Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing

Remember your Safeguarding responsibilities and Duty of Care when teaching online

With the current crisis of Covid-19 many dance teachers are now adapting their content for delivering their lessons online.

Teaching online can be an efficient way of remaining in touch with your students and enabling them to continue with their progress. You can do this by recording or offering live sessions through several different platforms.

When preparing for this it is important to remember that Safeguarding, and your Duty of Care for students, should remain at the forefront of your planning.

The Department for Education (DfE) has created a document for those who teach with a school or college environment, however there are some key areas that a dance teacher within a private setting should also consider. You can access the DfE guidance through the link below:

Guidance title:
'Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers'
Published 27 March 2020

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers

For those in the private school dance sector we would guide you to the section on:
Children and online safety away from school and college
Note: You can click on the title of this section under 'contents' found on the left-hand side of the screen and it will take you down the page to this / each specific section.

Key actions and considerations

1. REVISE YOUR SAFEGUARDING POLICY: review and revise your Child Protection Policy and keep it under review as circumstances continue to evolve.

Revisions should include:

- The arrangements that you have in place to keep children not physically attending the school or college safe, especially online

- The processes of reporting any concerns about children that arise including who you report this to. (See the above DfE link for signposting, and see Point 2 of this guidance)

- It is important that all staff and volunteers are aware of the new policy and are kept up to date as it is revised. The revised policy should continue to be made available publicly.

- Have you revised your current policy and / or written a specific 'Online Teaching Policy' for your dance school now that you are teaching online?

- Are all teachers working for you aware of this updated version, and have they signed to agree they have read it and adhere to the guidelines?

- Have you informed parents/carers?

- Is the updated / additional policy on your website?

2. AWARENESS THAT YOU STILL HAVE A DUTY OF CARE TO REPORT ANY CHANGES OR CONCERNS. Seek guidance Revisions should include:

It is important that all staff who interact with children online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and, where appropriate, referrals should still be made to children's social care and, as required, the Police.

- You still have a duty as a dance teacher to report any causes of concern whilst teaching online.
- You still need to be vigilant and be able to identify any changes of behaviour, physical or emotional.
- If you have any concerns for child safety or welfare you need to take this up and seek advice.

3. SEEK ADVICE. If you have concerns or are unsure because the work is online, then seek advice. This is a new environment to be teaching within: it is better to check and seek support than to ignore.

Professional online safety advice:

The Professionals Online Safety Helpline (POSH) was set up in 2011 to help all members of the community working with or for children in the UK, with any online safety issues they, or children and young people in their care, may face. So, if you work with children and young people, we're here to help you. You can access their website below:

https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline/professionals-online-safety-helpline

Or you can contact your local authority.

Further Guidance can be found here:

- **Internet matters** - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- **London Grid for Learning** - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- **Net-aware** - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
- **Parent info** - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- **Thinkuknow** - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- **UK Safer Internet Centre** - advice for parents and carers
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers (DfE: 27.03.2020) Link on page 1.

Remember:

- In times of rapid change within our environment we need to continue to keep ourselves and our children safe.
- Don't be frightened of delivering online but take the necessary steps to plan and set up your classes safely.
- If in doubt seek support and advice.
- Enjoy creating and sharing your work safely.