

Child Protection Policy for The Babel School of Dance

Statement

The Babel School of Dance has a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all its students/children whilst taking part in classes with the Babel School of Dance. The Babel School of Dance, will provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, an environment that is safe and with minimum risk to all who take part.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The children Act 1989)

Policy Aims

The aim of the Babel School of Dance Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- ☐ Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of The Babel School of Dance.
- ☐ All staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

Promoting Good Practice

Child abuse can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and outside environments. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported to The Principal.

Good Practice Guidelines

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- ☐ Always working in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication.
- ☐ Treating all students equally with respect and dignity.
- ☐ Always putting the welfare of each student first.
- ☐ Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust.
- ☐ Making dance fun and enjoyable.
- ☐ Ensuring any form of manual/physical support required should be provided openly. It is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving, students should always be consulted and their agreement gained, prior to any

support. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.

- ☐ Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance.
- ☐ Involving parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents, teachers and volunteers work in pairs.
- ☐ Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of the students.
- ☐ Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback.
- ☐ Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of students – avoiding excessive training and not pushing them against their will.
- ☐ Securing parental consent to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer Emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- ☐ Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of treatment given.

Practises to be avoided

The following should **be avoided** except in emergencies. If a case arises where these situations are unavoidable (eg. The child sustains an injury and need to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick up a child at the end of a session), it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the Principal or the child's parents.

- ☐ Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- ☐ Taking or dropping off a child to an event, unless written agreement is given and accepted between parent and staff.

Practises never to be sanctioned

You should **NEVER**

- ☐ Engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- ☐ Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- ☐ Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- ☐ 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 students that they can do for themselves.

NB It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the students involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. Particularly if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Incidents that must be reported/recorded

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- ☐ If you accidentally hurt a student
- ☐ If he/she seems distressed in any manner
- ☐ If a student misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done

Use of Photographic/filming equipment at events

There is evidence that some people have used performance events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young people. The Babel School of Dance will always request written parental consent before any photographs or filming takes place.

Video as a teaching aid: this considered a legitimate teaching aid, but the Babel School of Dance will always request written parental consent before the use of this aid and all materials will be stored in a locked cabinet when not in use.

Data Protection

All personal details of students are safely stored and inaccessible to the public. The Babel School of Dance adheres to information guidelines laid down by the Data Protection Act 1998. All records are destroyed once a student ceases being a student at The Babel School of Dance.

Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers

The Babel School of Dance recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children and all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

Pre-selection checks will include the following:

- ☐ All volunteers/staff will complete an application form. This will include self disclosure about any criminal record.
- ☐ Consent will be requested from an applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau
- ☐ Two confidential references will be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
- ☐ Evidence of identity will be requested.

Interview and induction

All employees and volunteers will be required to undergo an interview. All employees and volunteers will receive formal or informal induction during which:

- ☐ A check will be made that the application form has been completed in full, including sections on self-disclosure and criminal records.
- ☐ Qualifications are substantiated, where appropriate.
- ☐ Job requirements and responsibilities will be clarified.

- ☐ They will read and accept The Babel School of Dance's Code of Conduct.
- ☐ Child protection procedures will be explained and training needs clarified.

Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process will include training to help staff and volunteers to:

- ☐ Compare their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations.
- ☐ Recognise responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- ☐ Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
- ☐ Work safely and effectively with children.
- ☐ Give advisory information outlining good practice and information on what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person
- ☐ Give advisory information outlining good practice and information on what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour between children.

Responding to allegations or suspicions

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in The Babel School of Dance, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. There is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

The Babel School of Dance assures all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports his/her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Action

1. Concerns about poor practice:

- ☐ If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, The Principal will deal with it as a misconduct issue. If the allegation is made towards The Principal, the report must be made to Mrs Valerie Salter

2. Concerns about suspected abuse

- ☐ Any suspicion that a child has been abused by a member of staff or volunteer must be reported to The Principal, who will take actions considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question any other child who may be considered at risk.
- ☐ The Principal will refer the allegation to the social services department.
- ☐ The parents or carers of the child will be contacted following advice from social services.
- ☐ If The Principal is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to Valerie Salter.
- ☐ The Principal will deal with ALL media enquiries.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information will be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.

This will include the following:

- ☐ The Principal
- ☐ The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- ☐ The person making the allegation
- ☐ Social Services
- ☐ The alleged abuser (and parents if the abuser is a child)

Bullying

If bullying is suspected, the following actions will take place:

To help the victim and to prevent bullying:

- ☐ All signs of bullying will be taken very seriously
- ☐ All children will be encouraged to speak about their concerns. The victim will be helped to speak out and to tell someone in authority.
- ☐ All allegations will be investigated and actions taken to ensure the safety of the victim.
- ☐ Victims and alleged bullies will be spoken to separately
- ☐ Victims will be reassured that they can trust who they are speaking to and they will be helped, but promises must not be made to tell no one else.
- ☐ Records of all discussions will be kept
- ☐ Any concerns must be reported to The Principal immediately.

Action towards the bully(ies)

- ☐ Alleged bullies will be spoken to, help them to understand the consequences of their behaviour and an apology sought where required.
- ☐ Parents will be informed
- ☐ Provision of support for the victim's teacher
- ☐ Sanctions as necessary will be imposed
- ☐ Encourage and support the bullies to change their behaviour
- ☐ Meetings with parents will be scheduled to report on progress
- ☐ Written records of all actions taken to be kept

Information to be obtained when suspicions or allegations are made:

- ☐ Child's personal details, name, age, date of birth (obtainable from enrolment form)
- ☐ Child's home address and telephone number (obtainable from enrolment form)
- ☐ Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else

- ☐ The nature of the allegation, including date, times and any special factors relevant
- ☐ A description of any visible signs of injury. Any behavioural changes.
- ☐ Details of any witnesses to the incident.
- ☐ The child's account.
- ☐ Time of parental involvement
- ☐ Parental response
- ☐ Full report of the alleged incident, who reported it, etc.

Declaration

On behalf of The Babel School of Dance, we the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Signed: *S Ridley*

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NAME Sara Ridley

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Position within The Babel School of Dance

Principal

DATE: 30.8.25

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