

# DANCE STUDIO 22

## Child Protection Policy:

The safety and well-being of all children attending our Dance school is paramount, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity, they have the right to be protected from abuse.

As the principal of a dance school, it is my responsibility to take any allegations or suspicions of abuse seriously by taking the matter forward quickly and appropriately. All staff whether they are paid or voluntary, are aware of reporting any concerns of this nature to the Principal.

As our Dance school pupils are all children, we have a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in dance from mistreatment. All children have a right to protection and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. The dance school will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in dance through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines. A child is defined as under 18 The Children Act 1989.

## Policy Aims

To provide all children and young people with the appropriate safety and protection expected whilst in the care of staff within the dance studio.

It allows all staff & volunteers to make an informed and confident response to specific child protection issues and laws.

## Promoting Good Practice

- Where possible work in an open environment, by avoiding private or unobserved situations, encouraging an open environment, no confiding or special treatment.
- Always treating young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Must always the safety and welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals for themselves or the dance school.
- Sustaining a safe and appropriate distance with dancers, keeping a professional relationship between teacher and student. It is appropriate and breaking the law to have an intimate relationship with a child.
- Ensuring that a balanced relationship based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process, during their lessons.
- Promoting an unbiased environment to create a more enjoyable dance lesson for every child.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines provided by the IDTA. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- (CPD) Continual professional development – always keep up to date with skills and qualifications and insurance in dance and other related skills.
- When involving parents/ carers within the dance school to help out at competitions or shows, ensure that they work in pairs to limit any allegations or complaints.
- Principal and other members of staff being a good role model, by not smoking or drinking in the company of young people, ensuring that wherever possible promote positivity. i.e. school work and the possibilities of life.
- Providing positive feedback, thinking carefully about the specific child and how to deliver beneficial critiques by being enthusiastic.
- Getting to know each individual and recognising their personal developments and needs in the capacity of young people and disabled adults – evading excessive training or competitions, when they are not ready or do not want to participate.

- Keeping an accident report book with all details of any accidents/date time and details of any treatments provided, if any, for future reference if necessary.
- Must always obtain parental or guardian consent if dance school staff are expected or required to transport young people in their vehicles.

### **Practice not acceptable you should never:**

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- Share a room with a child
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults that they can do for themselves

### **Guidelines for use of photographic filming at dance events:**

Videoing as a training aid: there is no intention to prevent the use of video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, dancers and their parents/carers should be aware that this is part of the coaching programme and care will be taken in the storage of such films. If any other kind of photographic material or video of your child is required e.g. DVD of a performance or for advertisement material, then parental permission will be requested. Students/parents/carers are not allowed to record or take photos during classes or performances.

### **Recruitment and selecting staff and volunteers:**

In recent years, it is acknowledged that anyone could have the potential to abuse children in some way and it is our responsibility to protect these young people by taking reasonable steps to ensure that these inappropriate people are prevented from gaining access to them. When carrying out pre selection checks the following should be included:

1. All volunteers/staff should complete an application form. This will elect information about an applicant's past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record
2. Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau (DBS CHECK) or if they hold a recent Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Certificate, request sight of it, as not everyone is signed up to the 'DBS update system'.
3. Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children. These references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact
4. Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo)

### **Responding to suspicions or allegations**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in the Dance Studio in a paid or unpaid capacity to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities. The dance school will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague/volunteer is or may be abusing a child. When there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation.

- A child protection investigation.
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation.

### **Suspected Abuse:**

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the principal who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk. Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in dance

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns
- Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone of authority
- Create an open environment
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe
- Speak with the victim and the bully/ies separately
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else
- Keep records of what is said (what happened by whom, when etc)
- Report any concerns to the Principal

### **Action towards bullying:**

- Talk with the bully/ies explain the situation and try to get the bully/ies to understand the consequences of their behaviour
- Seek an apology to the victim/s.
- Inform the bully's parents
- Provide support for the teacher of the victim
- Impose sanctions as necessary
- Encourage and support the bully/ies to change behaviour
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress
- Inform all appropriate members of the action taken • Keep a written record of action taken (whom, when etc)