



DU Dance (NI)

**Children, Young People & Adults at Risk  
Protection Policy**

## **1. General Information**

DU Dance (NI) has a central aim – to advance dance as a tool for personal development and social change. It seeks to do this by using contemporary dance delivered to high professional standards by experienced practitioners committed to sharing their skills and training others.

DU Dance (NI) works with marginalised groups and divided communities, promoting dance as a means of raising esteem and changing attitudes. It works with people not issues, and with individuals, not labels.

As a registered charity DU Dance (NI) Board of Directors ensure that the organisation is managed appropriately in respect of legal and financial matters and ratifies all policies including children, young people and adults at risk protection policy and procedures relevant to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk including Complaints; Data Protection; Disciplinary, Grievance, Social Media and Whistleblowing.

The Management Team comprises the Board of Directors and the Artistic Director and steers the policy and the artistic vision of the organization

## **2. Statement of Intent**

DU Dance (NI) is committed to having active policies and procedures, which protect children, young people and adults at risk participating in activities run or organised by the company and enable them to work and create in safety, free from physical, sexual and emotional harm. This includes the recruitment and supervision of people who work with children or adults at risk.

DU Dance (NI) believes that:

- The welfare of the child, young person or adult at risk is paramount;
- All children, young people and vulnerable adults, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Staff and volunteers should be clear on how to respond appropriately;
- Children and parents are informed of the policy and procedures as appropriate.
- Participants are able to freely comment and make suggestions about the company's work through a number of mechanisms including direct contact by telephone, in writing, by email; a suggestion box and regular project feedback and through the Youth Steering Group.
- Appropriate procedures are in place for children, adults at risk, parents, family members, guardians, carers, advocates and partner organisations to share concerns that they may have or to make a complaint about the company.

## **3. Policy Aims**

The aim of Children, Young People & Adults at Risk Protection Policy is to promote good practice and to allow all staff, volunteers and contracted artists within the company to accept and recognise their responsibilities under the Children (NI) Order 1995, about safeguarding children and to make informed and confident responses to specific protection issues.

We will endeavour to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk by:

- Having an awareness of the issues that cause children and vulnerable adults harm;
- Adopting appropriate protection guidelines and procedures for staff, volunteers and artists;
- Providing information about protection and good practice to staff, volunteers artists, teachers, arts organisations and other audiences;
- Providing information about protection and good practice to children, parents and guardians;
- Sharing information about concerns with individuals and agencies who need to know;
- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff, freelance artists, volunteers and board members;
- Providing effective management for staff, freelance artists, volunteers and board members through supervision, support and training;
- Keeping policies, procedures and guidelines under regular review;
- Providing information as required to management committees/funders.

#### 4. Definitions

DU Dance (NI) defines:

A child is a person aged under 18 years. In this document, a 'young person' is in the upper age ranges of the official definition of a child. The term has no legal status – it acknowledges that people aged 16 or 17 may not think of themselves as 'children'.

All staff should be aware that abuse of a child occurs when the behaviour of someone in a position of greater power than the child causes significant harm. Because children can be abused in a number of ways, the harm caused cannot always be easily categorised but can be identified under four broad definitions of abuse.

**Physical** – the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the willful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.

**Emotional** – where children are persistently or severely emotionally neglected or rejected, for example, by not being given enough love or attention, made to feel worthless, or being intimidated by threats or taunts.

**Sexual** – where children are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity.

**Neglect** – where children's physical and/or psychological needs are persistently or severely neglected or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger.

It is also important to note that some children are more vulnerable to abuse because of the circumstances of their life. This group would include the following:

- disabled children;
- children in the criminal justice system;
- children living with domestic violence;
- children from countries with different social norms;
- children who are carers.

Workers should be particularly vigilant for signs of abuse if they are working with children in any of these groups.

An adult at risk is a person who is, or may be, in need of community care services because of mental disability or other disability, age or illness, and who is, or who may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

All company personnel should be aware of what is meant by adult at risk, adult abuse, where abuse can occur and who can abuse. Personnel need to be aware of circumstances that may leave an adult vulnerable to abuse and be able to recognise the possible signs of abuse. They should be alert to the demeanor and behaviour of vulnerable adults and those around them and changes that may indicate that something is wrong.

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Many incidents of abuse are criminal acts. Abuse is defined as:

'The physical, psychological, emotional, financial or sexual maltreatment or neglect of a vulnerable adult by another person. The abuse may be a single act or repeated over a period of time. It may take one form or a multiple of forms. The lack of appropriate action can also be a form of abuse. Abuse can occur in a relationship where there is an expectation of trust and can be perpetrated by a person/persons, in breach of that trust, who have influence over the life of a dependent, whether they be formal or informal carers, staff or family members or others. It can also occur outside such a relationship'.

Abuse can be either deliberate or the result of ignorance, or lack of training, knowledge or understanding. Often if a person is being abused in one way, they are also being abused in other ways.

Abuse can take many forms including the following:

**Physical** - hitting, slapping, pushing, burning, giving a person medicine that may harm them, restraining or disciplining a person in an inappropriate way.

**Psychological** - emotional abuse, verbal abuse, humiliation, bullying and the use of threats.

**Financial or material** - misusing or stealing the person's property, possessions or benefits, cheating them, using them for financial gain, putting pressure on them about wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions. An adult may be vulnerable to abuse because s/he has a mental health problem, a disability, a sensory impairment, is old or frail, has some form of illness or because of his or her living circumstances, for example, living alone or in isolation or in a residential care home, nursing home or other institutional setting.

Where the policy refers to 'staff or personnel' this includes anyone employed by DU Dance (NI) through the payroll, on a freelance basis, as a volunteer or as a registered artist.

All personnel should take into account **confidentiality** when abuse is disclosed or suspected and be aware of the procedures to deal with all such allegations or suspicions based on the fundamental principle that the welfare of the child is paramount. In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, it is extremely important to record the details of an allegation or reported incident regardless of whether or not a referral is subsequently made to a statutory agency.

All staff will be made aware / and have confidence in the DU Dance (NI) "**Whistleblowing Policy**" should they have concerns about any organisational actions regarding the protection of children, young people and adults at risk.

## 5. Recruitment

DU Dance (NI) recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children, young people or adults at risk in some way. Each year the company employs professional and voluntary staff on a project basis and reasonable steps are taken to ensure that only suitable people are recruited.

In the interest of providing a safe environment for all project participants and workers all staff are recruited:

- After submitting a CV/application form and signing a declaration form;
- After providing evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo);
- Are police checked;

In the case of administrative staff, an interview is followed by the request for two professional references. On international projects where this is often not possible two references are sought prior to employment.

In the event of an allegation involving staff it may be necessary to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service and a Professional Regulatory Body, where appropriate as per Appendix I.

Staff will be advised of the company's disciplinary procedure and sanctions, as outlined in the Staff Handbook, should they be in breach of this policy or codes of practice contained therein.

Staff will be advised of the company's grievance procedure as outlined in the Staff Handbook should they be concerned about an employment matter.

## 6. Training

DU Dance (NI)'s Artistic Director, Mags Byrne, ensures that best practice is followed with regard to the company's Protection Policy and operates as the company's Children, Young People & Adults at Risk Officer. The Artistic Director is responsible for attending appropriate training on an annual basis and disseminating information gained, as well as ensuring all 'staff' employed by the company in a professional and voluntary capacity understand and agree to adhere to the procedures set out in the policy. With the assistance of feedback from employees, community groups, participating individuals and partner organisations DU Dance (NI) will monitor, review and evaluate on an on-going basis, the effectiveness of this Protection Policy.

## 7. Codes of Practice

**All staff, freelance, volunteers and board members** working with children, young people or adults at risk on behalf of DU Dance (NI) will personally:

- Treat all children, young people and adults at risk with respect;
- Ensure that threatening, violent or degrading behaviour is not tolerated;
- Provide clear guidelines for when participants behaviour is a threat or harmful to others and what sanctions will take place;
- Be sensitive to, and take account of, participants' gender, age, stage of development, ability, religion, culture and race;

- Have only appropriate physical contact with a child, young person or adult at risk and ensure that the contact will not be misunderstood or cause offence;
- Encourage participants to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they feel threatened by or uncomfortable with, and make it clear whom they take their concerns to;
- Respect everyone's right to personal privacy;
- Be aware of and take action to combat peer abuse on any level and in any format whether personal or online, including bullying, taunting etc;
- If bullying does occur, all children and adults at risk should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Be aware of inappropriate verbal contact with children, young people or adults at risk;
- Listen to the concerns of participants and, where appropriate, refer them to other sources of help;
- Avoid placing oneself or others in a potentially compromising situation. If it is required to spend time with a child, young person or adult at risk in private for appropriate reasons, other adults will stay visible at all times.
- Avoid using or referencing anything of a sexually explicit nature in any format including audio, written, visual or digital whilst working or involved with children, young people or adults at risk.
- Avoid contact with young people using private messaging or any other tools to conceal the content of messages.

**As an employer DU Dance (NI) will:**

- Ensure that all employees are aware of and understand the Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Protection Policy and its procedures;
- Require all 'staff', to be police checked, and a declaration form signed. Working internationally, where sometimes this is not possible or desirable, DU Dance (NI) will require two referees for each employee;
- Ensure all employees provide a CV showing the relevant experience for the position they are being employed to hold.
- All 'staff' will be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations.
- Appoint a Designated Officer to deal with child protection issues.

**Young People's Code**

- No name calling
- No swearing
- Kids have a right to learn, so disrupting the class stops other kids' rights
- Respect & understanding for one another
- We look out for one another

**Sanctions**

- First time, move child closer and give warning
- Second time, time out for 5 mins.
- Third time, time out for 5 mins.
- Fourth time remove from remainder of class, and notify parent.

## **8. Procedures**

- When an allegation is made, staff will put the participant's safety and security first by listening, reassuring and by avoiding probing questions;
- An allegation should be recorded immediately, away from the child, young person or adult at risk and the DU Dance (NI) Designated Officer contacted, who will then contact relevant bodies and/ other appropriate person/s;
- When an allegation, suspicion or concern is received from a parent, guardian, family member, carer, advocate or other third-party staff will put the safety and security of the child/adult in question first by listening, reassuring and by avoiding probing questions;
- Any such allegation should be recorded immediately and/or passed onto the Designated Officer who will then contact relevant bodies and/ other appropriate person/s;
- The welfare and privacy of participant's information regarding abuse will be divulged only to the company's Designated Officer, parents and other appropriate adults and official bodies. No other person or member of staff, regardless of position will be informed;
- All suspected cases of abuse by an adult working for DU Dance (NI) must be taken seriously and reported to the Designated Officer. The welfare and privacy of such an adult must be sought, and no other member of staff, regardless of position will be informed. Relevant official bodies will be contacted if necessary, and further investigation of such cases and subsequent suspensions or dismissals will be guided by those appropriate bodies;
- All suspected cases of peer abuse should be reported in the first instance to the project leader. Any case of abuse that cannot and should not be handled by the project leader will be reported to the Designated Officer who will report it to the relevant official body. The privacy of the participant concerned is paramount, and only staff in direct contact will be informed.

**See Appendix I. Reporting Procedure Routes & Appendix II. Incident Form**

## **9. Information**

In line with the DU Dance (NI) Data Protection Policy, children, young people and adults at risk involved with the company as participants and their parents, guardians, carers or advocates, as appropriate, will be informed about what information the company holds about them and how this is used and stored. All staff will also be made aware of the Data Protection Policy.

## **10. Use of photographs and video**

- Relevant adults will be asked to give their permission for photographs to be taken;
- Project partners must give prior written permission for the use of any photographs or video;
- Children's names will not accompany photographs unless have the permission of either a parent, school or relevant adult;

Any recording of images or photos taken of DU Dance (NI) project participants should be with prior permission of the company only, sensitive to the nature of the work and in line with the company's Child Protection and Social Media policies and guidelines.

DU Dance (NI) will have full ownership over all material recorded and no images or clips of the work should be used for any purpose without explicit agreement in writing from the company. All images should be sent to the company and deleted from the artist's personal equipment as soon as possible. The company will use and store images and footage for an appropriate period of time in line with parental/participant consent and General Data Protection Regulation.

Mags Byrne, Artistic Director, is the DU Dance (NI) appointed Designated Officer to deal with child protection issues and can be contacted on  
Tel. **028 9033 0956** or mobile **07790 236 130**

NSPCC  
Child Protection Helpline  
**0808 800 5000**

**This policy will be reviewed and, if necessary updated, on an annual basis.**

DU Dance (NI) Board ratified this Policy on: 11th December 2020  
**Rosamond Bennett, Chair**

Signed: 