

EMPIRE DANCE SCOTLAND SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

At Empire Dance Scotland we recognise that the welfare of children is of paramount importance. We have a responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of all children and young people we work with and have a duty to do so under the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014, National Framework for Working Together and a duty to share our concerns under the 2014 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act.

Our duty is a four part duty to recognise, respond to, report and record all concerns regarding child protection.

We recognise the importance of promoting the wellbeing and safety of all children in line with the Getting It Right for Every Child Guidance which is based on the UNCRC and understand our responsibility to ensure all the children we work with are:

Safe
Healthy
Achieving
Nurtured
Active
Respected
Responsible
Included

In Scotland we become an adult at 16 years old however the 2014 Children and Young People Act applies to all those up until their 18th birthday. This means 16-18 year olds must still be granted the same protections as children but this may be provided under the Adult Support and Protection Act 2007. It may also be the case that support is provided for a young person through till they turn 18 under children's legislation due to an extension relating to a disability of a supervision order.

At Empire Dance Scotland we believe that all children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs and that no child, or group of children should be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access the services and support to meet their needs.

All staff and volunteers have a strict duty never to subject a child to any form of harm or abuse. Failure to adhere to these procedures will be treated as gross misconduct.

Children and their parents/carers who attend Empire Dance Scotland may view our policy and a copy will always be kept on our website; empiredancescotland.co.uk and in our office.

Designated Child Protection Officer:

The designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) within our organisation is Renee Costello.

The DCPO will advise members of staff and visitors to Empire Dance Scotland on best practice and expectations. They will be responsible for the monitoring and recording of any child protection concerns and for ensuring that all concerns are shared with the appropriate statutory authorities.

All staff and volunteers at Empire Dance Scotland should be made aware of this policy and should be able to demonstrate their roles of the responsibilities for child protection and promoting the welfare of children and young people, including how to raise concerns with both social work services and the police Scotland. Staff and volunteers shall be made aware of this through relevant training in commencement of employment, team meetings, team training sessions and briefings.

Overview of responsibilities:

All staff and volunteers must report all concerns to the designated Child Protection Officer at the nearest available opportunity.

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers at Empire Dance Scotland to take steps to protect children, to keep them safe from hazards and to take appropriate action in the event of an accident.

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to take responsible steps to protect children and young people from harm and abuse while in contact with our organisation and our staff to report any incident of or suspicion of abuse to the Designated Child Protection officer or in their absence to the appropriate statutory authority.

All staff working at Empire Dance Scotland who have contact with children and young people are required to hold a valid, clear disclosure check from the Disclosure Scotland and barring scheme in line with the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act 2007 and the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003.

Promoting the welfare of children and young people means:

Protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of a child's health or development, ensuring that children are growing up with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to ensure that children have the best life chances.

At Empire Dance Scotland we will do this by:

- Identifying and responding to concerns about a child or young person
- Providing a safe and happy dance environment
- Supporting development through dance in a way that fosters a sense of belonging/sense of self/ sense of community/ sense of independence
- Supporting young people to communicate freely with us, supporting their communication methods, providing time and space to talk

- Fostering an environment of trust and building appropriate professional relationships

Consent and information sharing:

Issues of consent are essential to effective safeguarding practice. Additional consent must be sought for any activity that is out of the usual parameters of our work. Basic consents for day to day activities will be sought through enrolment process, photo/video consent, consent for performances and competitions, and appropriate organisational guidance shall be provided to ensure those consenting have clear and transparent information on what they are consenting to.

Significant harm is no exception to this. Before making a referral to Children's Social Work Services parents or carers must be informed that you are doing so, including the reasons why and must be asked for consent to do this. It should be noted however that in cases where parents, carers or children do not agree to information being shared you are still able to refer to Children's Social Work Services or the police without consent but it is important to explain clearly to social work services why consent cannot be established and to make a record of this.

Instances where you may not wish to seek consent are where:

- Discussion with parents/carers could place the child or other members of their family at increased risk
- The child is in immediate danger (e.g. requires medical attention)
- Having the discussion with parents may put you or another member of staff at risk

It is often necessary to share information to provide support and prevent impairment or to protect and child from harm. Decisions to share will be appropriate, necessary and proportionate. You must record your decision and the reasons for it, whether or not you choose to share information. If you decide to share you should record what you shared and who you shared with.

Child protection:

Refers to activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or likely to suffer **significant harm**.

This is about abuse and maltreatment of a child. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them, or by others (for example over the internet.) They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child/children. Abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual, neglectful or multiple types of abuse.

All staff and volunteers should be able to recognise, and know how to act upon evidence that a child's health or development is being impaired or that the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. All concern about harm must be recorded and shared with the Designated Child Protection Officer.

No professional should assume that another will pass on information about the safety of a child. If a professional has concerns about a child's welfare and believe that are or are likely to suffer significant harm they have a responsibility to inform Children's social work services.

Seeking medical attention:

If a child has a physical injury, and there are concerns of abuse, medical attention should be sought immediately. Any child protection concerns should be shared with ambulance or hospital staff and then must be reported to children's social work services.

- **Nothing should be allowed to delay urgent medical treatment.**

Referring a concern and your DSP:

Our Designated child protection officer will act on behalf of Empire Dance Scotland in referring concerns or allegations of harm to Children's social work services or Police Scotland as appropriate. If the designated child protection officer is in any doubt information should be shared with children's social work services for a second opinion. It is not the role of the DCPO to investigate only to collate information, clarify details of the concern and facilitate information sharing. In the absence of the DCPO the individual who has the concern is responsible for contacting children's social work services and the information should be shared with the DCPO retrospectively.

The contact number for children's social work services in Eyemouth is:
01896 662787

Protection of children:

At Empire Dance Scotland we will make every effort to protect children from harm when they are visiting our setting/ attending our classes. We will do this through:

- Appropriate recruitment and selection procedures
- Provision of safeguarding training for staff and volunteers
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers hold clear current disclosure and barring Scotland checks
- We will take all reasonable steps to ensure health safety and welfare for all those who access our organisation
- We will take all practicable steps to ensure that no one working with us or for us would put a child in a situation of unreasonable risk to their health and safety
- We will not harm or abuse children within our care and will take all reasonable steps to ensure no one working with us or around us within the community could harm or abuse a child in our care

- We will ensure good reporting to our DCPO and onward to children's social work services where ever we suspect harm and will foster and environment of good communication, transparency and trust

Allegations against staff members/volunteers:

If any member of staff has concerns about another member of staff or volunteer at Empire Dance Scotland such as:

- Believing they have behaved in a way that has hard or may cause harm to a child
- Having possibly committed a criminal offence against or relating to a child
- Behaved toward a child in a way that indicates he/she is unsuitable to work with children. (This could include both children within the work place, children within the community or their own children).

The allegation or concern should be reported to the manager with responsibility for dealing with allegation immediately. This is Renee Costello.

Neither the member of staff who has raised the concern/allegation nor the member of staff who is alleged against should be allowed to question children or be part of any further investigation. The designated manager for Empire Dance Scotland will report the matter to the Local Authority designated Officer (LADO).

If an allegation or concern arises about a member or staff, outside of their work with children, and this may present a risk or harm to a child/children for which that member of staff is responsible, the general principles outlined in this policy will still apply.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Date of last review 13/07/2023

Next Review 13/07/2024

Signed RENEE COSTELLO (Designated Safeguarding Person)
