

## Southport Tragedy and SCD security July 2024

We have been deeply saddened to hear about the recent tragedy at a dance camp in Southport.

Our hearts are with all the families impacted by this event. We are encouraged by the outpouring of love, support and fundraising by so many in response. We were also shocked to hear of the riots that followed but again really delighted to hear about all the people showing kindness and love by supporting those affected and clearing up the damaged after the riots.

### SCD AS A PLACE OF SAFETY FOR EVERYONE

- SCD is a place where people from all backgrounds can dance together, irrespective of age, skill, beliefs and income levels. Your background doesn't make any difference to how welcome you are at SCD.
- Our number one aim here is to create a **safe dancing community**, bringing positive change for ourselves, wider community and our town centre.
- This is why we would always breakdown any cliques, bullying and disrespectful behaviour immediately - from children, teens or adults.

### WE NEVER TAKE SAFETY FOR GRANTED

- We do not take for granted that we live in an incredibly safe country, where we don't have to face the horrendous daily fears many of our brothers and sisters face around the world.
- We are also privileged at SCD to welcome friends from some of these countries currently facing horrendous violence. We love that these friends of ours feel completely at home here at SCD as a place of welcome and joy, through dance. This includes women survivors of domestic violence who we host in groups each week, children and families who moved here from war torn countries and others who come here for relief from difficult other situations.
- As an organisation we invest in our team ensuring not only do classes have wonderful dance teachers but that we also have wonderful 'front of house' team members always on hand to welcome and help keep everyone safe.

### WE WORK AS A VILLAGE TO KEEP EACH OTHER SAFE

- Incidents like the Southport event are incredibly rare in a country where hundreds of thousands of schools, clubs and dance schools safely operate every day of the week.

- SCD is a non-profit organisation where we exist to build community and help to create a sense of village, where we care for ourselves AND are encouraged to look out for others.
- We love the phrase 'it takes a village to raise a child' and believe this is true actually for all of us, whatever our age. We are all more resilient, happier and healthier when we have a village we know we belong to. So keeping people safe is something we ALL take part in and we are thankful to have so many parents / partners / siblings and friends of SCD members who come along and actively play a part in helping to keep our community safe and happy.
- So, again at a time like this we think of the safety of ourselves afresh but also – importantly – consider how we are always part of the solution in making a safer community, a safer village together.
- SCD, deliberately chooses to be located in the town centre and we are the only dance school with our own dedicated 24-7 space for dance in this area. This costs us a lot more money than renting (for example) a church hall for a few hours each week...but gives us so many benefits, as well as fulfilling our mission to be part of the regeneration of the town centre....

#### **SAFETY - THE PRACTICALITIES**

- SCD, being located in the St Nicholas Centre is fortunate to be in a space that is monitored 24-7 by a large and professional security team using an advanced camera system that links to the Police and the town centre's 'Townlink' system.
- Security guards patrol the centre 24-7 and are never far from us when needed. They immediately deal with any suspicious behaviour.
- The security team are on hand to us continually, with a 60 second response time.
- During any events where parents / guardians aren't present, such as our holiday camps, our main shutter is closed throughout the camp. Our side door is available to parents who need to drop by but access to this is monitored by the team and this door isn't advertised. People knock on the shutter if they want to access through side door.
- On our risk assessments, fire is far more of a likely risk for us - and any dance school - so we have an actively reviewed fire plan followed by all team and aided by a full commercial onsite sprinkler system, 3 fire exits and a commercial smoke and fire detection system - all integrated with the centre's system. Our last full evacuation test was in July 2024.

### **TEAM TRAINING**

- All of Team SCD (30 people) are DBS checked on the 'Update service' making checking live all the time.
- Every team member is First Aid trained and the last course for everyone took place in June 2024
- Most importantly, all SCD team are trained in and following SCD's safeguarding procedures all the time - procedures we review and update every 6 months.

If you ever have any questions or concerns about safety at any time please do get in touch.

Thanks,  
Team SCD