

Safeguarding Policy

Skelton Dance Academy recognizes its duty of care under the Children & Young Persons Act 1963, the Child (Performances) Regulations 1968, the Protection of Children's Act 1999 and the Criminal Justice & Court Services Act 2000 (In Scotland changed to Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003). Skelton Dance Academy recognizes that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. Skelton Dance Academy is committed to practice which protects children from harm. All staff members accept and recognize their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.

Skelton Dance Academy believes that:

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All members and employees should be clear on how to respond appropriately

Skelton Dance Academy will ensure that:

- All children will be treated equally and with respect and dignity
- The duty of care to children will always be put first
- Enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism
- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned
- All adults will demonstrate positive role modelling when dealing with other people
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour
- It will keep up-to-date with health and safety legislation
- It will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children
- It will undertake relevant development and training
- It will hold a register of every child attending and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies

Skelton Dance Academy has a dedicated Child Protection Officer who is responsible for ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are adhered to. Please contact K. Skelton for further details.

This policy will be subject to annual review

Child Protection Procedures:

Responsibilities:

- At the outset of any production involving children Skelton Dance Academy will
- Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process
- Identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for child protection
- Engaged in effective recruitment of chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children appropriate vetting (if necessary in consultation with the local education authority)
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times
- Know how to get in touch with the local authority social services in case it needs to report a concern

Parents:

Skelton Dance Academy believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and staff members

- Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the dance school and share in the responsibility for the care of children
- All parents will be given a copy of the society's Child Protection Policy and procedures
- All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arranged collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances. It is NOT the responsibility of the Chaperones to take children home

Unsupervised Contact:

- Skelton Dance Academy will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children
- Ratios of adults to children in the room will always be maintained at 12-1
- If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimize risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area, or in a designated room with a door open
- All licensed Chaperones will be required to obtain a criminal record disclosure

Physical Contact:

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children
- Adults will only touch children when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity
- Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear

Managing Sensitive Information

- Skelton Dance Academy has a policy and procedure for the taking, using and storage of photograph's or images of children
- Permission will be sought from the parents for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes
- The web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use
- Skelton Dance Academy will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as criminal record disclosures

Suspicion of Abuse

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of Skelton Dance Academy please make this known to the person with responsibilities for child protection. If you suspect that the person with responsibility for child protection is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to the other designated safeguarding officers
- Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of staff, chaperones, venue staff etc. that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the theatre, rehearsal room etc and will not have any unsupervised contact with any other children in the production

Disclosure

- If a child confides in you that abuse has taken place:
- Remain calm and in control but do not delay taking action
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Don't ask questions that suggest a particular answer
- Don't promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the person with responsibility for child protection. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share this information with others. Make it clear you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help
- Reassure the child that they did the right thing in telling someone
- Tell the child what you are going to do next
- Speak immediately to the person with responsibility for child protection. It is that persons responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually social services or the police
- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the child's own words. Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned and who you gave the information to. Make sure you sign and date your record.

Recording:

- In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, the details of an allegation or reported incident will be recorded, regardless as to whether or not the concerns have been shared with a statutory child protection agency
- An accurate note shall be made of the date and time of the incident or disclosure, the parties involved, what was said or done and by whom, any action taken to investigate the matter, any further action taken e.g. suspension of an individual where relevant, the reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency and the name of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported.
- The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation

Rights and Confidentiality:

- If a complaint is made against a member of staff, he or she will be made aware of his rights under Skelton Dance Academy disciplinary procedures
- No matter how you may feel about the accusation, both the alleged abuser and the child who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under legislation. Remember also that any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released
- In criminal law, the Crown, or other prosecuting authority, has to prove guilt and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty

Accidents:

- To avoid accidents, chaperones and children will be advised of "house rules" regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. Children will be advised of the clothing and footwear appropriate to the work that will be undertaken.
- If a child is injured while in the care of Skelton Dance Academy, a designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the accident book. This record will be countersigned by the person with responsibility for child protection
- If a child joins the production with an obvious physical injury a record of this will be made in the accident book. This record will be countersigned by the person with responsibility for child protection. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later and will also be a record that the child did not sustain the injury while participating in the production

Criminal Record Disclosures:

- Skelton Dance Academy believes it is in its best interests to obtain criminal record disclosures for chaperones or other personnel, it will inform the individual of the necessary procedures and the level of disclosure required. A standard disclosure will apply for anyone with supervised access to children. An enhanced disclosure will be required for anyone with unsupervised access.
- Skelton Dance Academy maintain confidentiality for the handling of disclosure information
- Skelton Dance Academy will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is not misused

Chaperones:

- Licensed Chaperones will be appointed to care for the children during the production process. By law the chaperone is acting in loco parentis and should exercise the care which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give to a child. The maximum number of children in the chaperones care shall not exceed 12
- Potential chaperones will be required to supply photographic proof of identity (e.g passport, driving licence) and two references from individuals with knowledge of their previous work with children, unless already well known to Skelton Dance Academy. They will also be asked to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children.
- Chaperones will be made aware of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Chaperones will not usually have unsupervised access to children in their care. If unsupervised access is unavoidable, or if this is a requirement of the local authority, a criminal record disclosure will be sought.

- Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children they should bring this to the attention of the producer. If changes cannot be made satisfactorily, the chaperones should consider not allowing the child to continue.
- If a chaperone considers that a child is unwell or too tired to continue, the chaperone must inform the producer and not allow the child to continue.
- Under the Dangerous Performances Act, no child of compulsory school age is permitted to do anything which may endanger life or limb. This could include working on wires or heavy lifting. Chaperones should tell the producer to cease using children in this way and should contact the local authority
- During performances, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the stage door and signing them into the building.
- Children will be kept together at all times except when using separate dressing rooms.
- Chaperones will be aware of where the children are at all times
- Children are not to leave the theatre unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parents
- Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms
- Chaperones should be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the venue and will ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger.
- Chaperones should ensure that any accidents are reported to and recorded by the Appointed First Aider and Child Protection Officer.
- Chaperones should examine accident books each day. If any accident has occurred, the producer is not allowed to use that child until a medically qualified opinion has been obtained (not just the word of the parent of the child)
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances. If someone different is to collect the child, a telephone call should be made to the parent to confirm the arrangements
- Children should be signed out when leaving and a record made of the person collecting.
- If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child.

11th August 2019