

## NORTHAMPTON FESTIVAL OF DANCE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

**The British and International Federation of Festivals for Music, Dance and Speech** and its member Festivals such as Northampton Festival of Dance, are committed to ensuring safe environments for children and young people. We believe that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to follow best practice guidelines to protect them.

This policy applies to the Festival Committee, paid staff, Adjudicator members, volunteers, students or anyone working on behalf of the Northampton Festival of Dance.

### We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- committee members, festival staff, teachers and parents share the responsibility for ensuring the safety of all children and vulnerable adults within their care
- to provide protection for the children and young people who participate in our festivals, including the children of festival members
- to provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm

### We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and safe working practice for staff and volunteers
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child protection and safe working practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

The Federation reviews its template policy each year in November in line with Safe Network guidance or sooner in light of any changes in legislation or guidance. Northampton Festival of Dance will review its policy in line with any such changes notified.

## Creating a Safer Festival for Everyone

1. Northampton Festival of Dance's Safeguarding Officer (FSO) is **Sinead Jones**, Phone: **07711320341**
2. The Festival Committee will undergo safeguarding training prior to the Festival in order to ensure their awareness of all procedures and policies in place for the festival and its participants.
3. We will use appropriate recruitment and induction procedures for all Festival staff and volunteers responsible for providing safe environments for everyone attending / performing at a Federation Festival, using the Federation's **Safe Working Practice** and **Festival Child Protection leaflets**.
4. All Festival personnel will wear an official Festival name badge.
5. Teachers/parents/guardians/carers should report any safeguarding incidents or concerns to anyone wearing a Festival badge. The staff member should ensure the matter is referred to a member of the Committee, or the FSO, for immediate action.
6. All adults and staff involved in the Festival in a helping role are expected to listen to children and take account of their needs, views and wishes, and pass on any concerns without delay, paying due regard to the need for confidentiality.
7. Details should be recorded on the Festival's incident log and the information passed to the FSO or a member of the Festival Committee. All reported incidents will be handled in accordance with the **Safe Working Practice** and **Festival Child Protection** best practice advice.
8. A quiet area / room where concerns can be expressed in private will be available.
9. For the duration of a Festival all teachers/parents/guardians/carers are responsible for the continuous care and supervision of their own children/pupils. If they are unable to attend personally, they must delegate their responsibilities to an identified adult and ensure that their children/pupils are aware of the identity and name of the person responsible for their care. This includes supervision throughout the Festival venue, including performance, practice and changing areas. The Festival cannot take responsibility for any property left unattended.

10. Notification of changing rooms will be given on arrival and parents should note that with the exception of the 'Family changing room' & the 'Green Room' all changing rooms are single sex and should make arrangements accordingly.
  - a. Following requests by a number of families, including single parents, a 'Family Changing Room' is provided for use by those who require it: users do so in the full knowledge that they may not be single sex.
  - b. The Green Room is for use solely for dancers awaiting their turn to perform. In some instances dancers may need to carry out quick changes: if needed, there are some private areas within the Green Room.
  - c. For Group sections, each school must provide a responsible adult to accompany the young people in the Green Room.
  - d. As the large majority of dancers at the Festival are female, only women are permitted in the Green Room. As such, large props must be brought to the stage door at a prearranged time (ie an appropriate break) and be placed in the scene dock. They are not permitted into the green room as they may cause an obstruction or a hazard to children and thus affect their safety.
11. No unauthorised photography, audio or video recording of children and young people is allowed at our Festival. Where parents/guardians/carers do not wish photos to be taken at all, then the responsible adult attending should ensure that their child is not included in photos by the official photographer by notifying the official photographer ideally in advance of the Festival of the child's name and sections entered.
12. Some children and vulnerable adults may have specific needs in order to take part. If this is the case we ask the responsible teachers/parents/guardians/carers to contact the Festival Organiser prior to arrival. The Festival actively seeks wherever possible to meet these needs, but must know beforehand in order to prepare support – or to advise that help cannot be provided on this occasion.
13. The Festival's Child Protection Policy and approach to Creating Safer Festivals for Everyone is published explicitly in our Syllabus and Programme. By completing and signing the entry form all parents / guardians / carers and teachers of competitors under 18 (or vulnerable adults of any age) confirm that they give (or have obtained) the necessary consents for the competitors to take part in the Festival. Without consent the entry to the Festival cannot be accepted.

## Definitions

A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm, or fails to act to prevent harm. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection

- **Physical Abuse** - May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after.

- **Sexual Abuse** - Forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening, may involve: physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts;

non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities; or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

- **Neglect** - Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- **Emotional Abuse** - The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age and developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, for example witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Bullying, either directly or indirectly (for example through social media) constitutes emotional abuse.