

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

IMPLEMENTED: 13TH MARCH 2024

ANNUAL REVIEW: Due MARCH 2025

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: JANE PRENTICE-JENKINS, 07867 988068

The safety of children and members of other vulnerable groups is paramount and all, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously, responded to swiftly and appropriately and all of the Festival's organisers/volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children, young people, and members of vulnerable groups by a commitment to recommend best practice which protects them.

THE BRITISH & INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF FESTIVALS CHILD PROTECTION POLICY (ADOPTED BY CENTRE STAGE DANCE FESTIVAL)

This policy applies to our Board of Trustees, Adjudicator members, volunteers, students, or anyone working on behalf of the Federation and our member Festivals.

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.

The purpose of the policy:

- 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 will review this policy each year in November in line with Safe Network guidance or sooner in light of any changes in legislation or guidance. All changes will be communicated to our member Festivals in time for the start of the new Festival year.

CENTRE STAGE DANCE FESTIVAL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Carers are reminded that the safety of young people and vulnerable adults, together with their belongings, remains their responsibility during the Festival.

When attending the Festival, carers must ensure that children and vulnerable adults are adequately supervised by themselves or by another responsible adult acting on their behalf. Festival officials are not able to undertake this task. Changing areas, warm up rooms and toilets are not supervised, and children should not be allowed to stray into areas designated as out of bounds.

1. PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF ORGANISATION

The object and purpose of Centre Stage Dance Festival is to assist in the education of children and young people in the art of dance and all of its branches. To this end Centre Stage Dance Festival holds annual competitive festivals, presents public performances and where funds permit, offers a bursary each year to assist in their journey of his/her/their dance training. A professional adjudicator, recommended by The British & International Federation of Festivals adjudicates the Centre Stage Dance Festival.

2. THE FESTIVAL ENVIRONMENT

The Festival is a Community Interest Company run by organisers and volunteers and informs and involves parents, carers, guardians, and teachers in partnership to ensure a safe environment at the venue. We do this by ensuring that all participants receive a copy of this policy. The Safeguarding policy is available in the syllabus, in the programme and on the website. The Festival has hired the facilities of the venue named above and the venue itself is not running the event.

3. TO WHOM DOES THIS POLICY APPLY?

This policy relates to all children under the age of 18 and members of vulnerable groups of any age whose needs are identified to the Festival organisers by parents, carers, guardians and / or teachers prior to their arrival at the Festival. This should be done by contacting the Safeguarding Officer. Contact details can be found at the top of the policy. Our Festival actively seeks to meet all needs but must know specific needs beforehand in order to identify what support we are able to offer.

4. CENTRE STAGE DANCE FESTIVAL PERSONNEL

Where Festival Personnel will be supervising children or in one-to-one contact with children at our Festival, they are required to undertake disclosure through the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) prior to the start of the Festival. Those disclosures will be processed either through the umbrella body which supports our Festival (The British & International Federation of Festivals) or through the appropriate local council. We ensure that all volunteers working at the festival submit contact details, which we hold on file and keep to hand during the Festival.

At the Festival there will always be an organiser available on the premises to answer any queries or deal with any issues. A notice will be placed at the entrance desk advising the name of that person and how to contact them.

All Festival Personnel will be identified by official Festival badges which show their name. In case of a problem, anyone wearing a badge may be approached at any time and if not able to deal with the problem themselves, will direct adults or children to the organiser. All problems will be dealt with discretely, documented and dated. All Festival Personnel will be signed in and signed out of the venue on a daily basis and we will keep a copy of this register to hand during the Festival.

All those who assist in running the Festival are volunteers; they are recruited upon recommendation by those who manage the Festival, or the umbrella body which supports our Festival (The British & International Federation of Festivals), as professional people in their own right and/or supporters of the Festival with good character. All Festival volunteers and helpers are familiar with this Policy.

Dancers must be signed in on arrival at the Festival by one of the Festival organisers/volunteers, and the name of the responsible adult provided.

Dancers must not be left in dressing rooms alone without a parent/guardian or licenced chaperone being present. Centre Stage Dance Festival organisers/volunteers do not act as chaperones for dancers in the dressing rooms.

5. PREPARATION FOR ATTENDANCE AT THE FESTIVAL

This Policy is sent to you as parents/guardians/carers (where applicable via the dance teacher) at the time you are making your arrangements to attend the Festival and your teacher will send back a signed paper to say that it has been distributed to you. Unless this signed acknowledgement is received by the Festival organisers before the commencement of the Festival, dancers from that school/group will be prevented from performing. This ensures that parents/guardians/carers and teachers become partners with the Festival in implementing this Policy. A parent/guardian/carer or teacher must accompany and supervise all entrants under 18. This policy is also included in the syllabus and programme, along with a hard copy being available with the Festival organiser at the venue.

6. PERFORMANCE, CHANGING AND COMMON AREAS

Designated changing areas will be provided, but these, along with public areas, will not be supervised by Festival organisers/volunteers and must be supervised by the adults accompanying the participants (teachers and chaperones appointed by the schools). Parents/Guardians/Carers/Teachers should be

aware that the only areas of the venue solely supervised by Festival organisers/volunteers are the side of stage and performing areas during performances. In all other areas of the venue (including, but not limited to, the dressing rooms, toilets, auditorium, warm up rooms, and corridors etc.)

parents/guardians/carers/teachers are reminded that the safety and belongings of young people are their responsibility during the festival. There will always be a Centre Stage Dance Festival organiser/volunteer at the side of the stage who will be a registered chaperone and therefore able to act as chaperone to competitors when in that area. Only ONE Parent/Guardian/Carer per performer will be allocated access to the backstage/changing areas. This designated person will be allocated a wristband for access and persons without a wristband will not be granted access to any backstage areas.

7. PHOTOGRAPHS, FILMING AND PRESS PHOTOGRAPHY

The taking of photographs or videos in the auditorium by members of the audience is strictly prohibited. An appropriate official photographer/videographer may be available throughout the festival to take photos/videos of competitors, along with official photographs taken at the end of each section for Festival publicity. Please note that any use of the photographer remains the responsibility of parents/guardians/carers/teachers, and where parents/guardians/carers/teachers do not wish for photos to be taken, it is the responsibility of the accompanying adult to ensure the child or vulnerable person is not included in said photographs. It is not Festival policy to take mobile phones from dancers or stop them using these to take photographs or videos, but Parents/Guardians/Carers/Teachers are asked to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly and to ensure that their use does not cause disruption in the backstage area. The taking of photographs on any device is strictly prohibited in any dressing rooms/areas and toilets.

8. THE LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE THAT SUPPORTS THIS POLICY

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
The Children Act 1989
The Police Act 1997
The Data Protection Act 1998
The Human Rights Act 1998
The Protection of Children Act 1999
The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
The Children Act 2004
The Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

9. DATA PROTECTION

The Festival is GDPR compliant and follows the latest regulations for the safe management, sharing and storage of all data collected from each entrant, customer, helper, or volunteer.

10. POLICY REVIEW

The organisers will review this Policy annually, revising and enhancing it as necessary. In doing this, they will look to The British & International Federation of Festivals for support and that body, in turn will look to other agencies for good practice, most notably the NSPCC and Arts Council of England policy guidelines.