**Rendez-Vous dance Ltd** **Safeguarding Policy & Procedures: July 2023**

**Rendez-Vous dance Ltd Safeguarding Statement**

Safeguarding is at the heart of all Rendez-Vous dance Ltd’ work with children, young people and Adults at Risk. Rendez-Vous dance Ltd believes that children, young people or Adults at Risk should never experience abuse or discrimination of any kind.

Rendez-Vous dance Ltd has a legal and moral responsibility to promote and ensure the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk, keeping them safe whilst participating in Rendez-Vous dance Ltd’ activities and events.

Rendez-Vous dance Ltd is committed to practise that protects children, young people and Adults at Risk.

The policy is reviewed, endorsed and approved by the Board annually, or when legislation changes.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all employees, the board, contracted workers, volunteers, placement students and anyone who carries out work on behalf of/in partnership with Rendez-Vous dance Ltd, and any other support staff or external advisor involved in a child protection concern. Young people, Adults at Risk and parents/carers are informed of the policy as appropriate.

The policy applies to anyone Rendez-Vous dance Ltd is in contact with in the course of our work, who is a child, young person or adult at risk. Where the policy or procedure refers to a ‘child’ or ‘young person’ we mean anyone who has not yet reached the age of 18 years. Where the policy refers to an ’Adult at Risk’, we mean anyone who is 18 years or older and who is vulnerable, according to the definition in the Care Act, 2014.

**Definitions**

**Children/Young People**

A Child or young person means someone who is under 18 years of age, that is, has not reached their 18th birthday by time of Rendez-Vous dance Ltd activity or event.

**Adult at Risk**

Any person aged 18 or over who is either both or one of the following:

* Is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and
* Is or maybe unable to take care of themself, or unable to protect themself against significant harm or exploitation.

**Disability**

* A major physical impairment, severe illness and/or a moderate to severe learning difficulty.
* An ongoing high level of dependency on others for personal care and the meeting of other basic needs.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to devise and implement good practice in safeguarding; to protect children, young people and Adults at Risk who participate or engage in Rendez-Vous dance Ltd’ activities and events. To provide everyone involved with a set of procedures to follow to support Rendez-Vous dance Ltd responsibly to prevent any abuse or neglect to children, young people and Adults at Risk.

Rendez-Vous dance Ltd acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice requirements.

This policy has been informed by law and guidance that seeks to protect children, young people and adults at risk. Rendez-Vous dance Ltd works to operate within the requirements of:

Children and Families Act 2014
Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
Children Act 2004
Sexual Offences Act 2003
Protection of Children Act 1999
Human Rights Act 1998
United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991\*
Children Act 1989
Care Act 2014.

*\*In Article 1, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states a child “means every human being below the age of eighteen years”.*

Rendez-Vous dance Ltd recognises that:

* The welfare of the child is paramount, as obligated by the Children Act 1989.
* All children regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, racial heritage, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or identity, socioeconomic background have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
* Some children may be additionally vulnerable due to the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication and other needs.
* Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people’s welfare.

This policy aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, racial heritage, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, all children, young people and adults at risk:

* have a positive experience with Rendez-Vous dance Ltd in a safe environment.
* are protected from abuse or neglect whilst participating in a Rendez-Vous dance Ltd activity or event.

**Objectives**

**Rendez-Vous dance Ltd Safeguarding Policy is committed to:**

* Promoting and prioritising the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and adults at risk who participate in or engage with Rendez-Vous dance Ltd activities or events or are entrusted in the care of Rendez-Vous dance Ltd staff, contractors and/or volunteers.

**Rendez-Vous dance Ltd will implement this by:**

* Valuing, listening to and respecting the views of children, young people and adults at risk who participate in or engage with Rendez-Vous dance Ltd work.
* Devising and endorsing safeguarding procedures which support safety and wellbeing of all involved. Revising annually or when legislation changes.
* Making Rendez-Vous dance Ltd’ safeguarding policy and procedures available to all members of staff, contracted workers and volunteers.
* Ensuring that everyone working or volunteering for Rendez-Vous dance Ltd understands their role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and the activity/event they are working on.
* Ensuring an appropriate learning opportunity is made available to staff, contracted workers and volunteers to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns.
* Responding quickly and appropriately to all suspicions and allegations of poor safeguarding practice or abuse.
* Ensuring that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.
* Ensuring all those employed by Rendez-Vous dance Ltd to work with children, young people and adults at risk are recruited including the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service Checks and receive guidance/training in Safeguarding policy and procedures.
* Whilst preventing the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals. Only members of staff who have gone through the necessary checks will be permitted to work with children and young people.
* Ensuring partners, venues and third-party providers in contact with children, young people and adults at risk have relevant safeguarding policies and procedures in place.
* Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for the children, young people, staff and volunteers who engage with our work by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law, regulatory guidance and our health and safety policy.
* Annually reviewing our child protection procedures and safeguarding policy to ensure they continue to be appropriate and in line with current legislation.
* Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) with appropriate training within the company, responsible for ensuring safeguarding procedures are monitored, updated and implemented.

Rendez-Vous dance Ltd Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually and subject to changes in Legislation by the Board of trustees, advised on implementation by the Executive Director.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is responsible for monitoring and updating Rendez-Vous dance Ltd’ Child Protection Procedures and Safeguarding Policy with reference to annual reviews carried out by the board.

All Rendez-Vous dance Ltd employees, the board, contracted workers and volunteers are responsible for the practical application of this policy throughout the company’s work and engagement with children and young people.

**Disclosure and barring**

The core team of Rendez-Vous dance Ltd are DBS checked (Enhanced) and safeguarding trained.

**Contact**

**Rendez-Vous dance Ltd Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)**Phil Douglas, Executive Director: phil.douglas@rendez-vousdance.com

**In case of unavailability, please contact:**

Mathieu Geffré, Artistic Director: mathieu.geffre@rendez-vousdance.com

**This policy should be read alongside:**

* Rendez-Vous dance Ltd Safeguarding Procedures
* Rendez-Vous dance Ltd Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Representation Policy
* Rendez-Vous dance Ltd Health and Safety Policy

**Further Relevant Contacts:**

**Children’s Social Care Initial Response Service (Newcastle)**

Cruddas Park Social Care Office,
Cruddas Park Neighbourhood Unit,
Cruddas Park,

NE4 7RW

Phone**: 0191 277 2500**

**Child Protection Unit (Northumbria Police)**Middle Engine Lane Police Station
Wallsend
NE28 9NT

Phone: **101**

**NSPCC Child Protection Helpline**

Phone: **0808 800 5000**

**DBS disclosure service**

PO Box 110,
Liverpool,
L69 3JD

Phone: **0870 90 90 811**Email: **customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov.uk**

**Safeguarding Procedures: March 2023**

**Staff/Volunteer Information**

Safeguarding is all staff and volunteers’ responsibility and it is vital that all who engage with/participate in Rendez-Vous dance Ltd’ work do so in a safe environment. As a representative of Rendez-Vous dance Ltd whilst working on projects/staffing events you may observe behaviour that you consider to be unsafe or you might have sensitive information disclosed to you that you may need to act on.

Safeguarding applies to everyone who participates in Rendez-Vous dance Ltd’ activity, but is particularly relevant for children, young people and adults at risk, as defined in Rendez-Vous dance Ltd’ Safeguarding policy.

Below outlines the actions you can/should take:

* Be on the lookout for any behaviour that you think is not appropriate – this could be from children, parents, a colleague or anyone attending an event.
* Report anything that you think is not right to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)
* Make notes about what you have observed and any action you have taken.
* Keep a detailed and non-emotional record of what was observed/said using the Safeguarding reporting form (printed copies available at the company premises and digital companies available on the company Google Drive. This may be used as the basis for a referral to government services so make sure it is as accurate as possible. Once completed please email the form to phil.douglas@rendez-vousdance.com).
* If anyone wishes to disclose any sensitive information to you, make sure that you listen calmly and don’t ask any leading questions.
* DO NOT offer confidentiality – this is very important as you may need to take any information further, depending on what has been disclosed.
* DO NOT directly approach a parent/carer with your concerns before you have spoken to the DSO.

As a general rule, share any concerns with another member of staff but also make sure that you are discreet and share any personal information carefully.

**Spotting Signs of Abuse**

Below is a list of signs to watch out for and report if you think that one or more of these things applies:

* unexplained bruises, burns or scars
* becoming withdrawn
* seeming anxious
* becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
* lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
* poor bond or relationship with a parent/carer
* knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
* displaying over-sexualised/inappropriate behaviour
* always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body
* unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
* persistently dirty or smelly

**Child behaviour indicators**

Safeguarding guidance highlights a number of indicators which might lead practitioners to “consider” or “suspect” that abuse or neglect has taken place, or the child is at risk. Practitioners should take seriously any marked change in behaviour or a repeated, extreme or sustained emotional response. Examples might include:

* Indiscriminate contact or affection-seeking.
* Being over-friendly to strangers.
* Excessive clinginess and persistently seeking attention.
* Habitual body rocking.
* Being withdrawn and reluctant to communicate.

**Disclosure**

If a child, young person or adult at risk asks to disclose something to you or you suspect that they are going to, make sure you do not promise confidentiality. It is important that you explain that you might need to speak to someone else, depending on what they are going to say. It is also best practice to make sure that you speak to them in a quiet but public space and avoid being in a room with a closed door with them.

 If a child, young person or adult at risk does choose to disclose something to you, you need to make sure that you follow the guidelines below:

* Listen quietly, calmly and carefully
* Try not to react in a shocked way, no matter what they say
* Don`t ask any leading questions – just let them speak and only ask questions that clarify anything you have not understood. For example: a child may use a name e.g “David said” - you can ask what relationship “David” is to the child to make sure you understand clearly.
* Reassure them that they have done the right thing and explain what you are going to do next. They may be reluctant for you to take things further but you can explain that you would be acting in their best interests and you have to act on what they have told you.

Remember that it is up to Rendez-Vous dance Ltd to report and refer and not to investigate (this is up to the relevant government department if required)

**Image/photography consent**

Staff/Volunteers/Facilitators/Guest Artistsmust NOT use their mobile to take photographs or film Rendez-Vous dance Ltd activity. Any filming/photography of events must be authorised by Rendez-Vous dance Ltd and signed consent must be given for everyone present. In the case of children, parental consent for photos/filming must be obtained.

Participants should also not film or take photographs of each other without explicit consent from all of the people in the room (adults) or without parental consent (children).