

COMPANY



Child Protection Policy and Code of Behaviour for working with children/young people

Dear Parents/Guardians of Company B,

This policy has been put together to comply with best practice for youth activities.

If an issue arises with your child and you are unhappy with the way they have been treated your first port of call should be Ciarán. This is how we have functioned since the beginning of Company B and it has worked well. Most problems can be sorted with a quiet word and some discussion.

However, if you feel that having brought it to his attention that you are dissatisfied or that you need to discuss an issue with someone other than Ciarán, then you should contact the Child Protection Officer, Caroline.

Company B

Director: Ciarán Gray

email: ciarangray@gmail.com

Child Protection Officer: Caroline Gillick

email: carolinegillick@eircom.net

Company B - COMMITMENT TO CHILD PROTECTION

Company B is committed to promoting and facilitating the full participation of children and young people in its work. The aim is to create a safe and healthy environment for the young people with whom we work and we are committed at all times to ensuring their safety and welfare.

These guidelines are based on “Children First – National Guidance” and “Our Duty to Care – The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People”. This policy also helps to provide safeguards and support for staff when they are working with children and young people.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Company B is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of all the children and young people with whom we work. Our policy on child protection is in accordance with “Children First”. Company B is committed to promoting the rights of the child including the participation of children and young people in matters that affect them.

A set of guidelines have been introduced by Company B and all staff and volunteers involved in any event with young participants have agreed to adhere to these guidelines.

Company B’s guidelines are set out in this document.

Everybody who works with children has a duty of care to them and this is a responsibility, which must be taken seriously. These guidelines aim to provide information and promote good practice for those involved in working with children in Company B so that staff will be aware of what to do in situations where the safety or welfare of a child may be at risk.

Good Practice Guidelines

Safe practice is essential in our work and we have put in place the following procedures to govern our work with children and young people:

- All staff and those assisting Company B in our work are aware of the good practice guidelines and are familiar with the overall child protection policy of the office;
- Children and young people involved with our work are informed of our guidelines and procedures;
- Parents of children involved with our work are also informed of our guidelines and procedures;
- Company B has put in place an anti bullying policy;
- Company B has put in place a complaints procedure;
- An appropriate ratio of adults to young people of 1:20 is in place for each event held by Company B. The ratio may vary depending on the particular situation,

the age of the participants and their dis/ability or other special needs (Where activities involve being away from home overnight, appropriate gender based supervision will be provided);

- Staff and facilitators show respect and understanding for the rights, safety and welfare of the children and young people;
- Inappropriate behaviour/language by the children/young people will not go unchallenged;
- A system is in place for recording any incidents or accidents while the child is in the care of Company B;
- There are clear channels of communication if parents/guardians or children/young people wish to voice their concerns if there is something they are not happy about;
- Company B will make every effort to ensure that during its events, the physical surroundings will be comfortable, fully accessible and appropriate for the work being undertaken;
- Employees and volunteers should not take one young person alone in a car on journeys. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full consent and knowledge of the parents/guardians and a senior member of the staff in Company B
- While we recognise that sometimes it is appropriate for staff to work on a one to one basis with a child or young person, staff/volunteers should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with an individual child/young person. Where an adult needs to work with a child/young person alone, the door should be left open and another adult informed.
- There should be no unnecessary physical contact between an adult and a young person. Physical contact is an inherent part of dance teaching but should follow the guidelines as laid out in Appendix - Safe Touch. Physical contact should be appropriate to the age and the level of development of the child.
- Company B respects and promotes the principles of equality and diversity and works with all children in a culturally sensitive way within the context of the Irish constitution and law and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Staff and volunteers from another agency/organisation

- When working with staff/volunteers from another agency/organisation in facilitating an event involving children/young people, such staff/volunteers will be given Company B Child Protection policy and code of behaviour and will be asked to sign a document certifying that they have read it and agree to abide by its contents and that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable for working with children/young people (see Appendix);

KEEPING PARENTS AND GUARDIANS INFORMED

Company B will keep parents and guardians informed of all aspects of the programme that their child is involved in. It is our policy to share information relating to the programme of activities, trips away, transport to and from events, etc. with the parents/guardians. It is our practice to inform parents/guardians first in the event of a child disclosing an incident of abuse, unless this could put the child in danger.

PROCEDURES FOR TRAVEL INVOLVING CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

Where Company B arranges for transport Company B will request consent from the parent(s)/guardian(s).

In the case where a child/young person travels with Company B to a meeting or an event, Company B will be responsible for the welfare of the young person while travelling and while at the event. This includes travel abroad. In these instances, parental consent forms must be completed by parents/guardians and a record must be kept of the emergency contact numbers supplied.

ACTIVITIES INVOLVING OVERNIGHT STAYS AWAY FROM HOME

Where the activities involve staying away from home overnight a number of additional concerns need to be taken into account. In all cases of residential work with young people, Company B follows the guidelines below:

General guidelines

- Adequate and safe transport arrangements will be made;
- There will be adequate insurance cover for the activities being undertaken;
- Parent/guardian consent will be obtained for each participant, prior to the trip, including information on each participant about the following:
 - Contact details of parent/guardian and another person named by the parent/guardian in the event of the parent/guardian not being available in an emergency
 - All relevant medical information for the participant and consent for medical intervention, if necessary
 - Any special needs which the participant may have, including diet, medical needs, support needs, etc;
- All relevant information including contact details, allergies, medicines, dietary needs etc. for the child or young person will be kept with a leader/staff member on the trip.
- Parents/guardians will be fully informed of the programme or timetable for the event and will receive a copy of the programme;
- Parents will be given full contact details of the centre/hotel/accommodation and also of the staff member in charge of the event;

- Company B will ensure that the physical surroundings are safe, comfortable, accessible and appropriate for the work being undertaken;
- There will be an appropriate ratio of adults to young people at the event – this may vary depending on the age and ability of the group involved;
- There will be appropriate gender based supervision for the event;
- Accommodation will be provided in single sex rooms, and dormitories will not be shared with non-group members;
- Company B have a system in place for recording any accidents or incidents while in the care of Company B
- One staff person will be designated as the 'key contact person' for the event and parents/guardians and participants will be given contact details of this person.
- Parents/guardians will also be given the contact details of Company B Child Protection Officer.

Code of behaviour for events

- All leaders will show respect and understanding for the children/young people involved.
- Inappropriate behaviour/language will not go unchallenged;
- The privacy of the participants will be respected at all times and particularly in dormitories, changing rooms, showers and toilets.
- Participants should be encouraged to report to a staff member any cases of bullying and the leader must be made aware of this.
- Leaders should avoid showing favouritism towards any one participant and should ensure that the relationship is constructive and aims to build the independence and autonomy of the participants.

DEALING WITH CHALLENGING OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Leaders who deal directly with children and young people will be given guidance and support in dealing with difficult behaviour. Company B ensures that the safety and welfare of the children and young people is a priority and that staff will deal sensitively and professionally with any difficult issues that may arise. Where instances of challenging or disruptive behaviour occur with children/young people, a record will be kept of this.

The report of the incident should include:

- The activity which was happening at the time
- Date of Incident;
- A record of what happened;
- Details of who was involved;

- Details of where and when it happened;
- A record of any significant comments;
- A record of any injury to person or property;
- Details of how the situation was resolved or left.

BULLYING

Bullying behaviour can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical which is conducted by an individual or group against others.

Examples of bullying include:

- Teasing
- Taunting
- Threatening
- Hitting
- Extortion
- Exclusion.

Company B will not tolerate any bullying behaviour by children/young people or adults and will deal with any incidents immediately in accordance with Company B anti-bullying policy when working with children and young people (Appendix).

DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

Company B values and encourages the full participation of children and young people in our work and will strive to ensure that the experience of the child/young person in our work is a happy and productive one. In the event of a child/young person disclosing an incident of abuse it is essential that this is dealt with sensitively and professionally by the staff member/volunteer involved. The following are guidelines to support the worker/volunteer in this:

- React calmly.
- Listen carefully and attentively; take the young person seriously.
- Reassure the young person that they have taken the right action in talking to you.
- Do not promise to keep anything secret.
- Ask questions for clarification only. Do not ask leading questions.
- Check back with the child/young person that what you have heard is correct and understood.
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser.
- Record the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible.
- Sign and date the record.
- Ensure that the child/young person understands the procedures which will follow.

- Pass the information to the Child Protection Officer, do not attempt to deal with the problem alone.
- Treat the information confidentially.

ROLE OF THE CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

The Child Protection Officer in Company B has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the child protection and welfare policy of Company B is promoted and implemented.

The role of the Child Protection Officer involves the following duties:

- To be familiar with “Children First”, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children and “Our Duty to Care”, the principles of good practice for the protection of children & young people and to have responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the child protection and welfare policy of Company B;
- To receive reports of alleged/suspected or actual child abuse and act on these in accordance with the guidelines;

REPORTING PROCEDURE IN RESPECT OF CHILD ABUSE

Company B has put in place a standard reporting procedure for dealing with disclosures, concerns or allegations of child abuse.

Definition and Recognising Child Abuse

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Definitions of the four types of abuse, how to recognise abuse and an explanation of “reasonable grounds for concern” are included in Appendix , which is based on “Children First – National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children”.

Responsibility to Report Child Abuse

Everyone must be alert to the possibility that children with whom they are in contact may be experiencing abuse or have been abused in the past. This is an important responsibility for staff and volunteers when working with children and young people.

The guiding principles in regard to reporting children abuse are summarised as follows:

- The safety and well-being of the child or young person must take priority
- Reports should be made without delay to the HSE
- While the basis for concern must be established as comprehensively as possible, children or parents should not be interviewed in detail about the suspected abuse.

The reporting procedure for dealing with disclosures, concerns or allegations of child abuse is outlined in the following steps:

- The leader who has received a disclosure of child abuse or who has concerns of abuse, should bring it to the attention of the Child Protection Officer immediately.
- The Child Protection Officer will assess and review the information that has been provided. The CPO may contact the HSE for informal advice relating to the allegation, concern or disclosure.
- After consultation with the HSE officials, the Child Protection Officer will then take one of two options:
 - Report the allegation, concern or disclosure to the HSE or
 - Not make a formal report to HSE but keep a record of the concerns on file. The reasons for not reporting the allegation, concern or disclosure will be clearly recorded. The employee/volunteer who made the initial report will be informed if a formal report is not being made to the HSE and it is open to him/her to make a formal report themselves, directly to the relevant authority if they feel this is necessary.
- Where a formal report is made the HSE will then liaise with An Garda Síochána. It is likely that the HSE will want to speak to the person who first made the report to clarify facts and the circumstances of the report.

In an emergency a report should be made directly to An Garda Síochána.

In making a report on suspected or actual child abuse, the individual must ensure that the first priority is always for the safety and welfare of the young person and that no young person is ever left in an un-safe situation.

Parents/guardians of the child will be informed of the allegation, concern or disclosure unless doing so is likely to endanger the child.

Information required when making a report

The more information which is gathered and put together on the Standard Reporting Form which has been adopted by Company B (see Appendix) the easier it will be to assess an allegation, concern or disclosure of abuse. Reports, which are made anonymously, will be followed up but this may take longer and will make it more difficult for the professionals involved to assess the situation. If a person is unsure about the case, it may be useful to talk over the issue with the Child Protection Officer or with a HSE worker before making an official report.

Confidentiality

In matters of child abuse, an employee/volunteer should never promise to keep secret, any information which is divulged. It should be explained to the young person that this information cannot be kept secret but only those who need to know, will be told.

It is essential in reporting any case of alleged/suspected abuse that the principle of confidentiality applies. The information should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis and the number of people that need to be informed should be kept to a minimum.

The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998

This Act provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to the Child Protection Officer, the HSE or An Garda Síochána.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN AN ALLEGATION IS MADE AGAINST A MEMBER

Where an allegation of abuse is made against a Company B employee/volunteer, there are two procedures that Company B will put in place:

- The reporting procedure in respect of the child;
- The procedure for dealing with the employee.

In the case of the allegation being against a Company B employee/volunteer, the same person will not deal with both the young person and the alleged abuser. The Child Protection Officer will follow the normal reporting procedure in Company B. It will be the responsibility of the Leader of Company B to deal with an employee/volunteer against whom an allegation has been made.

If there is an allegation or suspicion in relation to the Leader, the Secretary General in the Department of Health and Children will deal with all aspects relating to the Director General.

If there is an allegation or suspicion in relation to the Child Protection Officer, the Leader will deal with all aspects of the case, including the reporting procedure.

If an allegation is made against a Company B employee/volunteer the following steps will be taken:

- The Director of Company B will deal with all aspects of the case relating to the employee.
- The allegation will be assessed by the Child Protection Officer to establish if there are reasonable grounds for concern and whether a formal report will be made to the statutory authorities, at this point. The CPO may wish to contact the HSE for advice on the issue.
- The safety of the child is the first priority of Company B and all necessary measures will be taken to ensure that the child is safe. The measures taken will be proportionate to the level of risk.
- Company B will ensure that no other children/young people are at risk during this period and will inform other relevant agencies or parents/carers as appropriate.
- The measures which can be taken to ensure the safety of children and young people can include the following: suspension of duties of the person accused, re-assignment of duties where the accused will not have contact with children/young people, working under increased supervision during the period of the investigation or other measures as deemed appropriate.

- If a formal report is being made the employer will notify the employee that an allegation has been made and what the nature of the allegation is. The employee has a right to respond to this and this response should be documented and retained.
- Company B will ensure that the principle of 'natural justice' will apply whereby a person is considered innocent until proven otherwise.
- Company B will work in co-operation with An Garda Síochána and the HSE and any decisions on action to be taken in regard to the employee will be taken in consultation with these agencies.
- The person against whom the allegation is made will need support during this period and Company B will provide advice on how to access the relevant support services.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE IN RELATION TO CHILD SAFETY AND PROTECTION

Company B is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of all children/young people with whom we work. Company B has put in place a complaints procedure (Appendix) to cover any situations which may arise, when children/young people or their parents/guardians are not happy with the way the children/young people were treated by Company B. Complaints regarding the safety and welfare of children/young people should be directed to the Child Protection Officer in Company B. Other complaints should be directed to the person with whom the child/young person dealt with or the head of the relevant section in Company B.

RECORD KEEPING

The Child Protection Officer is responsible for keeping the following records related to Child Protection in a locked filing cabinet. The Child Protection Officer and the Director of Company B are the only officers who have access to these records:

- Any complaints about the safety and welfare of children/young people while working with Company B;
- Any disclosures, concerns or allegations of child abuse;
- The follow up to any complaints, disclosure, concerns or allegations, including informal advice from the HSE, reports to the HSE and informing parents/guardians;
- Any bullying complaints related to Company B work with children/young people and the follow up action;
- Signed acceptance forms of Company B Child Protection Policy by staff members, people on short term contracts, staff/volunteers from other agencies working on COMPANY B projects.

APPENDIX

Parental/Guardian Consent Form

For Participation in the dance activities of Company B

Name of Child / Young Person _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____

Other Relevant Information
(Please mention any medical conditions, special needs or dietary requirements)

Contact details for parent/guardian

1. Name _____

Address: _____

Landline number: _____

Mobile number: _____

Email: _____

2. Name _____

Address: _____

In case of a medical emergency:

In the event of illness or accident, I give permission for medical treatment to be administered where considered necessary by a suitably qualified medical practitioner

and/or hospital. I understand that every effort will be made to contact me as soon as possible. In an emergency I can be contacted at the following telephone numbers:

Photo and Video

I understand that the proceedings may be photographed/videoed and used for archive/promotional purposes.

I agree to allow the child named above to attend all activities of Company B. I understand that there will be suitable supervision while the young people are in the care of Company B.

Signed: _____
(Guardian)

(Guardian)

APPENDIX

Standard Form For Reporting Child Protection and/or Welfare Concerns to the Health Service Executive (HSE)

Private and Confidential

In case of emergency or outside HSE hours, contact should be made with An Garda Síochána.

A. To Principal Social

Worker/Designate: _____

This will be printed as relevant to each Community Care Area.

1. Details of Child:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Age/D.O.B.: _____

1a. Name of Mother: _____

Name of Father: _____

Address of Mother if different to Child:

Address of Father if different to Child:

Telephone Number: _____ Telephone Number: _____

2. Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s), dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view(s), child's view(s) (if known).

3. Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the child:

Name: _____ Age Male Female

Address:

Relationship to Child:

6. Details of Person Reporting Concerns:

Name: _____ Occupation: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Nature and extent of contact with Child/Family _____

7. Details of Person completing form:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Occupation: _____

Signed: _____

APPENDIX
Acceptance of Company B
Child Protection Policy

Declaration from all staff and volunteers working with children and young people

Surname _____ First name _____

Date of Birth _____

Address _____

Contact Phone Number

I have read Company B Child Protection Policy and code of behaviour and agree to abide by its contents.

Signature _____

Date _____

There is no reason why I would be considered unsuitable to work with children or young people.

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX

Incident/accident report form

Name of event where the incident/accident occurred _____

Date _____

Location _____

Briefly describe what happened _____

Who was involved _____

Any injury sustained?

Who dealt with the situation? _____

How was it resolved/dealt with? _____

Any follow up required? _____

Please attach any additional information if required _____

Signature: _____

Name (block letters):

APPENDIX

Reference Form Confidential

_____ has applied to work with Company B and has given your name as a referee.

This post involves access to children and young people and as an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children and young people, we need to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children or young people.

Yes

No

If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence.

If you are happy to complete this reference form, all information contained on the form will remain confidential and will only be shared with the applicant's immediate supervisor, should they be offered a position. It is very important that this reference form accurately reflects your knowledge and experience of the named person.

How long have you known this person ? _____

In what capacity ? _____

What attributes does this person have which you would consider makes them suitable to work with children and young people ?

Please rate this person on the following (Please tick)

	Poor	Average	Good	V. Good	Excellent
Responsibility					
Maturity					
Self Motivation					
Trustworthiness					
Reliability					

Signed _____

Date _____

Occupation _____

APPENDIX

Recognising Child Abuse

Definition and Possible Physical and Behavioural Indicators of Child Abuse

Neglect

Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care. Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point.

Possible indicators of this type of abuse are:

- Frequent minor or serious injuries
- Untreated illness
- Hunger, lack of nutrition
- Tiredness
- Inadequate and inappropriate clothing
- Lack of supervision
- Low self esteem
- Lack of peer relationships

Emotional

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between a care-giver and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms.

Possible indicators of this type of abuse are:

- Unreasonable mood and/or behavioural changes
- Aggression, withdrawal or an 'I don't care attitude'
- Lack of attachment
- Low self esteem
- Attention seeking
- Depression or suicide attempts
- Persistent nightmares, disturbed sleep, bedwetting, reluctance to go to bed
- A fear of adults or particular individuals e.g. family member, baby-sitter or indeed excessive clinginess to parents/carers
- Panic attacks

Physical

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury or injury which results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child.

Possible indicators of this type of abuse are:

- Frequent bruising, fractures, cuts, burns and other injuries
- Torn clothing
- Bite marks burns or welts
- Bruises in places difficult to mark e.g. behind ears, groin
- Undue or unnecessary fear
- Aggressiveness or withdrawn
- Absconding frequently from home

Sexual

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.

Possible indicators of this type of abuse are:

- Over affectionate or inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Age inappropriate sexual knowledge given the child's age, which is often demonstrated in language, play or drawings
- Fondling or exposure of genital areas
- Hints about sexual activity
- Unusual reluctance to join in normal activities which involve undressing, e.g. games/ swimming

Indicators of Abuse are Not Facts

It is important to stress that no one indicator should be seen as conclusive in itself of abuse; it may indeed indicate conditions other than child abuse. A cluster or pattern of signs is likely to be more indicative of abuse. Signs must also be considered in the child's social and family context as child abuse is not restricted to any socio economic group, gender or culture. It is important to always be open to alternative explanations for possible physical or behavioural signs of abuse.

Reasonable Grounds for Concern

The statutory authorities should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been abused, or is being abused, or is at risk of abuse. A suspicion that is not supported by any objective indicator of abuse or neglect would not constitute reasonable grounds of for concern.

The following examples would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:

- i. specific indication from the child that s/he was abused;
- ii. an account by the person who saw the child being abused;
- iii. evidence such as injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in any other way;
- iv. an injury or behaviour, which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse. An example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour;
- v. consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

A suspicion, not supported by any objective indication of abuse or neglect, does not constitute a reasonable suspicion or reasonable grounds for concern.

(Children First 1999, 4.3.2 and 4.3.3)

APPENDIX

Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse “reasonably and in good faith” to the HSE or An Garda Síochána. This means that even if a reported suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that the reporter had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report.

This protection applies to organisations and to individuals. It is considered therefore that organisations should assume full responsibility for reporting suspected child abuse to the appropriate authorities. Reports to the HSE and to the Gardaí should be made by the Child Protection Officer, as per the organisation’s policy and guidelines.

Section 3 (1) of the Act states:

“3. (1) A person who apart from this section, would be so liable shall not be liable in damages in respect of the communication, whether in writing or otherwise, by him or her to an appropriate person of his or her opinion that-

- (a) a child has been or is being assaulted, ill-treated, neglected or sexually abused, or*
- (b) a child’s health development or welfare has been or is being avoidably impaired or neglected,*

unless it is proven that he or she has not acted reasonably and in good faith in forming that opinion and communicating it to the appropriate person”.

APPENDIX

Anti Bullying Policy when working with children/young people

What is bullying?

Bullying behaviour can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical which is conducted by an individual or group against others.

Examples of bullying include:

- Teasing
- Taunting
- Threatening
- Hitting
- Extortion
- Exclusion

COMPANY B Policy on Bullying when working with children/young people

Company B will not tolerate any bullying behaviour by children/young people or adults and will deal with any incidents immediately in accordance with this policy. This policy covers:

- Children/young people bullying other children/young people;
- Adults bullying children/young people;
- Children/young people bullying adults.

The policy is as follows:

- All children/young people and adults who participate in activities run by Company B will be treated with dignity and respect by adults and by other children/young people and will not be subject to bullying.
- All children/young people and adults who participate in activities run by Company B have a responsibility to treat other children/young people and adults with dignity and respect and refrain from bullying behaviour.
- It will be made clear to all children/young people and adults participating in COMPANY B events/activities that bullying is not acceptable and that other children/young people and adults should be treated with dignity and respect.
- There will be adequate supervision by COMPANY B or other staff/volunteers at all events/activities involving children/young people. This will help to prevent bullying.
- COMPANY B or other staff/volunteers will monitor all events/activities run by Company B involving children/young people to ensure that no bullying is taking place.
- If an COMPANY B or other staff/volunteer witnesses bullying or suspects that bullying is taking place he/she will follow the procedure outlined below.
- If a child/young person witnesses bullying or suspects that bullying is taking place he/she should report it to an COMPANY B or other staff/volunteer. Company B or other staff/volunteer will follow the procedure outlined below.
- If a child/young person is the victim of bullying he/she should report it to an COMPANY B or other staff/volunteer who will follow the procedure outlined below.

Procedure for dealing with bullying

- All reports of bullying will be recorded, investigated and dealt with by an appropriate Company B staff member or other volunteer.
- Company B director or other member who has received the complaint or witnessed the bullying will consult with Company B Child Protection Officer, if present or the most senior Company B staff member present to decide who is the most appropriate person to follow up on the complaint.
- The staff member dealing with the complaint will keep a record of the alleged bullying incident/s and the investigation and action taken.
- The staff member dealing with the complaint will speak separately to all involved in order to get all sides of the story. The staff member should also speak to others who may have witnessed the incident/s, if appropriate. The staff member will interview all involved in a calm manner and will seek answers to what, where, when, who and why.
- If the victim of the alleged bullying is a child their parent/guardian will be informed of the complaint and the outcome of the investigation.
- If the perpetrator of the alleged bullying is a child their parent/guardian will be informed of the complaint and the outcome of the investigation.
- If the perpetrator of the alleged bullying is an adult, the Director of Company B or the parent organisation of the staff member/volunteer (if appropriate) will be informed of the complaint and the outcome of the investigation.
- If the staff member dealing with the complaint concludes that bullying has not taken place, the following action will be taken:
 - The complainant, alleged victim and alleged perpetrator/s will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and the reasons why it was concluded that bullying did not take place;
 - Support will be given to the complainant, alleged victim and alleged perpetrator/s if necessary;
 - A meeting will be arranged between the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator to discuss the issues involved if both are agreeable and it is deemed appropriate.
- If the staff member dealing with the complaint concludes that bullying has taken place, the following action will be taken:
 - The complainant, alleged victim and alleged perpetrator/s will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and the reasons why it was concluded that bullying took place;
 - Support will be given to the victim;
 - A meeting will be arranged between the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator to discuss the issues involved if both are agreeable and it is deemed appropriate;
 - A meeting will be held with the perpetrator to discuss the bullying behaviour. They will be informed of the disciplinary action, which will be taken as a result of this bullying behaviour.

Disciplinary action

When the inquiry into the alleged bullying incident has taken place and it has been concluded that bullying occurred, it will be necessary to take some disciplinary action against the perpetrator of the bullying. The disciplinary action should be agreed between at least two staff members of Company B and should be appropriate to the seriousness of the incident/s. If the perpetrator of the bullying is a child/young person, the parent/guardian of the child/young person and the child/young person will be informed of the disciplinary action which will be taken. If the perpetrator of the bullying is an adult the following people will be informed of the disciplinary action, which will be taken:

- the Director of Company B;
- the perpetrator.

The options for disciplinary action include:

- ❖ For serious incidents involving children/young people, sending the child/young person home and not allowing them to participate in any further Company B events/activities;
- ❖ For less serious incidents involving children/young people, allowing the child/young person to continue to participate in the event/activity once they have apologised to the victim and stated that they would not engage in any further bullying behaviour. Their behaviour would then be closely monitored;
- ❖ Providing support to the child/young person to get them to understand that their behaviour is not acceptable and monitoring their behaviour;
- ❖ For offences involving staff/volunteers from other organisations, informing their parent organisation of the offence and not working with that staff member or volunteer again.

APPENDIX

Complaints Procedure in relation to working with children/young people

Company B is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of all children/young people with whom we work. We also try to ensure that children/young people have a positive and enjoyable experience when working with Company B.

This complaints procedure aims to cover any situation which may arise, when children/young people or their parents/guardians are not happy with the way the children/young people were treated while they were in Company B, working with Company B or at an event/activity run by Company B or another organisation on behalf of Company B.

Who can make a complaint

Complaints can be made by:

- Children/young people involved with Company B
- Their parents/guardians
- Other advocates on behalf of children/young people

How to make a complaint

1. If the complaint is in relation to the safety and welfare of children/young people the complaint should be made to the Company B director and/or Child Protection Officer.
2. Other complaints should be made to the person with whom the child/young person dealt with.

Information you need to provide

Complaints can be made orally or in writing. By providing the following information you can help to speed up the investigation of your complaint.

- The name of the child/young person affected.
- If the complaint is being made by a parent/guardian or other adult, the name and address of the parent/guardian or other adult;
- Exactly what you are dissatisfied with;
- The name of the person(s) who dealt with you.
- If your complaint is complicated, you may find it best to put it in writing so that no important detail is overlooked.
- If you have special needs that may affect your ability to make a complaint, please let us know at the earliest opportunity. We will make every effort to assist you.

Our standards for dealing with complaints

- If the complaint relates to the safety and welfare of a child/young person, it will be examined in accordance with good practice in relation to the safety and welfare of children/young people;
- We will treat your complaint properly, fairly and impartially and in the best interests of the child/young person;
- We promise that making a complaint will have no implications for your dealings with Company B;
- We will examine and review your complaint and send a reply to you within 20 working days of the receipt of your complaint. Where it is not possible to meet this target, we will inform you and continue to do so until the matter is resolved;
- We will apologise for any mistreatment of the child/young person, explain what happened and put it right wherever possible;
- We will change the way we do things to avoid making the same mistake in future.

Can you appeal?

If you are unhappy about the outcome of the review you can appeal the matter to the Director of Company B.

APPENDIX

Safe Touch

Physical contact is central to dance pedagogy as most teaching methods employ 'touch' to guide the learning experience. A teacher may draw attention to alignment, or adjust position using touch. Participants in a workshop could learn how to support or manipulate each other's bodies in a creative process via touch. In all situations, it is essential that everybody involved is aware of the purpose of physical contact and is comfortable with its use.

Ensure that all physical contact in youth dance is appropriate and only used where necessary. Participants and their parents/guardians should be made aware that touch is part of the learning process but they can 'opt out' if they wish.

Consider the following points when planning and delivering activities:

- Use alternative means of instruction before touch (verbal, imagery etc.).
- Consider the appropriateness of proximity in activities.
- Always seek permission before touching.
- Explain how and why you are using touch.
- Is the touch appropriate, consider circumstances/context/reaction.
- Recognise discomfort, and act appropriately.
- Contact should be direct - purposeful and non-lingering.
- All instances of touch should have a learning outcome.

Only use touch to promote learning. At all times ensure a secure and trusting environment by respecting the needs of the individual. Judge each situation as it occurs; a participant may be happy to receive physical corrections one day, but not the next.

Best Practice in Safe Touch:

- Appropriate use.
- Make intentions clear.
- Seek permission.
- Ensure a learning outcome.