



Dancemind – Health & Safety Policy
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HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

DEFINITIONS

The law defines Health and Safety in Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
Recommendations from these acts have been applied when writing this policy.

When referring to Dancemind employees or staff this includes: company directors, producers, administrative staff, freelance dance/arts leaders/teachers/practitioners,

STATEMENT

Dancemind demonstrates its commitment to health and safety in every area of its business. The company believes that all individuals, whilst participating, both physically and as an audience member, in dance and movement should feel and be in a safe environment.

Dancemind is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practical, the health, safety and welfare of it's employees and other people who may be affected by its activities.

Dancemind pledges itself to implement the Health and Safety at work Act 1974 and other relevant statutory provisions and will endeavor to provide the necessary resources to carry out its responsibilities in full.

The successful implementation of this policy requires the commitment and co-operation of all management and staff. Each individual has a legal obligation to take reasonable care of his or her own health and safety and for the safety of other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

Each employee will be given such information, instruction and training as is necessary to enable the safe performance of work activities.

Adequate arrangements will be maintained to enable employees and their representatives to raise issues of concern with regard to their health and safety at work.

Dancemind will take out appropriate insurances on behalf of the company, for example, Public Liability Insurance when the company is on tour.

This policy is monitored to ensure that the objectives are achieved. It will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised in the light of legislative or organisational changes.

PROCEDURE

Dancemind, as the employer, is ultimately responsible for:

- (i) Meeting the employer's obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (the Act) as it affects employees, members of the public and non-employees.
- (ii) Providing resources, both financial and personnel, to fulfill the requirements of the Act.

The nominated Health and Safety person is Tina Heeley – Founder/Director.



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In dance spaces and venues

The safety of staff and participants will be addressed by following site specific Health and Safety guidelines and via written risk assessments when needed.

The dance leaders are responsible for ensuring the performance space is safe before every performance.

Dance/workshop leaders are responsible for ensuring the dance space is safe before and during every class they teach.

Floors

When leading workshops there is a degree of flexibility with regards to the floor depending on the nature of the workshop and the physical impact of the activity. Floors should ideally be sprung, and should not be carpeted, as well as clean and well maintained eg. without splinters, and without loose floorboards/floor tiles.

Has the floor been recently cleaned or polished? If so, the area should have been left to thoroughly dry and a hazard warning sign must be displayed as necessary.

Sanitary, washing and changing facilities

Workshop, rehearsal and performance venues will have as a minimum requirement, a suitable area for changing that will accommodate the number of performers / workshop participants with clean and accessible toilets on site.

First Aid Policy

Dancemind does not take responsibility for first aid when teaching in educational and other settings, however, it is the dance workshop leaders responsibility to identify the appointed first aider when leading workshops in these settings.

Responsibility to Staff

All contracted staff must hold their own valid public liability insurance (minimum £5,000,000) prior to being contracted for work. The staff member is responsible for the re-issue of insurance if it becomes invalid before a contract is over.

All contracted staff who come into contact with children or vulnerable adults will hold a current enhanced DBS check.

Lone Working

No workshop leader should work alone. This is where there is no other responsible adult, aware of the activity being conducted and who is available if help is needed, in the same building.

Where this is unavoidable a contact number should be given to an elected member of Dancemind (the nominated health and safety person) and a courtesy call will be made 30 minutes after the end of the activity.



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Training

All staff will be familiarised with and required to read this health and safety policy document.

Workshop Leaders will also be asked to read Dancemind's current Safeguarding Policy and advised to attend safeguarding training every three years.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKSHOP LEADERS

These guidelines are designed to highlight safety issues, prepare dance and other workshop leaders, This will enable them to feel confident whilst acting professionally in a dance-teaching or performance environment. The list is based on the Independent Theatre Council (ITC) guidelines.

Your behaviour

Workshop Leaders -

You are an ambassador to Dancemind and a role model for workshop participants. Please ensure everything you do and the manner in which you communicate with participants reflects the professional standards expected from Dancemind.

If you are leading a workshop you should wear appropriate clothing for the activity.

Do not smoke anywhere in the workshop environment (e.g. in a school or community venue) including in your vehicle if on workshop premises. It is illegal to smoke in a public building.

Ensure that language and conversation is appropriate (e.g. no swearing whilst on the workshop premises).

Ensure your actions do not conflict with workshop rules (e.g. no chewing gum or sweets etc).

Alcohol and recreational drugs should never be taken onto the workshop premises or consumed before leading a workshop or whilst on workshop premises.

Arriving at a workshop

Please turn off your mobile phone as you arrive for the workshop, or place your phone on 'do not disturb' if using your device for music.

Workshop Leaders should identify themselves to the workshop organisers / main contact, signing in if appropriate and ensure they are instructed in the system for fire escape (fire exits, alarms, assembly points etc).

Workshop Leaders should identify the appropriate First Aider on site.

Behaviour with workshop participants

Workshops should be overseen at all times by a member of staff from the partner organisation. It is their responsibility to deal with specialist attention (help with toilets, First Aid etc). If there is no partner organisation then Dancemind will agree all procedures prior to the start of the workshop.

Avoid being left alone with less than three children, young people or students.



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Do not accompany any children or participants to toilets on your own or remove a participant to a space alone, away from class members. In family workshops encourage the parent/guardian to take young children to the toilet.

Avoid being in disputes between children and/or their families or passing opinions on controversial topics (e.g. drugs, politics, religions, sexual behavior).

Follow Dancemind's safe practice policy on lesson structure (e.g. introduction, warm up, cool down etc) to ensure safe operation when leading a workshop.

Treat all participants with respect (e.g. don't automatically laugh at something a child says – they may not have intended for it to be funny). Listen to them carefully.

Avoid any unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact with participants.

Avoid any familiar contact with participants (e.g. hugs or sitting on your knee) and encourage them to seek comfort from the person in charge or their parent/guardian (in family workshops).

Leaving the space after a workshop

Take responsibility for cleaning up afterwards. Remove any rubbish you may have generated.

Report breakages or accidents immediately to the person in charge of the workshop premises.

All accidents should be recorded in the accident book of the partner organisation or Dancemind, where applicable. In all cases any accidents should be reported to the director.

Complete, collect in and return any required evaluation feedback to Dancemind.

Social Networking, Photography and the Internet

Dancemind's film and photography policy should be clear and available to workshop participants, parents/guardians and audience members. Dancemind must ask permission to use the photographs or film of children and families for various promotional and media purposes. Promotional purposes include leaflets and the company's website. Media includes newspaper articles. No child who is photographed will be named unless prior permission has been sought. No photograph of a child whose parent / carer does not give permission will be used.

Photographs can be viewed by parents / carers on the website and leaflets.

Further permission must be given for photographs or film to be used on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. In these instances the photographs or film will be used on Dancemind's own accounts.

Workshop Leaders, unless working under the Director's instructions must not upload photographs or film onto the internet. Under no circumstances should Workshop Leaders use photographs or film of Dancemind's work for their own promotional purposes or on their own social networking accounts or websites unless prior permission is obtained.

Dancemind's work should not be broadcast by Workshop Leaders on social networking sites or personal websites. No child, should ever be mentioned by name.



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Problems concerning Health and Safety issues

You have the right to refuse to teach a class or perform if the environment, number or behaviour of participants makes it unsafe to do so. Report problems to the person in charge immediately and contact Dancemind for support if required.

When leading workshops, you should not need to lift heavy objects, use ladders, use machinery or use hazardous substances (you should never bring these to a workshop premises) and you will not receive training for doing these things. If you find yourself in a position where you do need these things to be done seek help and tell the person in charge.

Inform Dancemind immediately if any major accident occurs.

Further details regarding workshop / performance safety issues can be found in the section, Safe Practice for Dance Leaders.

Agreed by the Board: Monday 12th June 2023

SAFE PRACTICE FOR DANCE LEADERS

The following are points for dancers leader classes or workshops, but will probably be new information to workshop participants. When leading workshops remember to explain and remind participants of good, safe practice for the benefit of their long-term health.

Injury check

For your own protection always do an injury check at the beginning and end of each workshop session.

If an injury occurs during a workshop ensure the workshop partner (ie.school, childrens centre staff) and Dancemind are informed so that the relevant forms may be filled out and parents/carers can be contacted if they are not participating or on site.

Do not administer first aid, other than 'RICE', unless qualified and preferably with another responsible adult present. Torn muscles, ankle sprains and bruising all require the same treatment at first, RICE.

- Rest the injured person on the floor.
- Ice, apply a covered ice or cold pack to decrease inflammation and pain.
- Compression, apply compression evenly, but not tightly, wrapping a bandage around the ice pack and injured area to limit the swelling.
- Elevate the injury above the level of the heart to prevent excess bleeding into the injury.



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Warm up

Warm up is an essential part of leading a workshop and as preparation for performers to protect from injury and to be fully prepared and focused. All performers must take responsibility for warming up their bodies prior to performance. Time will always be allocated for individuals to warm up and where possible a company warm up will be provided.

Below is an example of what needs to be covered in a warm up;

10 – 15 minutes of aerobic style exercise to increase the pulse and breathing rates so the amount of oxygen delivered to the muscles can increase for energy production without fatigue.

Warm the body so joint and muscle tissue can become pliable (think warm blue-tack) and lubricating fluid can be released to cartilage and joints (think oil in a car engine).

Use gentle pedestrian walking/moving activities in a rhythmic way. Gradually increase impact of activities to raise temperature.

Use easy static stretching for muscles – avoid ballistic / bouncing stretches as they can tear muscle tissue.

In a workshop situation, stress that each individual must work at their own pace – their body and joint range is unique.

Cool Down

When leading a workshop, always make time for this part of the session however rushed. Cool down can include time for discussion about the session.

If you have been working physically at a fast pace, allow the heart and breathing rate to slow gradually through the reverse of you warm up – easy jogging, walking and rhythmic swinging to prevent a sudden drop in blood pressure and dizzy participants.

Ease out possible stiffness with 10 – 15 static stretches held for 8 – 10 seconds and breathing deeply. Holding stretches for 30 – 60 seconds will increase flexibility.

In a workshop, if participants are comfortable with each other they could massage necks, shoulders, arms and partners hands to aid relaxation.

Re-mobilise joints by taking them gently through their full range.

For performers it is advisable to find time to stretch following a performance.