



BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

Director David Bintley CBE

Safeguarding

at Birmingham Royal Ballet



Safeguarding at Birmingham Royal Ballet

Birmingham Royal Ballet works with children and vulnerable adults in education and community settings, and with child performers with the professional company. Everyone we work with is valued and respected as an individual and their views and concerns are listened to. Having an open and positive relationship is important and contributes both to the success of the rehearsal and performance process and to the outcomes in education work. Birmingham Royal Ballet is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment for all young people and vulnerable adults in order that they achieve their potential, as well as ensuring that all staff are trained and supported in their role when working with these groups.

This Policy outlines the principles we work to. It is supported by a series of Good Practice Guidelines, which cover every area of the Company's work that involves children. The Policy and Guidelines are reviewed on an annual basis by a group of Birmingham Royal Ballet staff, to ensure that they remain in line with current legislation and good practice.

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- Responding to concerns or allegations of abuse
- Flow chart – reporting a child welfare concern
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Good Practice Guidelines for each area of the Company's work

- Education and outreach work
- Media activities
- Rehearsal and performance
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- Treatment from Birmingham Royal Ballet's Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Dance Injuries
- Dealing with aggressive or violent behaviour

Leaflets to promote Safeguarding at Birmingham Royal Ballet

- Parents', carers' and schools' leaflet
- Children's leaflet
- Staff leaflet

Safeguarding Policy Statement

The Policy and Good Practice Guidelines apply to all staff and artists who work for the Company whether on permanent, temporary or freelance contracts, or working as volunteers. Organisations and individuals who wish to hire Birmingham Royal Ballet studios are required to have their own Child Protection Policy or Safeguarding Procedures in place.

Principles

In all our work with children and vulnerable adults we adhere to the following principles:

- Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe.
- Their well-being and safety is our primary concern.
- We respect the rights and dignity of everyone we work with.
- Children and vulnerable adults are treated equitably and sensitively, regardless of gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation or religion, in line with Birmingham Royal Ballet's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Relationships between Birmingham Royal Ballet staff and artists and the groups they work with are based on mutual trust and respect.
- Birmingham Royal Ballet staff and artists seek to achieve a balance between artistic outcomes and the social, emotional, intellectual and physical needs of the groups we work with.
- The feelings and concerns of any child, vulnerable adult or their parent/carer are listened to and acted upon.
- Birmingham Royal Ballet staff and artists acknowledge that some children and vulnerable adults are particularly vulnerable to abuse for example those with disabilities, those living in circumstances of domestic violence, severe parental mental illness, potential substance misuse, living in care, young carers, children whose behaviour involves a lack of control.
- All Birmingham Royal Ballet staff and artists who work with children and vulnerable adults have a responsibility to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of anyone with whom they come into contact. Any suspicions or allegations of abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All staff whose job involves working closely with children and vulnerable adults need to complete child protection training and/or vulnerable adult training.
- Staff recruitment and selection processes will include Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS) checks for all staff that work with children or vulnerable adults, and these checks will be renewed at least every three years, and more frequently where appropriate.
- All young people, parents/carers, schools and community groups who work with Birmingham Royal Ballet will receive information about the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Supporting policies

Other Birmingham Royal Ballet policies and procedures that link with this policy are:

- Safe recruitment practice – includes references, DBS checks and rehabilitation of offenders self-declaration forms
- Equality and diversity
- Harassment and bullying
- Health and safety
- Whistle blowing
- Procedures for issues of capability
- Disciplinary procedures
- Grievance procedures
- Supervision and training

Legal context

- Birmingham Royal Ballet uses the word ‘child’ to refer to anyone under the age of 18, as defined by the Children Act 1989.
- A vulnerable adult is a person over 18 who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.
- The safety of the children we work with is our priority. Although not legally required to do so, we take every reasonable step to ensure a level of care that is comparable to the requirements of the Protection of Children Act 1999, Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2006, The Human Rights Act, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- While the principles in the Policy and Good Practice guidelines apply to work with children and young people in any location, the reporting procedures were drawn up within the legislative framework of England, Wales and Northern Ireland and may vary outside these jurisdictions.

Birmingham Royal Ballet’s community programme also involves adults who are vulnerable, e.g. adults with learning disabilities. The Principles outlined above apply equally to our work with vulnerable adults.

This Safeguarding Policy and procedure materials were drawn up specifically by Birmingham Royal Ballet in 2003 and are reviewed annually. They conform to current child protection legislation and guidance.

Reviewed November 2015; the next review will take place in November 2016.

Staff introduction to the Safeguarding Policy

What is the Safeguarding Policy?

Birmingham Royal Ballet works with children and vulnerable adults in a range of different ways, and the well-being and safety of everyone we work with is of paramount importance to the Company. We have therefore worked with the NSPCC to create a policy outlining the principles that all staff are expected to follow. The policy is backed up by a series of Good Practice Guidelines, which cover every area of the Company's work involving children and vulnerable adults.

Why do we need these?

These documents have been developed to give advice to everyone who works for Birmingham Royal Ballet, to make sure that all the children and vulnerable adults we work with are kept safe. These procedures recognise that staff can also be at risk and it is important that staff do not put themselves in situations where they might be vulnerable.

Who are these documents for?

These documents are written for Birmingham Royal Ballet staff and artists, whether on permanent, temporary or freelance contracts, or working as volunteers.

How do we define 'children and vulnerable adults'?

The word 'child' refers to anyone under the age of 18, as defined by the Children Act 1989. A vulnerable adult is a person over 18 who is or may be in need of community care services by reasons of mental health or other disability, age or illness and is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation (Who Decides – Lord Chancellor's Department, 1997).

What do I need to read?

There are a number of documents. You should read the following list, and make sure that you read the documents that are relevant for you:

- **Safeguarding Policy Statement**

This outlines the principles that Birmingham Royal Ballet follows in working with children and vulnerable adults and everyone who comes into contact with these groups at Birmingham Royal Ballet should read this document.

- **Working with children and vulnerable adults**

These provide more details of things to think about when you are working with children and vulnerable adults, and should be read by anyone who might work with these groups at Birmingham Royal Ballet. This includes staff in departments that take young people on work placement, members of the Sinfonia who may come into contact with child performers, and dancers who may perform with children on stage. The guidelines include practical advice on the importance of chaperones, the need to respect a child's right to privacy, etc.

- **Recognising and responding to concerns or allegations of abuse**

This tells you what to do if you have a concern that a child might be a victim of abuse, whether it is by someone working for Birmingham Royal Ballet or someone in the child's home or elsewhere. It is essential that any suspicions or concerns you have are passed to the designated people at Birmingham Royal Ballet. The Procedures for doing this are outlined in this document.

We have also developed a set of Good Practice Guidelines to give more detailed advice on specific areas of the Company's work. If you work in any of these areas you should make sure you read the relevant documents:

- **Education and outreach work**
- **Rehearsal and performance**
- **Media activities, including social media**
- **Work placements**
- **Children being treated by staff from Birmingham Royal Ballet's Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Dance Injuries**
- **Dealing with aggressive or violent behaviour by children and young people**

How can I get more practical help?

All staff working with children or vulnerable adults will receive child protection training. If you have not received training or would like refresher training please contact the HR Director.

Who should I speak to for more information or advice?

You should speak to any member of Birmingham Royal Ballet's Safeguarding Steering Group, who are:

Pearl Chesterman, Director for Learning, designated Safeguarding Officer, and Chair of the Safeguarding Steering Group.

Role: To oversee the development and implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and ensure that all policies and procedures are in place, relevant and practicable for all departments but with particular focus on education and community work. Responsible for ensuring that all procedures are followed in cases of concern or allegation.

Paul Grist, Company Manager and designated Safeguarding Officer.

Role: To ensure that all children engaged to perform with the Company are safeguarded in line with the policy and guidelines, including recruitment of registered chaperones and liaison with schools and local authorities to ensure all relevant licensing is completed. Works closely with the Director for Learning to ensure all procedures are followed in cases of concern or allegation.

Claire Owen, HR Director and designated Safeguarding Officer.

Role: To ensure that all recruitment procedures are followed in order to safeguard the children, young people and vulnerable adults the Company works with by completing all relevant recruitment checks on employees and future employees. Responsible for staff training and works closely with the Director for Learning to ensure all procedures are followed in cases of concern or allegation.

Safeguarding Steering Group

Marion Tait Assistant Director

Diana Childs Senior Stage Manager

Claire Lishman Media & PR Manager

Jonathan Payn First Soloist

Sue Harrison Board Member

Anelli Peavot Elmhurst representative

Role: Members of the Steering Group represent a cross-section of the Company and are responsible for reviewing the Policy and Procedures on an annual basis and ensuring they are maintained throughout the Company.

Whether you are working with the Company in Birmingham or on tour you will be able to speak to any member of the Steering Group in person or by telephone.

Working with children and vulnerable adults

These guidelines have been developed to help all staff and artists who work for Birmingham Royal Ballet to ensure the safety of all the children and vulnerable adults we work with. They are also designed to help protect staff: we know that false allegations of abuse are occasionally made by children and vulnerable adults – although this is a rare occurrence, it is important that staff do not put themselves in situations where they might be vulnerable.

These are general guidelines, which should be read in conjunction with Birmingham Royal Ballet's Safeguarding Statement. More detailed guidelines are available about specific areas of Birmingham Royal Ballet's work: education and outreach, children in performance, children on work placement, children treated in Birmingham Royal Ballet's Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Dance Injuries, children and the media, and dealing with aggressive or violent behaviour. Our policy and guidelines apply to all staff, whether on permanent, temporary or freelance contracts or working as volunteers.

Approach to working with children and vulnerable adults

It is essential to Birmingham Royal Ballet that everyone we work with is valued and respected as an individual, and that their views and concerns are listened to. Remember that having an open and positive relationship is important, and contributes both to the success of the rehearsal and performance process, and to the outcomes in education work. Working with children or vulnerable adults in any context at Birmingham Royal Ballet, staff must:

- Treat everyone with respect
- Offer encouragement and praise
- Take time to listen to their views
- Where possible take these views on board in any relevant decision-making process

Children have said they need

- **Vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them.
- **Understanding and action:** to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon.
- **Stability:** to be able to develop an on-going stable relationship of trust with those helping them.
- **Respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not.
- **Information and engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans.
- **Explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive reaction.
- **Support:** to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family.
- **Advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views.

Contact with children and vulnerable adults

You must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Any work with children at Birmingham Royal Ballet should take place in the presence of a registered chaperone or Disclosure and Barring Service checked member of Birmingham Royal Ballet staff.
- Work in schools should always take place in the presence of a teacher.
- As far as possible, work in other education contexts should take place in the presence of a teacher or chaperone.
- Avoid being on your own, but if it is unavoidable, make sure that you are within sight or hearing of others.
- Do not have any unnecessary physical contact. If it is unavoidable or indeed desirable, for example if a child is distressed about something, the purpose of the contact must be made clear and it should only take place with the individual's consent. Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, however well intentioned.
- **Clearly within dance classes and rehearsals physical contact is essential and more detailed advice is given about that in the Education and Outreach and Rehearsal/Performance Guidelines.**

Respect a person's right to privacy

- Do not do anything of a personal nature for a person if they can do it themselves.
- Adults and children should not share changing and toilet facilities. Separate dressing rooms and toilets should be provided for children performing with the Company; in some smaller theatres on tour this may not be possible, and it is important that an advance visit identifies this beforehand. Should this situation arise, children, their parents and Company dancers should all be informed in advance, and chaperones should be briefed to ensure that children change at different times from adults. When working in schools, make sure you use the staff toilets not the children's.
- It is not good practice to take children alone on car journeys, however short. If it is essential it must be done with the parents'/carers' consent, and insurance liability needs to be checked.

Contact with young people via e-mail / text / telephone / social media

- If direct contact is needed with young people it is recommended that you contact young people only when necessary and ensure other people know whom you phoned, when you phoned and why you phoned.
- Avoid interaction with young people on personal social networking sites. Facebook groups or blogs may be set up for a project and these should be used in a professional capacity. As an employee of Birmingham Royal Ballet, you are in a position of trust and therefore should interact with the same professionalism as in face-to-face meetings. For further information on safe use of social networking sites visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Relationships

Many people at Birmingham Royal Ballet will develop relationships with children or vulnerable adults through their work. This might be, for example, as a dancer performing with children on stage, a musician working in the pit with a children's choir, or a member of the Communications team working with young people who are taking part in Birmingham Royal Ballet media activities. This contact can lead to what is known as a 'relationship of trust', i.e. a relationship that exists between an adult and a young person aged 18 years or under, where the adult has power or influence over that young person due to the nature of their role within an organisation. It is essential that such power is not abused in any way by anyone working for Birmingham Royal Ballet. You should bear in mind:

- Young people aged 16 to 18 years can legally consent to some types of sexual activity, however in law they are still classified as children (The Children Act 1989). A young person's age does not necessarily reflect maturity and emotional development, and young adults may still be vulnerable to abuse. The law says that it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over to have sexual intercourse or engage in any other sexual activity with a person under that age, if the older person is in a position of trust in relation to the younger person.
- It is essential that you recognise your responsibility towards the children, young people and vulnerable adults Birmingham Royal Ballet works with, and that you do not abuse your position of trust. Do not meet with them outside your work, whether that work is taking place at Birmingham Royal Ballet, in an educational institution, or elsewhere.

Children working with Birmingham Royal Ballet

Occasionally young people of 16 or 17 are employed by the Company. The Company's relationship with any employee is governed by employment law, however where an employee is under the age of 18 we are mindful of the fact that they are still defined as a child in law. As far as is practically possible within their job role, the principles behind our Safeguarding Policy are adhered to.

Recommended ratios

Making arrangements for the proper supervision of children is the most effective way of safeguarding. Following the recommended ratios is very important:

- **3 – 8 years:** one member of staff to four children
- **Over 8 years:** two members of staff to 20 children (15 children for outdoor activity). There should be one additional staff member for every ten children.

Transport

When children, young people and vulnerable adults are required to travel by bus or taxi, care will be taken to ensure that only recognised companies are used and drivers with DBS checks are requested. Faxed confirmation should be requested when booking.

General

It is important that you challenge unacceptable behaviour. Sanctions or reprimands which are in any way humiliating, or make a person look or feel foolish in front of others, are not acceptable. Humiliating behaviour is equally unacceptable from anyone. You must report any suspicions or allegations of abuse or bullying, whether by an adult or another child. The separate Procedures document gives details of how to do this.

Bullying

Bullying is not acceptable to Birmingham Royal Ballet, whether adult-to-adult, adult-to-child, or child-to-child. Bullying can include:

- Physical actions such as hitting and kicking
- Name-calling, humiliation, ignoring
- Racial insults and gestures
- Sexual comments and suggestions
- Unwanted physical contact

If a child or vulnerable adult tells you that they are being bullied, they must be taken seriously, and given support. Similarly the bully needs to be supported, as they may well be victims of bullying themselves. Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the victim's and bully's parents or teacher, by an appropriate member of Birmingham Royal Ballet staff, i.e. class teacher, chaperone, project manager. If a member of staff perpetrates the bullying, the Harassment and Bullying Policy will be referred to.

If you have any worries

Recognising child abuse is not easy, however it is not up to individuals to decide whether or not abuse has taken place – if you have any anxieties it is essential that you report them using Birmingham Royal Ballet's Procedures (see separate document), and let the appropriate bodies investigate. This applies regardless of whether your concern relates to the behaviour of another Birmingham Royal Ballet employee, or the possibility that a child or vulnerable adult might be a victim of abuse at home or elsewhere.

What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Children or vulnerable adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. An adult, or another child or children may abuse them. It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse:

- 1. Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of illness in a child, or deliberately causes illness.
- 2. Emotional abuse** is persistent emotional ill-treatment, which can cause severe and persistent adverse effects on emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child or vulnerable

adult that s/he is worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed. These may include interactions that are beyond the child or vulnerable adults developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or prevention of participation in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children or vulnerable adults frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or their exploitation or corruption. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of children and vulnerable adults, but it can also occur alone.

3. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children or vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, sexual on-line images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging inappropriate sexual behaviour.

4. Neglect is the persistent failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of health and development. Neglect may also occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once the child is born, it can include a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to basic emotional needs

5. Be alert to:

Child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, peer-to-peer relationship abuse, sexting and cyber bullying, domestic violence, drugs, fabricated or induced illness, faith abuse, forced marriage, gangs and youth violence, gender-based violence, mental health, radicalisation and trafficking.

Things to look for and think about

- Most children acquire cuts and bruises during their normal daily life, but the location of bruises can be indicators of abuse – for example a bruise on a part of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. the face, can be a worrying sign. Bruises, which reflect hand marks, or injuries where the explanation does not make sense, are other causes for concern, as are unexplained changes in behaviour.
- Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, but signs can include developmental delay, fear of making mistakes, self-harm, or a fear of their parent being approached regarding their behaviour.
- In cases of sexual abuse it is usually the child's or vulnerable adult's behaviour, which causes people to become concerned. In all cases, children who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that any child who talks to you about this is listened to and taken seriously. Behavioural changes, which can indicate sexual abuse, include nightmares, sexual knowledge that is beyond a child's age or development, eating problems, self harm, drugs misuse.
- Neglect can be difficult to recognise, but physical signs can include hunger, loss of weight, inappropriate dress for the conditions. Children may also complain of being tired all the time, and talk about being left alone or unsupervised.

Reviewed November 2015; the next review will take place in November 2016.