Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

The Dance Studio London LLP ("DS")–

- the welfare of the child 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 of DS should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

DS will ensure that:

- all children will be treated equally and with respect and dignity.
- the welfare of each child will always be put first.
- enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism.
- bullying will not be accepted or condoned.
- all adult members of the DS provide a positive role model for dealing with other people.
- action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- it will hold a register of every child involved with the DS and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF DS

At the outset of any production involving children DS will:

- undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process.
- identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for child protection for that production.
- ensure that children are always supervised.
- know how to get in touch with the local authority social services in case it needs to report a concern. (See below)
- Be aware of the correct reporting procedures if concerned about a child's welfare.

3. PARENTS

- All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances. It is NOT the responsibility of DS to take children home.
- Parents are not allowed in the backstage area unless they are appointed chaperones or suitable adults.

4. UNSUPERVISED CONTACT

- DS will ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children.
- There will always be two adults in the room when working with children.

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of DS, please make this known to the person with responsibility for child protection, then it must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer "DSO". 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 Principal.
- A note must be made for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response in case there is follow-up in which you are involved. This must be done as soon as possible.

5. DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

If a child confides in you that abuse has taken place:

- Remain calm and in control but do not delay in 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 that 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. They in turn should liaise with DS's designated person responsible for Child Protection and it is their 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.

6. 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 of 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.

7. ACCIDENTS

- To avoid accidents, chaperones, suitable adults and children will be advised of "house rules" regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds.

- If a child is injured while in the care of the The Dance Studio, a designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the society's accident book. This record will be counter-signed 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 counter-signed 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.
- Qualified first aiders should be on hand in all entertainment establishments.

8. CHAPERONES AND SUITABLE ADULTS

- A chaperone/suitable adults first duty is to look after the children in their care and they must not undertake any activity that would interfere with the performance of this duty. The maximum number of children in the chaperone/suitable adults care shall not exceed 12.
- Chaperones/Suitable adults are required to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check as part of the approval process or have an existing enhanced DBS and apply in house and provide evidence of suitability and provide references.
- Chaperones/suitable adults have the responsibility of care for children in entertainment and the nature of this role is that they are in a position of trust regarding those children. Abuse of a position of trust in respect of young persons under the age of 18 is considered an offence, and under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 would include sexual activity with or in the presence of a child, causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity or watch a sexual act.
- The law says that the maximum number of children an individual chaperone may supervise is twelve. However, The Dance Studio may decide that the chaperone/suitable adult would supervise a smaller number.
- Boys and girls from the age of 5 must be in separate changing rooms. There would have to be at least two chaperones/suitable adults on duty, or one chaperone plus a suitable adult.
- Chaperones/suitable adults must remain with the children all of the time. It is only when they are on stage or performing that chaperones are not required to be by their side.
- Chaperones/suitable adults should possess firm negotiating skills. Occasionally production companies may try to exploit a child in order to facilitate their schedule. Chaperones/suitable adults have the power to withdraw a child from a performance if they have good reason and should have the confidence to do so when it is in the interest of the child.
- The chaperones/suitable adults must keep daily records of the children at the place of performance. There should be emergency contact numbers available.
- A child should not be allowed to perform when unwell. The chaperones/suitable adults must put the needs of the child first. They have the responsibility to refuse to accept a sick child who arrives for a performance.
- 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.
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms. Children must change in separate gender changing rooms.

- Qualified first-aiders should be on hand in all entertainment establishments. Chaperones should establish where the first-aid kit and accident book are located.
- The chaperones and suitable adults should become familiar with the procedures for evacuating the building in case of fire and the escape routes from whatever rooms the children are using.
- The local authority officers are empowered to enter any premises where a performance or entertainment is being performed by children, without prior notice, to establish that the children are being properly supervised and cared for. They have the authority to withdraw the children from the performance, to rescind the chaperone's approval, or both.

9. RESPONSIBILITY

- The Dance Studio will appoint a person to be responsible for implementing and enforcing child protection procedures. The current person with that responsibility is Sarah Kiamil
- That person must be at all events including rehearsals, at which children will be present. If they are unable to be present then they may arrange for another suitable person to be deputise.

10. FORMS

- For each rehearsal, performance, or other organized event at which children are present a log sheet will be kept by either the chaperone, or the designated person.
- For each child involved in a performance a registration form must be completed by parent or guardian, which details the child's name, address, age, any relevant medical information and contact details of a responsible person. The form should also list people who are permitted to collect the child after the performance. These forms will be collected and stored securely by the designated person appointed by Ds, but extracts of the relevant information will be retained by chaperones in order for them to fulfil their responsibilities.

11. AUTHORITIES

- Child Protection Enfield: 0208 379 1000
- Enfield Children's MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) Tel: 0208 379 5555
- or the police - **in an emergency always contact the police by dialling 999**.

12. REVIEW

This policy will be regularly monitored and will be subject to annual review.

Signed S Kiamil. Dated 15/12/2025

Sarah Kiamil (Principal)