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'Harry Potter' chases kids' BAFTA

'Terabithia,' 'Happy Feet' also in the running

By **STEVE CLARKE**

LONDON — “Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix” will slug it out with “Bridge to Terabithia,” “Flushed Away” and “Happy Feet” for best feature at the BAFTA children’s awards.



'Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix'

In nominations announced Monday, there was a strong presence by the BBC, Blighty's biggest investor in kids' fare.

In the animation category, the pubcaster broadcast three of the potential winners — “Charlie and Lola Christmas Special,” “Shaun the Sheep” and “The Secret Show,” nominated alongside “Oban Star Racers.”

The corp.'s pre-school digital channel CBeebies is competing against Nickelodeon UK, Nick Junior and on-demand service Scamp for channel of the year.

Vying for the drama prize are three BBC shows, “Byker Grove,” “Jackanory — The Magician of Samarkand” and “That Summer Day.” The other nominee is CITV's “Life As a Popat.”

The kudo for indie of the year is a race between Aardman, The Foundation, Tiger Aspect and Twenty Twenty.

The international category pits Nick Junior's “Lazytown” against Jetix's “Lockie Leonard,” Nickelodeon UK's “SpongeBob SquarePants” and Jetix's “Yin Yang Yo!”

This year's awards are taking place against a real sense of crisis in children's TV production in the Blighty, with ITV no longer investing in domestic tyke fare and job cuts at the BBC's children's department.

A further blow to the sector has been ITV's decision to replace weekday afternoon children's shows on flagship web ITV1 with mainstream drama and entertainment programs.

The children's BAFTAs, which are sponsored by U.S. games giant Electronic Arts, will take place Nov. 25 in London.