



## **Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures**

1. Monarch Studios Ltd. acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care and is committed to working to provide a safe environment for all members. A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18 engaged in any company dance or drama activity.

2. The key principals of the Safeguarding Children Policy are that:

- The child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration
- All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, faith or belief
- All suspicious and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents and carers is essential

3. We acknowledge that every child or person who participates in dance/drama should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse.

Monarch Studios recognises that this is the responsibility of every adult involved in our company.

4. Monarch Studios has a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. It is noted and accepted that the Safeguarding Children Policy and

Procedures applies to everyone involved with Monarch Studios, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

5. We endorse and adopt Responsible Recruitment guidelines for recruiting new teachers and volunteers and we will:

- Specify what the role is and what tasks it involves
- Request identification documents, an Enhanced DBS (formerly CRB) and Public Liability Insurance proof.
- As a minimum we will meet with the applicant(s) as a means of interview before appointing them. All current Monarch Studios Staff who are regularly caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of children and young people will be required to provide evidence of a DBS certificate.

If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved or who has approached us to become part of Monarch Studios Ltd. guidance will be sought from appropriate governing bodies including: Local Authorities, RAD, BATD, and ISTD. It is noted and accepted that Monarch Studios Ltd. will consider the relevance and significance of the information obtained via the DBS and that all decisions will be made in the best interests of children and young people.

It is accepted that Monarch Studios Ltd. aims to prevent people with a history of relevant and significant offending from having contact with children or young people and the opportunity to influence policies or practice with children or young people. This is to prevent direct sexual or physical harm to children and to minimise the risk of 'grooming' within dance/drama.

6. This Policy will be available on the Monarch Studios Ltd. website and all Monarch Studios Staff will be made aware of this through induction programs, training and personal development. It will also be referred to in our relevant correspondence for our annual productions and all off site performances. All policies will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes in legislation, guidance or in the event of an incident.

7. Monarch Studios Ltd. has appointed a company Child Welfare Officer in line with Safeguarding requirements and holds a Safeguarding and Protection Children (SPC) Course Certificate.

Our Officer is the first point of contact for all company members regarding concerns about the welfare of any child or young person. The Welfare Officer will be familiar with the procedures for referring any concerns.

If an incident, allegation or suspicion of abuse (hereinafter referred to as incident) is seen, heard or suspected, the person receiving the information, whether a Monarch Studios Ltd member of staff, student or volunteer should follow the procedure below:

- Stop other activity and focus on what they are being told or seeing. Responding to the incident being reported should take immediate priority.
- Where an incident is being reported, react in a calm and considered way but show concern.
- Tell the child, that it is right for them to share this information.
- Take what the child has said seriously and allow extra time if a child has speech difficulty and differences in language.
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum necessary to ascertain a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said but do not interrogate the child.
- Listen to the child do not interrupt if they are recounting significant events.
- Offer reassurance to the child.
- Do not give assurances of confidentiality but explain you will need to pass on this information to those that need to know.
- Consider whether immediate action is needed to protect anyone who may be at risk.

- Think about the child who is the immediate concern and any others who may be at risk, in light of what you have been told or seen. If the Child Welfare Officer is not immediately available you should alert the appropriate authority and stay with those you think are at immediate risk until they can be transferred to safe care, where practical.
- Make a comprehensive record of what is said or seen and actions taken at the earliest possible opportunity. Where possible this should always be reported using the Incident Report Form (See Appendix A) and within the timescales stated. Keep all original notes as they may be needed as evidence.

The comprehensive and confidential record should include the following:

- a) A detailed record of the incident in the child own words. You should note this record may be used later in a criminal trial and therefore needs to be as full and accurate as possible.
- b) Details of the nature of the incident.
- c) A description of any injury. Please note that you must not remove the clothing of a child or vulnerable adult to inspect any injuries.
- d) Dates, times or places and any other information that may be useful.
- e) Written records including emails and letters.

The incident should be reported in writing immediately to the Child Welfare Officer for appropriate action to be taken.

8. We acknowledge and endorse the identification of bullying as a category of abuse. Bullying of any kind is not acceptable in our company. If bullying does occur, all participants or parents and carers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. Incidents need to be reported to our company Welfare Officer and in cases of serious bullying the appropriate disciplinary procedures will be put into place.

9. Monarch Studios believes that the Code of Behaviour and good practice will assist everyone with advice on protecting children and also help with identifying any practices which could be misinterpreted or lead to false allegations. Monarch Studios Staff and students organising any activities on behalf of Monarch Studios Ltd, involving children must adhere to the following code:

1. All children should be treated with respect
2. All activities involving children should include a ratio of one adult to every 10 children. For younger children under the age of nine, there will always be an additional member of staff e.g. another teacher, pianist or class assistant, or chaperone. Where this is not possible, Monarch Studios Ltd. will ensure that activities take place within the sight or hearing of other adults.
3. Respect should be given to a child's rights to personal privacy, including in changing room areas and toilet facilities.
4. In all activities, Monarch Studios should be aware that physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted and should be avoided. Where any physical touching is required, it should be provided openly in front of other students. Parents, guardians and students will be warned in advance that physical touching may be required for correctional purposes, or partner acrobatic balancing and lifts.
5. In activities, feedback should always be constructive rather than negative and be mindful of the language that you use so as not to be threatening or upsetting.
6. Private or unobserved contact with a young person should be avoided wherever possible unless authorised on the appropriate consent form by a parent or guardian and recorded, e.g. for a 1:1 private dance lesson.
7. If first aid is required, where possible, it should be administered by a trained first aider in the presence of another adult, and the Child Welfare Officer should be informed. As part of the renewal process for training, in future there will be a program to undertake paediatric first aid courses.
8. Any incidents, allegations or suspicions of abuse should be reported immediately to the Child Welfare Officer, as per the reporting guidelines.
9. In all dealings with children, Monarch Studios Staff shall not,
  - leave children who are in their care unsupervised on any Monarch Studios premises, play rough physical or sexually provocative games, involving or observed by children or vulnerable adults whether based on talking or touching

- share a room overnight with a child
- enter the private room of a child unless it is absolutely necessary and wherever possible should be accompanied by another adult
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate physical activity involving children or any bullying of a child by an adult or another child
- allow children to use inappropriate language
- use any physical punishment as part of disciplining a child
- shout or use harsh criticism
- consume alcohol or take drugs during the working day, including any breaks or when involved in activities with children
- give your personal contact details to a child whom you have met through work or using social networking sites
- allow yourself to get into a situation where an abuse of trust may occur. This means that you should not form a close personal relationship, sexual or otherwise with a child even if they are seeking and are consenting to such a relationship,
- transport a child in a personal vehicle unless consent has been given by a parent or guardian. In the case of an emergency, the Child Welfare Officer must be informed.
- allow allegations made by a child to go unrecorded
- undertake personal activities (such as washing or dressing) for a child which they can do for themselves. If a child has a disability, such tasks should only be performed with the full understanding and consent of and, where appropriate, assistance from the parents or carers.

#### 10. Photography and filming of children:

No unauthorised filming or photography should take place during Monarch Studios activities without the company gaining appropriate written, informed parent or guardian permission. This should explain the purposes for which any photographic images will be used.

11. Reporting your concerns about the welfare of a child or young person is everyone's responsibility and if you are worried about a child it is important that you report your concerns.

- If you are worried about a child then you need to report your concerns to the company Welfare Officer
- If the issue is one of poor practice the Welfare Officer will either:
  - Deal with the matter themselves or
  - Seek advice through the appropriate channels
- If the concern is more serious-possible child abuse, where possible, contact the Local Authority first, then immediately contact the Police or Children’s Services
- If the child needs immediate medical treatment take them to a hospital or call an ambulance and tell them there is a child protection concern. Let the company Welfare Officer know what action you have taken, they in turn will inform the appropriate governing bodies.
- If at any time you are not able to contact the Monarch Studios Ltd. Welfare Officer or the matter is clearly serious then you can either:
  - Contact the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board
  - Contact the Police
  - Call the NSPCC 24 hour helpline for advice 0808 800 5000

12. Further information of Safeguarding Children matters can be obtained from:

**Jan Turner – Monarch Studios Ltd. Child Welfare Officer**

**Certificate Number: 001413696730**

**T: 07912039710**

**E: [accounts@monarchstudios.co.uk](mailto:accounts@monarchstudios.co.uk)**

**W: [www.monarchstudios.co.uk](http://www.monarchstudios.co.uk)**

Children’s Services Contact Centre

Floor 3, Conquest House, Wood Street, Kingston Upon Thames, KT1 1AB

Tel: 0300 200 1006 Out of hours tel (5pm – 9am): 01483 517898

## **Appendix A:**

Incident, allegation & suspicion of abuse (hereafter 'incident') report form

Date Incident reported: \_\_\_\_\_

Person recording the incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Person reporting the incident:

Name:

Job role:

Knowledge of and relationship to the child:

Contact address:

Telephone numbers(s):

E-mail:

Child Details:

Full name of child:

Date of birth:

Contact address:

Telephone numbers(s):

Disability (if applicable):

Incident Details:

Location of incident (if relevant): Date and time of incident (if relevant):

Detailed information (where applicable in child's own words if possible):

Details of any observations made by you or to you (e.g. description of visible bruising, other injuries, child's emotional state). N.B. Make a clear distinction between what is fact and hearsay:

Actions taken so far:

Alleged abuser's details (if known):

Name:

Date of birth/age:

Relationship with child/vulnerable adult:

Occupation:

Address:

Telephone numbers(s):

Disability:

I acknowledge that the details described are accurate and will remain strictly confidential between the 'appropriate reporting channels' and myself.

Signed..... Date.....

Please submit this form immediately to the Child Welfare Officer.