



COLLEGE OF DANCE POLICIES

Please take a moment to read this document thoroughly.
These policies were last reviewed August 2025

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FIT TO STUDY POLICY

1. Fit to Study Policy

FIT TO STUDY

The following policy applies to the College of Dance (CoD) Transition Year, One and two year programmes of study.

This policy should be applied when a concern is raised over a student's ability to engage with their course of training due to ill health or personal circumstances.

It should not be applied as a means of justifying absence from, or inability to complete assessment.

WHAT IS FIT TO STUDY?

'Fit to Study' refers to a student's ability to engage positively and fully with their training and to fulfil the expectations of the course without negative impact on other students or staff. It is a policy designed to support the needs of students.

SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES

This policy applies to all students enrolled in full-time courses at College of Dance.

This policy is intended to provide supportive procedures which can be used by CoD faculty, when a student's health, well-being and/or behaviour is or appears to be at risk of impacting their studies or training.

The aim of this policy is to sustain the students' progress in a supportive environment whilst ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of CoD community. The procedures can be used by any faculty member who has a sufficient level of concern about a student's health, safety and well-being.

Reasonable expectations of any student:

- That a student can attend and engage effectively in the full range of classes, workshops, rehearsals, performances and lectures.
- That a student can undertake independent study or activity without supervision.
- That a student can participate in assessments, with adjustments if required throughout the year.
- That a student can adhere to all attendance requirements.
- That a student can demonstrate awareness of their own health and safety
- That a student can demonstrate awareness of the health and safety of teachers and students.
- That a student can abide by the Student Code of Conduct.

Cases where these expectations are not being met. the Fit to Study Policy will be applied.

FIT TO STUDY POLICY

INDICATORS FOR CONCERN

A student's fitness to study may be a cause for concern due to a wide range of circumstances including (but not restricted to) the following;

- A student declares difficulties related to physical or mental health, disability, alcohol
- or drug problems, or other personal circumstances.
- A student has told a member of staff that they have concerns about their own fitness to study.
- Multiple complaints are received about the student from other students or faculty.
- The student is in serious and continued breach of attendance requirements
- The student behaviour changes in a way that is considered a disciplinary matter but there is reason to believe that this may be due to underlying causes, which could provide mitigating factors
- The student's academic performance or personal conduct is not acceptable and thought to be the result of an underlying mental or physical health problem.
- A student's health difficulties are adversely affecting the health, safety or wellbeing of others.
- Obvious changes in behaviour (becoming unusually aggressive, withdrawn or anxious).
- A sudden deterioration in academic performance or motivation.
- Obvious signs of injury, ill health and/or self-harm.
- Ongoing lack of personal hygiene and care.
- Challenging or inappropriate behaviour.
- Obvious signs of substance abuse.

ASSESSMENT OF FITNESS

Students may be assessed for fitness to study;

- if causes for concern are identified and supported by at least two staff members.
- Upon return from injury, surgery, or medical leave.
- When staff observe behaviour or physical signs that indicate concern.

PROCEDURES MAY INVOLVE

- Initial conversation with student and /or parents to formulate a plan of action - could include
- Consultation with a healthcare professional.
- Submission of a doctor's report.
- Involvement of the college's safeguarding or wellbeing officer.

FIT TO STUDY POLICY

RETURN TO STUDY

Students returning from significant illness, injury, or mental health-related absence may be required to:

- Provide medical evidence confirming they are fit to resume training where applicable
- Communicate with the Student welfare officer to agree on a phased return or support plan as needed

RISK OF BEING DEEMED UNFIT TO STUDY

A student may be considered unfit to study if they:

- Pose a significant risk to themselves or others
- Fail to meet attendance or engagement requirements without valid reason, (Refer to Lateness and absences policy)
- Are unable to meet the physical and academic demands of the course due to ongoing health concerns

TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL OR SUSPENSION

If a student is deemed unfit to study and cannot safely engage with the programme, the college may recommend:

- A temporary break from training.
- Deferred assessment or performance.
- Suspension of studies, with re-entry conditions

APPEAL & REVIEW

Students have the right to appeal any decision made under this policy. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Board of Directors Chairperson within 10 working days of notification.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains aligned with best practices in health, education, and professional dance training.

LATENESS & ABSENCE POLICY

2. Lateness & Absence Policy

ATTENDANCE

- Students must maintain 90% minimum attendance in classes and rehearsals.
- Absences must be reported before 8.30 AM. Medical notes may be requested.
- Missing classes and rehearsals may affect casting and assessments.

EXPECTATIONS

Attendance is compulsory for all classes, rehearsals, performances and practical assessments. Registers are taken for all classes and attendance is carefully monitored.

This policy recognises that students may sustain injury, become ill, or may have personal difficulties that mean they cannot attend, or can only partially complete a class or students may occasionally be late in the morning, due to travel disruptions. Therefore, **the minimum level of attendance required is 90% per year.**

Students may not participate in afternoon rehearsals if they have not taken class during the day.

In the case of late trains/buses/medical appointments/waiting in for tradesmen, students should let College know of lateness via the College Group WhatsApp. Students may join class after getting permission from the teacher.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a high standard of attendance and punctuality, reflecting the discipline expected in both academic and professional dance environments.

Regular class attendance is a fundamental requirement of training at College of Dance. The College requires consistent attendance across all genres and all lessons; every class you take is developmental, as skills are acquired step by step, and stage by stage over a period of time. Absence from just one class means it will be more challenging to keep abreast of your training. You should therefore consider each class as irreplaceable.

EXPECTATIONS

- Students are expected to attend all timetabled classes, rehearsals, and performances.
- Arriving on time is essential for safety, respect for tutors, and readiness to learn.
- Attendance and punctuality are part of the professional standards assessed during the course.

LATENESS & ABSENCE POLICY

REPORTING ABSENCES

- If you are unable to attend due to illness or emergency, you must notify the college by email before 8:30 AM on the day of absence.
- For absences of more than 2 consecutive days, a doctor's note or official documentation may be required.
- Pre-planned absences (e.g., medical appointments, auditions) must be approved in advance by the College.

LATENESS

- Students arriving more than 5 minutes late may be asked to observe the class instead of participating, for safety reasons.
- Students may join class only after getting permission from the teacher.
- Persistent lateness will be recorded and may result in disciplinary action.
- Three instances of lateness within one term will count as one unauthorised absence.

ATTENDANCE MONITORING

- Attendance is recorded daily.
- Students are expected to **maintain at least 90% attendance each term.**
- Falling below 90% without valid reason may lead to:
 - Meetings with the Artistic Directors
 - Possible loss of performance opportunities
 - Risk to assessment grades or progression to the next term

UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCE

- Absence without notifying the college will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Repeated unauthorized absences may result in:
 - Written warnings
 - In severe cases, removal from the course

PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS

- Dance training mirrors professional industry standards—reliability and commitment are essential.
- Absences and lateness not only affect your own progress but also impact partners, ensembles, and overall production quality.

LATENESS & ABSENCE POLICY

ATTENDANCE DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

Informal Warning

Triggered by:

- Repeated lateness (e.g., 3+ instances in a term)
- Unauthorised absences (e.g., 1 missed sessions without notice)

Action:

- Verbal or written reminder from faculty or student support
- Opportunity for the student to discuss any challenges or barriers
- Attendance expectations re-clarified

Formal 1st Written Warning

Triggered by:

- Continued lateness or absence after informal warning
- Unauthorised absences exceeding 3 days of scheduled sessions in a term

Action:

- Written warning issued by the college
- Formal meeting with academic advisor or program lead
- Attendance improvement plan may be put in place
- Student informed of potential consequences if issues persist

Final 2nd Written Warning

Triggered by:

- No improvement following formal warning
- Further unauthorised absences or lateness

Action:

- Final written warning issued
- Review of student's suitability to continue in the program
- Possible suspension from performances or assessments

LATENESS & ABSENCE POLICY

Removal from the Program

Triggered by:

- Continued non-compliance with attendance expectations
- Failure to engage with support or improvement plans
- Disruption to learning environment or breach of conduct

Action:

- Recommendation for withdrawal made to the Board
- Student notified in writing with appeal rights
- Exit meeting offered to support transition

3. Health & Safety Policy

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Aims: The College of Dance regards the promotion of Health and Safety measures as a common objective for all personnel at all levels. It is therefore the College of Dance's policy to do all that is reasonably practical to prevent personal injury and damage to property and to ensure the mental and physical welfare of all staff at, and visitors to, the College of Dance. In particular the College of Dance has a responsibility to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our staff and students and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose. The College of Dance also accepts responsibility for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by our activities.

Where reasonably practicable, this policy will seek to provide and encourage:

- A safe place to work and safe access to and from it
- Safe arrangements for the use, handling and storage of equipment
- Sufficient information, instructions, training and supervision to ensure all employees are well-equipped to avoid hazards and contribute positively to effective Health and Safety at work
- This policy will be kept up to date, particularly as our College changes in nature and size to ensure our responsibilities are met in relation to:
 - The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 (Ireland)
 - Other relevant current legislation

To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed annually.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL STAFF

It is the responsibility of all staff to help maintain the safety and security of the students and the working and dancing environment. This includes being aware of the risks, knowing the appropriate action to take and identifying any potential safety issues. Each member of the teaching staff within the College has a duty to exercise care and attention with regard to their own safety and that of their students. Under this responsibility, each teacher shall:

- Ensure reasonable care is taken during their work activities to avoid accidents or injuries to themselves, pupils and any other personnel within the building
- Observe all safety instructions and procedures incorporated in this document
- Report all potential hazards affecting Health and Safety to the Artistic Director or, if appropriate, designated Health and Safety Officer
- Report all accidents in the appropriate manner and record in the accident book

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

ACCIDENTS & FIRST AID

All accidents are to be reported to the Artistic Director or, if appropriate, designated Health and Safety Officer and recorded in the accident book. Unless there is good reason, First Aid should not be administered without the permission of the child's parent or accompanying adult. A child cannot give consent. If the parent is not at the premises, obtain their phone number and try and make contact. However, if a child is alone and seriously injured or unconscious, the situation will need to be dealt with immediately. If at all possible, treatment should only be given by a trained First Aider. Provided this does not in itself put the child at risk, always try to administer First Aid with another adult present.

Always tell the child exactly what you are doing and why. Unless it is irrelevant, ask the child if they use medication (e.g. for asthma, diabetes, and epilepsy) or have any allergies. Some children have allergic reactions to stings.

For minor injuries, you may not offer any medication, including antiseptics or pills of any kind. If you have any doubts about helping someone to use their own medication, phone the emergency services. Any treatment should be as little as necessary without threatening the child's wellbeing. If a child comes to you for comfort because of a minor accident or fright, it is acceptable with the Code of Behaviour to hold their hand or put your arm around them. Just ensure:

- That you know about any injury and do nothing to make it worse
- That physical contact is what the child wants, and the kind of contact between you is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- That you do your best to stay in sight of other adults

If a child needs a doctor or hospital, call the emergency services.

It is nearly always best to stay with them and wait for the ambulance. You should only take the risk of bringing in the child yourself if the emergency services ask you to do so because of exceptional circumstances.

SAFETY CHECKS

Equipment

Correct storage of equipment is vital in the role of minimising risks. Any equipment not being used is a potential risk. Every piece of equipment that is being used must be checked at the beginning of the dance lesson to ensure its safety. In addition, care must be taken to:

- Make sure that all equipment/resources used are safely and securely stored after each lesson
- Any damaged equipment is removed from use
- Set up equipment correctly and safely

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

- Ensure that participants are shown how to use the equipment correctly and safely
- Ensure that no participant is able to access equipment without supervision Dance Studio

Checks to be made before pupils enter the studio:

- Floor – ensure floors are clean with foreign bodies removed
- Mirrors – ensure mirrors are unbroken
- Plug sockets – ensure they are safe with no wire showing
- Curtains – any falling or have fallen down
- Doors and exits – ensure doors are exits are secure and that there is nothing blocking emergency exits
- Lighting and light switches – identify any that are not working or loose

Students

- Ensure all pupils are wearing appropriate dance wear/uniform and footwear to minimize accidents or risk
- Safety/protection clothing must be worn when appropriate, i.e. knee pads

FIRE SAFETY

Equipment

The College of Dance operate a strict no smoking policy in and around its premises.

All staff will be advised of the fire action procedure, location of fire alarms and fire exits at their induction.

Fire evacuation drills are arranged by the College of Dance, or where appropriate, the Health & Safety Officer, practiced at least annually and records maintained by the College of Dance or Health and Safety Officer of the evacuation time.

A register of participants must be taken at the start of each session. Fire alarm points have a regular operational check, ensuring each point is operated in turn over an annual period. The College of Dance will complete a roll call and liaise with Fire Service personnel.

FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

If you discover a fire

- In the event of discovery of a fire, activate the fire alarm.

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

- Assemble at the agreed fire point
- Take the register and liaise with any Fire Service personnel – any absences or concerns should be reported immediately
- Do not re-enter the building until you are informed to do so by the Health and Safety Officer or the Fire Service personnel

FIRE EVACUATION PLAN

Artistic Directors/Teachers/Admin all are responsible for the safe and efficient evacuation of all inside the College of Dance.

Staff should:

- Check the Kitchen and Toilets.
- Shout out 'FIRE is anyone still in the building?'
- Exit the building via the Front door/nearest fire exit quickly checking each room as they exit to ensure is empty.
- Declare themselves as the 'last man'
- Once the 'last man' is out, check each person signed in has exited the building
- Take a register to ensure all participants are accounted for.

SECURITY POLICY

- Anyone wishing to enter the premises must be escorted by a member of staff
- Any unidentified person seen on the premises must be reported to the Artistic Director immediately.

RISK ASSESSMENT

It is in the College of Dance that formal written risk assessments will be undertaken prior to commencement of any work, which is potentially harmful to health. Relevant employees receive training in risk assessment techniques.

Risk assessments, once completed, will be brought to the attention of any person who may be affected by the work to which the risk assessment relates.

Risk assessments will be reviewed at least annually by the person responsible for the work / activity or as required due to a change in the risk severity or a change in the working procedures. Any changes made will be brought to the attention of all people who may be affected by the change.

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Once completed the risk assessment forms should be filed in the Health and Safety file. Format of Risk Assessments shall include:

- The nature of the potential risk
- Who is at risk
- The control measures present
- Any further and necessary control measures

CODE OF CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

4. Code of Conduct & Disciplinary Procedure

INTRODUCTION

Every child should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse which, in this policy, means any kind of neglect, non-accidental physical injury, sexual exploitation or emotional ill-treatment, this pertains to direct contact and virtual contact through online social networking and mobile technology. In accordance with the College's Terms and Conditions, child means a child of whatever age admitted by the College to be educated and includes any student aged 18 or over.

Where a child is at risk, is suffering significant harm or is likely to do so, action will be taken to protect the child.

The College of dance is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all dancers and staff/ volunteers associated with the school. To ensure the effective running of the College of Dance and to protect all individuals connected with the school it is important that the following codes of conduct are read, respected and adhered to at all times.

CODE OF CONDUCT

ATTENDANCE:

Students are required to be in the studio TO WARM UP 15 MINUTES before the start of morning classes where registration will be taken. LATE ARRIVALS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO JOIN CLASS without teachers permission.

Students must be on time for ALL CLASSES DURING THE DAY.

ILLNESS:

Students MUST email Admin@collegeofdance.com if unable to attend college. Texting friends is not acceptable. Absence of 3 or more days requires a doctor's certificate.

PLANNED ABSENCE:

An Absence Request Form should be completed and submitted to the office in advance.

UNIFORM:

Basic jewellery is permitted, please avoid dangling earrings and body piercings to prevent injury

Basic College of Dance uniform for all genres must be worn at all times. Strictly no logos or colours

CODE OF CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

INJURY:

ANY injury, however minor, MUST be reported to the teacher BEFORE commencement of class.

Teachers must be updated in relation to any guidelines received from medical/physical practitioners. Whenever possible, students with injuries WILL BE expected to attend class in an observer capacity so as not to fall behind.

PROFESSIONAL WORK:

Students wishing to attend auditions or engage in outside professional work, MUST OBTAIN OFFICIAL PERMISSION IN ADVANCE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTORS.

Any part-time work must not conflict with the full College timetable.

SMOKING:

Smoking, alcohol or illegal drugs are not permitted at all. GENERAL:

- Dancers must participate within the College rules and respect all the teachers/staff and their decisions.
- Dancers must respect their fellow students.
- Dancers must not distract, bully or harass other students during the class.
- Dancers must not use bad language.
- Dancers must be polite and display good manners at all times.
- Dancers must treat all equipment with respect.
- All body jewellery must be removed.
- Long hair must be tied back.
- Food, drink and chewing gum are strictly prohibited in the studio (dancers may bring a sealed drinking bottle into the studio but it must only contain water and must have the dancer's name on).
- All litter must be placed in the bins provided.
- Please leave all valuables at home – the College of dance will not be held responsible for the loss of any items.
- Mobile phones and other electronic devices must be switched off in the studio.
- Dancers must not make any derogatory statements on social media in relation to the College of Dance, students, faculty or Board.

CODE OF CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

SUMMARY

- We shall arrive to class on time.
- We shall, if late, apologise to the Teacher and ask permission to join class
- We shall not sit down during class unless instructed by the teacher.
- We shall not chew gum or bring food into the studio.
- We shall not miss class except for valid reasons.
- We shall not wear dance shoes outside and will carry dance shoes in a dance bag.
- We shall abide by the school dress code for each class.
- We shall be positive and have a “can do” attitude.
- We shall label all shoes and uniform items with our name.
- We shall politely ask dance related questions in class.
- We shall keep our bags & uniform out of the way and keep the studio and corridors neat.
- We shall use strong arms, stretched feet, and proper body placement.
- We shall keep our phones off or on mute while in dance class.
- We shall use 100 percent of our energies while in class.
- We shall have our hair securely up before class.
- We shall not gossip or put down other students.
- We shall use a deodorant daily and wear minimal jewellery for class.
- We shall not act as if we are better than other students in our class.
- We shall keep good conduct and quiet voices inside DCC.
- We shall work well and in unison with other students in class.
- We shall go to the bathroom before class to minimise disruption.
- We shall use proper language and show good sportsmanship at all times.
- We shall keep our hands off the mirrors.
- We shall speak respectfully to the teachers and to one another.
- We shall not make unnecessary conversation or noise while in class.
- We shall not hang on the dance barres or on equipment inappropriately.
- We shall respect our art, our instructors, and our fellow students.
- We shall use the litter bins provided and keep the changing room and studio areas tidy

PURPOSE & SCOPE

This procedure is designed to help and encourage all students to achieve and maintain standards of conduct and attendance. The College rules as outlined in this handbook and this procedure applies to all students. The aim is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all.

CODE OF CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

General Principles:

Unless the conduct of a student is considered gross misconduct no disciplinary action will be taken against a student until the case has been fully investigated.

At every stage in the procedure a student will be advised of the nature of the complaint against him/her and will be given the opportunity to state his/her case before any decision is made.

At all stages a student will have the right to be accompanied by a parent/guardian or responsible adult during the disciplinary interview.

No student will be suspended/expelled for a first breach of discipline except in the case of gross misconduct when the penalty may be immediate suspension/expulsion.

A student will have the right to appeal against any disciplinary penalty imposed.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

All College students are required to observe and respect the Rules of the College at all times, to maintain

Purpose and Scope

This procedure is designed to help and encourage all students to achieve and maintain standards of conduct and attendance. The College rules (a copy of which is enclosed/displayed on the College noticeboard) and this procedure applies to all students. The aim is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all.

At all stages a student will have the right to be accompanied by a parent/guardian or responsible adult during the disciplinary interview.

No student will be suspended/expelled for a first breach of discipline except in the case of gross misconduct when the penalty may be immediate suspension/expulsion.

A student will have the right to appeal against any disciplinary penalty imposed.

THE PROCESS

Minor faults will be dealt with informally but where the matter is more serious the following procedure will be used.

Stage 1 - Informal Warning

CODE OF CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

If conduct does not meet acceptable standards a student will normally be given an ORAL WARNING. A brief note of the oral warning will be kept.

Stage 2 - Written Warning

If the offence is a serious one, or if a further offence occurs, a WRITTEN WARNING will be given. This will give details of the complaint, the improvement required and the timescale. A copy of this written warning will be kept.

Stage 3 – Suspension/Expulsion

If conduct is still unsatisfactory and you still fail to reach the prescribed standards, SUSPENSION/EXPULSION will normally result. The student will be provided, as soon as reasonably practicable, with written reasons for expulsion, the date on which expulsion/suspension takes place and the right of appeal.

Gross Misconduct

The following list provides examples of offences which are normally regarded as gross misconduct. The list is not exhaustive.

- Theft
- Fighting
- Harassment / Violence/threat of violence or serious inappropriate behaviour to fellow students, members of the College faculty or staff.
- Deliberate damage to College property
- Serious incapability, through alcohol or being under the influence of illegal drugs
- Serious negligence, which causes unacceptable loss, damage or injury
- Serious act of insubordination
- Bullying in all forms, i.e. cyber bullying
- Harassment or any other actions deemed by The College to constitute serious misconduct.
- Bullying as defined by the Anti Bullying Policy
- Repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct and indirect, whether verbal or written, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more students against another or others, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity.

Equality Legislation in Ireland defines harassment as any act or conduct (including spoken words, gestures, or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material), if the action or conduct is unwelcome to the recipient, and could reasonably be regarded as offensive, humiliating, or intimidating. The harassment has to be based on, or motivated by, one or more of the nine relevant characteristics of the person targeted. These are:

- Marital Status, Age, Sexual Orientation, Family Status, Race, Gender, Religious Belief, Disability and Membership of the Travelling Community.

CODE OF CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

If a student is accused of an act of gross misconduct, that student may be suspended while the alleged offence is investigated. Upon completion of the investigation and the full disciplinary procedure, the College is satisfied that gross misconduct has occurred, the result will normally be immediate suspension/expulsion.

Any alleged incident of unlawful behaviour may immediately be referred to the Garda Síochána. In that event, internal proceedings under this Code will be adjourned pending the decision on whether proceedings would issue.

APPEALS

If a student wishes to appeal against a disciplinary decision that student should inform the Student Liaison Officer or Artistic Director immediately.

GRIEVANCES

Where a student has a grievance the following procedure should be adopted.

- The grievance should be raised verbally with the Artistic Directors.
- This should be done in confidence.
- Should the Artistic Directors not be able to satisfactorily resolve the grievance, the matter should be referred in writing to the Board of the College of Dance.
- A decision will be made after due consideration. **This decision will be final.**

5. Anti-Bullying Policy

ANTI-BULLYING

An Anti-Bullying Policy is a priority issue identified by the staff, students and parents since no school is immune from the problem of bullying.

The College of Dance has a **zero-tolerance policy towards bullying**. The scope, definition and aims of our policies and the measures we take relating to bullying and the College's strategy to prevent bullying behaviour is outlined below.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COLLEGE OF DANCE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

- To create a school ethos which encourages students to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To raise awareness of bullying as an unacceptable form of behaviour with school management, teachers, students, parents/guardians.
- To create a school that acknowledges, accommodates and respects a diversity of students across the nine grounds covered by the equality legislation. Gender, Civil Status, Family Status, Sexual Orientation, Religion, Age, Disability, Race, Membership of the Traveller Community.
- To take practical actions to prevent incidents of bullying behaviour e.g. to ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- To develop procedures for reporting and recording incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To develop procedures for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of the College of Dance has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the College's overall Code of Behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, which were published in September 2013.

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students and is, therefore, fully committed to the following key Principles of Best Practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

(a) A positive culture and climate which

- Is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
- Encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

- Promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
- (b) Effective leadership
- (c) A school-wide approach
- (d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact
- (e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
- Build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
 - Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying;
 - Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
- (f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
- (g) Supports for staff
- (h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- (i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The list of examples below is non-exhaustive, and schools may wish to add behaviours which reflect their own circumstances.

Bullying is repeated aggression conducted by an individual or a group against others - such aggressive behaviour may be verbal, cyber, psychological or physical. Examples of bullying behaviours or General behaviours, which apply to all types of bullying

- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.
- Physical aggression
- Damage to property
- Name calling
- Slagging

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

- The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person
- Offensive graffiti
- Extortion
- Intimidation
- Insulting or offensive gestures
- The “look”
- Invasion of personal space
- Cyber
- Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation
- Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual
- Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person’s name
- Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight
- Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online
- Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images
- Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group
- Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety
- Silent telephone/mobile phone call
- Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls
- Abusive text messages
- Abusive email
- Abusive communication on ANY SOCIALS e.g. Snap Chat / Instagram Facebook/Ask.fm/X/YouTube or on games consoles
- Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures
- Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
 - Physical aggression
 - Damage to property
 - Intimidation
 - Gestures
 - Silent telephone/mobile phone calls
 - Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls
 - Abusive text messages
 - Abusive email/Facebook/Social media messaging
 - The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person
 - Isolation & exclusion
 - Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying, etc.
 - Name calling / Slagging

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

SUPERVISION AND MONITORING

- Classes are supervised at all times by teachers and/or teaching assistants.
- Bullying danger spots have been identified in collaboration with students
- Both teaching and non-teaching staff involved.
- Trained classroom assistants are involved as a resource to assist in countering bullying.

Anti Bullying Procedures

These procedures are intended to reassure any student who is being bullied that he/she will be listened to and his/her case will be dealt with seriously. They are also intended to enable those involved to recognise the serious nature of bullying and to dissuade them from participating in or supporting bullying behaviour.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to contact the Teacher/Artistic Director immediately if they suspect or know that a child is being bullied. Parents are encouraged to keep a record of any incidents of bullying, noting who, what, when and where.

Investigation of incidents of alleged bullying will be conducted in a manner that affords full rights to those concerned in accordance with natural justice.

While every case will be dealt with sensitively no absolute guarantee of confidentiality can be given to a person making a complaint.

The steps that are taken in dealing with bullying incidents, where an incident of bullying is observed by, or reported to, a member of staff the following measures will be taken:

- The teacher/Artistic Director will speak with the accuser to ascertain what has taken place.
- The teacher will monitor closely the activities of the respective students and their classmates.
- Persons involved in or witnessing alleged incidents of bullying are asked to write an account of the incident. This does not necessarily imply that these persons have engaged in bullying behaviour.
- The investigation and questioning will be sensitive to the needs of those involved.
- The teachers will bring their findings to the attention of The Board of Directors, who will then take appropriate action.
- Those who have been found to have engaged in bullying will be encouraged to recognise the inappropriateness of such behaviour and the seriousness of its effects on others. They will also be encouraged to apologise for their behaviour to the victim in question. The College of Dance recognizes that often bullying is the result of a thoughtless action and once brought to the attention of the perpetrator can be simply resolved.
- A record of bullying incidents will be maintained and recorded in the Child Protection/Incident Report book, which is retained in the College's files.
- Where bullying behaviour has been established as having taken place and where there is a repeated or serious offence, the parents/guardians will be notified.
- Parents/Guardians are expected to co-operate with these policies and to re-enforce them in the home.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Appropriate sanctions will be imposed which may ultimately result in exclusion from the school. Sanctions and disciplinary procedures imposed in instances of bullying behaviour will have as their priority:

- The health and safety of all students
- Preservation of the anti-bullying ethos of the College of Dance
- Prevention of further occurrences
- Reconciliation between the parties to the bullying incident
- The effect on the perpetrator

Retaliation against students or others, following or during an investigation, will be regarded as a very serious breach of discipline and will merit the most serious of sanctions.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

Our staff will:

- Foster in our pupils self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others.
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

The Responsibilities of Students

We expect our students to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- Intervene, to protect the pupil, who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so.
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:

- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

The Responsibilities of Parents

- We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.
- Advising their children to report any bullying to (name of a member of staff/specific post in school/their class teacher) and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils.
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying
- Informing the College of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved.
- Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

It is recognised that the counselling of both bullies and victims is a special skill that needs to be developed by training for staff and will focus on a whole College approach to the prevention of bullying. This will be of particular benefit to all/any staff, who may feel uneasy about their skills in dealing with this area.

6. Safe Physical contact with Students Policy

DEFINITION

Teaching all genres of dance is a physical activity and appropriate physical contact between students and teachers in class is essential for correct training. Teachers will use their hands to illustrate a correct placement to a student or to adjust parts of a student's body. Posture often requires adjusting the rib-cage and the pelvic area simultaneously.

Teachers may be demonstrating with students in ways, which will involve supporting and lifting also demonstrating positions and movements to the students by moving parts of the students' bodies.

This often involves a good deal of contact with students. Permission will always be sought for any physical contact required.

The College of Dance recognises that such physical contact is a potentially complex area; and the College also fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding students and teachers and for protecting their welfare.

The following principles and procedures are in place to fulfil the College's obligations:

- Contact by the teacher is made with full permission and particular awareness of the needs of each individual, to assist the dancer in correcting placement
- All teachers will treat any physical contact with due sensitivity and care
- Contact will not involve force or the use of any instrument
- Teachers will be mindful of location and avoid situations where they are isolated with a student; all classes should be held in studios. Teachers and students should feel free to report any concerns to the Artistic Director.

7. Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Policy

DEFINITION

By ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Ireland committed to:

Respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

The College of Dance is committed to take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinion or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

Article 2 (UNCRC, 1989) '[persons with a] disability' means those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

'diversity' refers to the diverse nature of Irish society. Diversity is about all the ways in which people differ, and how they live their lives as individuals, within groups, and as part of a wider social group: for example, a person can be classified, or classify themselves, by their social class, gender, disability/ability, as a returned Irish emigrant, family status, as an inter-country adoptee, or from a different family structure, including foster care. They can be seen – or see themselves – as part of a minority group, a minority ethnic group or part of the majority/dominant group (adapted from Murray and Urban, 2012).

'equality' refers to the importance of recognising, respecting, and accepting the diversity of individuals and group needs, and of ensuring equality in terms of access, participation and benefits for all children and their families. It is therefore not about treating people 'the same'.

Equality of participation is particularly relevant when working with children and parents.

Inequality can be instigated by an individual, or through policies at an early childhood service or broader institutional level (adapted from Murray and Urban, 2012).

'inclusion' refers to a process involving a programme, curriculum or educational environment where each child is welcomed and included on equal terms, can feel they belong, and can progress to his/her full potential in all areas of development. (National Childcare Strategy 2006– 2010).

All children have rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or girl, what their culture is, whether they have a disability, whether they are rich or poor. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis. High-quality childcare is a vital factor in a child's early experiences and holistic development. Participation in inclusive high-quality early childhood settings enhances all children's early learning experiences. In an inclusive

DIVERSITY, EQUALITY & INCLUSION POLICY

setting there is an awareness and respect for each child's individual strengths and areas of difficulty. Inclusive settings engage in meaningful collaboration with parents and other professionals to ensure access, equality and full participation for all children.

This Inclusion Charter is the early years sector's commitment to promote the values of diversity, equality and inclusion throughout early childhood care and education settings, as well as through the work of all early years practitioners. The College of Dance will provide opportunities for all children to thrive through the promotion of positive identities and abilities, the celebration of diversity and difference, and the provision of an inclusive, participative culture and environment.

05Accordingly, the College of Dance will strive to:

- Respect all children equally, nurturing each child's cultural identity and sense of belonging.
- Ensure that service planning and provision embraces the needs of all children and works to deliver an inclusive and accessible environment for all.
- Enable all children to meaningfully participate in all aspects of the training, and extend learning to challenge and promote the individual child's abilities and development.
- Ensure that children of all abilities have equal access to culturally and developmentally appropriate dance training, understanding skills and holistic development.
- Support children to celebrate diversity and feel comfortable with difference.
- Support children to enjoy dance training in an environment free from bias, stereotypes and discrimination.
- Empower children to stand up for themselves and others in difficult situations.
- Guarantee the safety and well-being of all children as central to every aspect of children's learning, well-being, welfare and development.

These Guidelines have been developed to support, guide and empower the early childhood care and education sector to deliver a diversity, equality and inclusion focus to practice and training. This means recognising gender, ability, culture, class, ethnicity, language, religion, sexuality and family structure as integral to society. Many of these aspects intersect: everybody has multiple identities, influencing how we practise and how children learn in the early childhood service.

Historically, in Ireland, the richness of diversity among the population has not always been valued; similarly, differences have not been equally cherished. As a result, Ireland has not always shown due regard for the diverse needs of all people. Research has also shown that, in early childhood care and education, we have an opportunity to make a meaningful difference to children's lives through addressing diversity, equality and inclusion (Eurydice, 2009). With these Guidelines, we aim to orient practices and understanding across all levels of the early childhood care and education sector.