

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

Vestry school of Dance has a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all of our students/children whilst taking part in classes. The company 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 Vestry school of Dance Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in our care
- All staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

The following are common sense examples of how we 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, drama, singing and performance fun and enjoyable.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible.

For example: encouraging them to take responsibility for children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure a team of parents, teachers and volunteers are put in place and students are not left with one single adult.

- 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.

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. Any concerns must be reported to management immediately.

Action towards the bullies

- 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
 - 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

SAFETY REGULATIONS

- Casual visitors should not have access to children without the presence Vestry staff.

- Children under the age of 12 years old will not be permitted to leave the class without being handed over to a responsible parent/guardian. Those over 12 years old and where arrangements are in place to make their own way home will not be permitted to leave without written consent from a responsible parent/guardian. Students over the age of 12 will be required to sign themselves in/out of the building and after signing out Vestry staff are no longer responsible for their safety.
- We ask that parents inform us should they make alternative arrangements to collect their child (i.e friend, grandparents).
- We ask that should a parent/guardian find they are running late, they contact us by telephone at least 5 minutes before the class expected finish time so that we are aware of the situation.

USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC/FILMING

Vestry school of Dance will always request written parental consent before any photographs or filming takes place.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

Vestry 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.

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