-19** There is no longer a legal requirement to provide a **Covid-19** Risk Assessment for this activity. The current public health guidance (which replaced the Working Safely guidance) can be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reducing-the-spread-of-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19-in-the-workplace>