THEATRE PECKHAM SAFE DANCE & TOUCH POLICY

Whilst dance is regarded as one of the safest forms of physical exercise, care needs to be taken to minimise the risk of injury. Theatre Peckham will ensure your child's safety by taking the following precautions:

1. All our tutors will be appropriately qualified and/or experienced and are required to conduct classes in a professional manner and create a positive atmosphere.

2. All exercises will be carried out in an informed and controlled way, taking into account the structure of the body and limitations on body movement.

3. Each session will start with warm up and end with cool down exercises.

4. Class sizes will be appropriate to the levels and techniques being taught.

5. Class members in each group will be of a compatible age and/or standard.

6. The spaces used for classes will be clean and have the correct temperature setting.

7. The flooring will be non-slip and appropriate to the techniques being taught. All obstacles and trip hazards will be removed from the teaching area.

8. Class members engaging in strenuous activity will be encouraged to drink water to avoid dehydration.

9. Tutors, Assistants and volunteers will be aware of procedures for dealing with medical emergencies and for ensuring incidents are recorded in an accident book.

In addition:

10. Class members are required to wear suitable clothing and in particular, suitable footwear. It is compulsory to wear the correct uniform for each class (please refer to Uniform Guidelines).

11. All personal effects belonging to class members, such as jewellery, must be removed or made safe before the session commences.

12. Hair must be secured off the face for all students. Long hair should be tied back and bound at the back of the neck. Very full hair should be secured to show the outline of the head. For Acro and Ballet hair should be dressed according to the requirements of the teaching staff.

USE OF TOUCH IN DANCE TEACHING

Teaching dance is a physical activity and appropriate physical contact between students and tutors and/or assistants in class is essential to a student's training and development. It is recognised that a level of physical contact exists in the day-to-day teaching of dance, as well as between students as part of the classes. For example, touch will be required for some aspects of the class such as Pas de Deux.

During class, a tutor and/or assistant may use touch to correct a student's posture, placement of limbs or guide a movement as in choreography, for example. Tutors and assistants are expected to use touch in a meaningful and direct way with appropriate contact and physical pressure. Tutors and assistants are encouraged to think about whether the correction they are making, or the point they are trying to explain can be made clearer in another way. For example, if the correction is anatomical then tutors might demonstrate on themselves. Touch can be used as a teaching tool when it is the most effective method to support learning. Tutors should aim to use touch when and where it is most useful.

Students, and parents of students who are under 16 years, can expect appropriate touch to be used as part of their dance training. Academy team all follow the same basic guidance:

- The use of touch relies upon a relationship of trust between the tutor and student, tutors are discouraged from initially using touch when working with students who are new to them.

- When a tutor's practice involves the fundamental use of touch, the tutor will explain why they are taking this approach, and students will be able to choose not to participate.

- When appropriate seek agreement with the student in advance for the use of touch.

- Whenever feasible accompany touch with a verbal explanation to support the student's understanding about the purpose for the use of touch.

- Consider any physical contact with due sensitivity and care for the student.

- Never intentionally touch the groin or breast areas.

- Where feasible do not surprise a student by initiating touch from behind.

- Avoid using an object to touch a student.

- If a student refuses to be touched or indicates discomfort with touch, refrain from the activity.

- If you have any concerns about how a student has responded to touch or the invitation to be touched, you should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead DSL (Andreea Urzica, Head of Academy). If the DSL is not available, please check the Safeguarding policy to seek advice from our other trained Safeguarding officers. The Safeguarding policy is available on the Academy page on our official website. We also have sing postage in the building with the Safeguarding officers.

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