RUISLIP-NORTHWOOD FESTIVAL ASSOCIATION

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

IMPLEMENTED: February 2025 **ANNUAL REVIEW DUE: February 2027**

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Brenda Reed, 0208 422 1145

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 RUISLIP-NORTHWOOD 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. It has been drawn up on the basis of relevant law and guidance that seeks to protect children and young people, and its purpose is to set out the overarching principles that guide our approach

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
- 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

RUISLIP-NORTHWOOD FESTIVAL ASSOCIATION

We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to, and respecting them
- Appointing a Federation Head of Safeguarding and, for each festival, at least one Festival Safeguarding Officer
- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and safe working practice for staff and volunteers
- Working within the legislation and guidance that specifically addresses the needs of young performers (specifically, the Children and Young People Acts 1933 and 1963, and the Children (Performance and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Adopting a safe and balanced approach to the issue of creating and using photography and images of children and young people at our festivals and in our communications
- 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.

BIFF will review this policy each year in line with NSPCC guidance or sooner in light of any changes in legislation or guidance

RUISLIP-NORTHWOOD DANCE FESTIVAL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Guardians 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, guardians must ensure that children and vulnerable adults are adequately supervised by themselves or by another responsible adult acting on their behalf e.g. a teacher. Festival volunteers are not able to undertake this task. Changing areas, toilets and the canteen area 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 Ruislip-Northwood 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 Ruislip-Northwood Dance Festival holds an annual competitive festival. A professional adjudicator, recommended by The British & International Federation of Festivals, adjudicates Ruislip-Northwood Dance Festival

2. THE FESTIVAL ENVIRONMENT

The festival is a Charity 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 hires the facilities and the venue 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 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. RUILSIP-NORTHWOOD 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) or obtain a volunteer chaperone license (which includes the 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. This information is provided beforehand in our Festival Guide which is sent to all participating dance schools, displayed on our website and posted on our social media page.

All Festival Personnel will be identified by wearing the Ruislip-Northwood Festival t-shirt or a badge which shows their name. In case of a problem, anyone wearing a t-shirt or 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 and/or supporters of the festival with good character. All festival volunteers and helpers are familiar with this policy.

On arrival dancers sign in to confirm the dances they will be performing that day with a festival volunteer. Dancers are not allowed to be left alone anywhere on the premises without a guardian being present. Ruislip-Northwood Festival provide a licensed

chaperone for when the dancer is backstage only, at all other times they are the responsibility of the guardian.

5. PREPARATION FOR ATTENDANCE AT THE FESTIVAL

Before a dance school pays for entries to the dance festival they must agree to the terms and conditions, which includes the need to review all the festival policies on our website and ensure that these are communicated within their dance school. Entries are unable to processed without agreement to these terms. This policy is part of the documents on the website.

This ensures that guardians and teachers become partners with the festival in implementing this policy. A guardian 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 volunteers and must be supervised by the adults accompanying the participants. Guardians and teachers should be aware that the only areas of the venue solely supervised by festival volunteers are backstage, 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, corridors, canteen etc) guardians and teachers are reminded that the safety and belongings of young people are their responsibility during the festival. There will always be a Ruislip-Northwood Dance Festival 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. A guardian will only be allowed backstage with dancers under the age of 7, or with prior arrangement for dancers that have Additional Needs, should the dancer wish them to be. They will be introduced to the Festival volunteer and advised on where they can be located to ensure the safety of the dancers.

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 may be available throughout the festival to take photos of competitors.

Please note that any use of the photographer remains the responsibility of guardians, and where guardians do not wish for photos to be taken, it is the responsibility of the guardian 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 guardians 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 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 2018
The Human Rights Act 1998
The Protection of Children Act 1999
The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 The Children Act 2004
The Safeguarding 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.

This policy was last reviewed on:

Name: BRENDA REED

Signed: Bren Reed

Date: 27th January 2026