

THE ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS DANCE FESTIVAL

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Chairman:	Sally-Anne Leigh
Secretary:	Lynn Gittings c/o 119 Lower Green Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 8YY
Treasurer:	David Stephens
Venue:	The Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, Kent
Dates:	Annually in February

Please note that throughout this policy the word "children" refers to those who are under 18 years of age and also includes vulnerable adults of any age. The word "parents" includes guardians and carers. The word "Festival" refers to The Royal Tunbridge Wells Dance Festival.

1. Purpose and function of the organisation

The object of the Festival is to assist in the education of children or young people in the art of dance in all its branches. To this end the Festival holds annual competitive festivals, presents public performances and where funds permit, offers a bursary each year to an outstanding local performer for furtherance of his/her dance training at a vocational establishment. A professional adjudicator, recommended by The British & International Federation of Festivals, adjudicates the Festival.

2. The Festival environment

The Festival seeks to create a caring environment with the highest possible level of protection, as far as it is reasonably possible, to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. This Policy is passed to parents and teachers in order to inform and involve them in this objective. In this way we seek to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, a safe environment at the Festival.

3. To whom does this policy apply

This policy relates to children who are identified to the organisers prior to their arrival at the Festival. This should be done by contacting the Secretary at the address or telephone number shown above. In recognising the needs of children from minority ethnic groups and children who are disabled, the Festival actively seeks to meet needs notified to the Festival by parents and/or teachers.

4. Festival personnel

All helpers and organisers at the Festival are volunteers. Where appropriate, the Festival has undertaken suitable checks of volunteers to assess their suitability for working in close proximity with children. At the Festival there will be an organiser available on the premises at all times to answer any queries or deal with any issues. A notice will be placed at the entrance desk advising the name of that person and how to contact them. All problems will be dealt with sympathetically and confidentially and will be documented and dated. All Festival volunteers will wear identification badges and anyone wearing a festival badge will be able to direct adults or children to the organiser.

5. Preparation for attendance at the Festival

The Festival will contact parents individually prior to the Festival date with a copy of this Child Protection Policy. This contact will be made by mailing the policy direct to home addresses or, where an entry is made by a teacher, through agency of that teacher who will be required to notify the Festival that this has been done. In sending all parents a copy of this policy, the Festival ensures that parents know that, where they are not personally attending with their children, it is their responsibility to ensure that responsible adults acting on their behalf supervise them.

6. Performance areas and changing areas

Parents should be aware that the ONLY AREAS of the theatre SUPERVISED BY RTWDF PERSONNEL are the SIDE OF STAGE AND PERFORMING AREAS. In all other areas of the theatre (including the dressing rooms, auditorium, toilets, corridors etc.) parents and teachers are reminded that the safety and belongings of young people are their responsibility during the festival.

A separate dressing room will be provided for males and also a family dressing room for both sexes should it be required. No men will be allowed entry to any female dressing room. The Festival reserves the right to question any person within the backstage area and, where deemed appropriate, request them to leave.

7. Photographs, videos and press photography

The taking of photographs or videos in the auditorium during the Festival is **strictly prohibited**. An appropriate official photographer, located in the inner foyer area, will be available throughout the Festival to take photographs of entrants if required.

8. The legislation and guidance that supports this policy

The Children Act 1989; The Police Act 1997; The Data Protection Act 1998; The Human Rights Act 1998; The Protection of Children Act 1999; The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

9. Policy Review

The Festival will review this Policy annually, improving and enhancing it as necessary. In doing this it will seek advice and guidance from *The British & International Federation of Festivals*. This organisation will, in turn, look to other agencies for good practice, most notably the *NSPCC* and *The Arts Council of England* policy guidelines.

Policy reviewed June 2011