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# Code of Behavior for Staff

## 1) Child Centered Approach

All staff at Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts will:

- a) Treat all children and young people equally;
- b) Listen to and respect children and young people;
- c) Involve children and young people in decision-making, as appropriate;
- d) Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability);
- e) Use Appropriate language (physical and verbal);
- f) Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere;
- g) Offer constructive criticism when needed;
- h) Treat all children and young people as individuals;
- i) Respect a child's or young person's personal space;
- j) Discuss boundaries on behavior and related sanctions, as appropriate, with children and young people and their primary carers;
- k) Encourage feedback from group and give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- l) Use age-appropriate teaching aids and materials;
- m) Lead by example;
- n) Be aware of a child's or young person's other commitments when scheduling rehearsals or activities, e.g., school or exams;
- o) Be cognisant of a child's or young person's limitations, due to a medical condition for example;
- p) Create and atmosphere of trust;
- q) Respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race and sexual orientation.

## 2) Good Practice

All staff at Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts will:

- a) Register each child/young person (name, address, phone, special requirements, attendance, emergency contact);
- b) Always work in an open environment ( e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets). Never allow yourself to be left alone with a pupil in an unsupervised area with no visual access. Where this is not possible, the teacher should ensure there is another adult nearby.
- c) For individual lessons parents are made aware that training is done on a one to one basis, but that there is always visual access.
- d) Make primary carers, children/young people, visitors and facilitators aware of the Child Protection Policy and procedures;
- e) Have emergency procedures in place and make all staff aware of these procedures;
- f) Be inclusive of children and young people with special needs;
- g) Plan and be sufficiently prepared, both mentally and physically;
- h) Report any concerns to the Designated Person (**Lisa Kelly**) and follow reporting procedures;
- i) Encourage children and young people to report any bullying, concerns or worries and to be aware of anti-bullying policy.
- j) Observe appropriate dress and behavior;
- k) Evaluate work and practices on a regular basis;
- l) Provide appropriate training for staff and volunteers;
- m) Report and record incidents and accidents. First aid given should be recorded in writing and reported to the primary teacher in the room who can contact the parent or carer. First Aid incidents should be logged in the incident report folder and signed by staff and parent/carer.
- n) Update and review policies and procedures regularly;

- o) Keep primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children;
- p) Ensure proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved
- q) Do not be passive in relation to concerns, i.e. don't 'do nothing'
- r) Do not let a problem get out of control;
- s) Maintain awareness around language and comments made. If you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, then try to address it in a sensitive manner.

### 3) Inappropriate Behaviour

All staff at Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts will:

- a) Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children/young people;
- b) Not use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language;
- c) Not single out a particular child/young person for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, or unwelcome focus or attention;
- d) Not allow/ engage in inappropriate touching.
- e) Not hit or physically chastise children/young people;
- f) Not socialize inappropriately with children/young people, e.g., outside of structures organisational activities.
- g) Maintaining a safe and appropriate adult distance with pupils (e.g. it is not appropriate for any teacher to have an intimate relationship with a pupil)

### 4) Physical Contact

All staff at Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts will:

- a) Seek consent of child/young person in relation to physical contact (except in an emergency or dangerous situation);

b) Avoid horseplay or inappropriate touch. However, it is unrealistic and inappropriate for the Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts to prohibit physical contact between the teachers and pupils. Touch is very much part of what we do and it is an essential part of the creative interpretation of roles as well as a means of directing movement, encouraging performance and providing comfort and reassurance. Where physical contact is necessary the teacher should explain the reason. However teachers must bear in mind that even innocent actions can be misconstrued. It is important for them to be sensitive to a pupil's reaction to physical contact and to act appropriately. No pupil should ever be touched on a part of his/her body or in a way that is indecent. The areas covered by bra and pants in an adult should never be touched except in case of emergency. If there is a reason why you have had to touch a child in these areas then you should record what you have done and contact the Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts director to discuss. Touch must always be related to the needs of the pupil rather than to those of the member of the team. Always check with children/young people about their level of comfort when doing touch exercises.

## 5) Health and Safety

All staff at Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts will:

- a) Not leave children unattended or unsupervised;
- b) Provide a safe environment;
  - i) Of particular importance is the control of who comes onto the premises and whether doors can be locked to ensure that unidentified people cannot enter, and that pupils cannot leave without us being aware of it. In doing this we are creating a safe zone.
  - ii) Have clear instructions to the pupils that we are teaching as to toilets and rules around their use. It is not realistic to escort children to the toilet on all occasions, and if the toilets are within

the safe zone then there is no need to do this. If the toilets are elsewhere then we have to make judgments about escorting pupils to and from them. We need to be aware that the 'potential' for abuse comes not only from outside but also from older more capable pupils. The only age group we may need a staff member to assist in escorting to toilets is our theatre totz group. Staff should not have to enter the toilet but in the event of a child requiring assistance, two staff members should be present and the incident be logged.

- c) Be aware of accident procedure and follow accordingly.

## Good Practice for Online Teaching

### 1) Good Practice for Online Teaching

Management at Bellvue Academy will:

- a) Make primary carers, staff, children/young people, visitors and facilitators aware of the introduction of the *Good Practice for Online Teaching* policy subsection of the current Child Protection Policy and Procedures for Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts. This policy will be emailed to all staff, parents/ guardians and students over the age of 18 years and will also be made available on [www.bellvueacademy.com](http://www.bellvueacademy.com). Parents/Guardians and students over the age of 18years will be contacted via text to advise of the availability of the policy.

### 2) Recordings Policy

- a) The only purpose in recording lessons is to enhance/ protect both students and teachers in the context of child protection The procedure for recording will be as follows:
- b) Lessons will take place via Zoom (or via other video platforms in cases where Zoom is not accessible) and will be recorded on the teacher's device.
- c) On conclusion of the lesson, each teacher will, without undue delay, forward the recording to management.

- d) Teachers will delete said recordings once sent to management, ensuring that all links, emails and trash cans have been fully deleted
- e) On receipt, management will download recordings to an external hard drive, to be securely stored at Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts, Unit 2D Ard Gaoithe Business Park, Cashel Rd, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary
- f) Recordings will be stored in a secure enclosure and access permitted only to management (Keith Dwyer Greene & Lisa Kelly)

### 3) Recording on the part of the student

- a) Under no circumstances, will a parent/guardian or student, record any part of an online lesson without confirmed permission from the subject teacher
- b) A teacher may permit recording of a lesson on the part of the student at their discretion

### 4) Storage and Deletion of Recordings

- a) The following relates to the storage and deletion of footage of lessons recorded during online teaching.
- b) Management at Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts will ensure that;
- c) Recordings will be stored in a secure enclosure at Bellvue Studios and access permitted only to management (Keith Dwyer Greene & Lisa Kelly)
- d) Recordings will not be forwarded to parents/guardians or students for any reason
- e) Should a parent/guardian or student over the age of 18 years wish to view their recording, this will be accommodated and will be watched in the presence (either online or in person) of a member of management
- f) Recordings will be stored for a period of **90 days** from the date of the completion of term (May 16<sup>th</sup> 2020)
- g) On the conclusion of this period, all recordings will be destroyed
- h) Parents/Guardians will be notified **30 days** in advance of recordings being destroyed
- i) Parents/Guardians & students over the age of 18 years will be notified when recordings have been destroyed

## 5) Online Teaching Practices

- a) During Online Lessons the following protocols will be adhered to;
- b) A parent/guardian will be present for the duration of the lesson for any student under the age of 18 years
- c) Where a parent/guardian cannot be present in the lesson, alternative arrangements for a change of lesson time will be made at the discretion of the teacher. Alternatively another person +18 may be nominated to sit in for the lesson once sent in writing via e mail to [bellvueacadmey@gmail.com](mailto:bellvueacadmey@gmail.com) from the parent/guardian
- d) In the event that a parent/guardian needs to leave the room for any period of time during an online lesson, they should notify the teacher so the teacher may pause the lesson until they return.
- e) Students will take their lessons in an open setting
- f) Teachers and students will present in acceptable attire during lessons and will dress to the same standard as they would if attending lessons in person
- g) Teachers will arrange schedules in advance of lessons and will notify students/parents/guardians of these schedules
- h) Teachers and Students will exercise good punctuality in relation to attendance of lessons
- i) Parents/Guardians will make contact with teachers or management in the event that a student will not be in attendance at a scheduled lesson time
- j) Missed lessons on the part of the student will incur a loss of lesson. It is at the discretion and availability of the teacher as to whether or not they can accommodate a make-up time for a missed lesson

## 6) Incidents, Complaints & Comments

- a) In the event that a Parent/Guardian or Teacher observes, hears or witnesses something which causes concern, Parents/Guardians and Teachers will refer to the following sections of the Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts Child Protection:
  - i) Allegations of misconduct or abuse by staff;
  - ii) Complaints and comments;
  - iii) Incidents & Accidents

# Who to contact about issues related to child protection and welfare.

Lisa Kelly has been designated as the person to contact if you have an issue or concern about any aspect of a child's or young person's safety and welfare. It is the responsibility of this person to support and advise staff about policy and procedures in relation to child protection and to ensure that procedures are followed. It is also the responsibility of the Designated Person to liaise with the Health Service Executive or Gardaí where appropriate.

- Lisa Kelly can be contacted at 087-7460821
- Keith Greene has been designated as deputy to Lisa Kelly and can be contacted at 0858550935 / 0876133446

*The following excerpt from Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (4.3.2 - p.38) shows what would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:*

- (i) *specific indication from the child or young person that s/he has been abused;*
- (ii) *an account by a person who saw the child/young person being abused;*
- (iii) *evidence, such as an injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way;*
- (iv) *an injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse[an example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour];*
- (v) *consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.*

- Staff should record the following information in relation to children and young people:
  - Suspicions;
  - Concerns;
  - Worrying observations;
  - Behavioural changes;
  - Actions and outcomes.

- Dealing with a disclosure, staff will:
  - Stay calm and listen to the child/young person, allow him or her enough time to say what s/he needs to say;
  - Not use leading questions or prompt details;
  - Reassure the child/young person but do not promise to keep anything secret;
  - Not make the child/young person repeat the details unnecessarily;
  - Explain to the child/young person what will happen next (explanation should be age-appropriate).
  
- Reporting procedures:
  - The reporting procedure shall be known and accessible to all staff;
  - The person who expresses the concern should be involved and kept informed;
  - Actions and outcomes will be noted;
  - Record all details, including the date, time and people involved in the concern or disclosure and the facts (for example in an incident book). Information recorded should be factual.
  - Any opinions should be supported by facts; Inform the Designated Person (Lisa Kelly) or the Deputy Person (Keith Greene) if unavailable;
  - The most appropriate person should discuss the concern or consult with primary carers. Parents, carers or responsible adults should be made aware of a report to the Health Service Executive unless it is likely to put the child/young person at further risk;
  - The Designated Person may contact the Health Service Executive Duty Social Work Department for an informal consultation prior to making a report;
  - Information will be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis.
  - If there is any reasonable grounds for concern as outlined above, the designated person will contact the Duty Social Worker in the Health Service Executive area using the standard reporting form. Reports should be made to the Health Service Executive directly;

- In case of emergencies outside of Health Service Executive Social Work Department hours, contact the Gardaí. In situations that threaten the immediate safety of a child/young person, it may be necessary to contact the Gardaí.

## Confidentiality Statement

We in Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts are committed to ensuring peoples' rights to confidentiality. However, in relation to child protection and welfare we undertake that:

- Information will only be forwarded on a 'need to know' basis in order to safeguard the child/young person;
- Giving such information to others for the protection of a child or young person is not a breach of confidentiality;
- We cannot guarantee total confidentiality where the best interests of the child or young person are at risk;
- Primary carers, children and young people have a right to know if personal information is being shared and/or a report is being made to the Health Service Executive, unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk;
- Images/videos of a child/young person will not be used for any reason without the consent of the parent/carer (however, we cannot guarantee that cameras/videos will not be used at public performances);
- Students are not permitted to use recording devices in their classes.

## Recruitment and Selection Policy

We will ensure that staff are carefully selected, trained and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and young people, by observing the following principles:

- Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined for every job (paid or voluntary);
- We will endeavour to select the most suitably qualified personnel;

- Staff will be selected by a panel of at least two (or more) representatives;
- No person who would be deemed to constitute a 'risk' will be employed;
- All staff will be required to consent to Garda clearance, and where available, this will be sought.
- Failure to abide by one or more of these guidelines can result in the review/termination of any position held by a sub-contractor / volunteer at the academy.

## Managing and Supervising Staff

To protect both staff (paid and voluntary) and children/young people, we undertake that:

New staff will:

- Be made aware of the organisation's code of conduct, child protection procedures, and the identity and role of who has been designated to deal with issues of concern;

All staff will:

- Receive an adequate level of supervision and review of their work practices;
- Be expected to have read and signed the Child Protection Policy Statement;
- Be provided with child protection training.

## Involvement of Primary Carers

We at Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts are committed to being open with all primary carers.

We undertake to:

- Advise primary carers of our child protection policy;
- Inform primary carers and schools of all activities and potential activities;
- Issue contact/consent forms where relevant;

- Comply with health and safety practices;
- Operate child-centred policies in accordance with best practice;
- Adhere to our recruitment guidelines;
- Ensure as far as possible that the activities are age-appropriate;
- Encourage and facilitate the involvement of parent(s), carer(s) or responsible adult(s), where appropriate.

If we have concerns about the welfare of the child/young person, we will:

- Respond to the needs of the child or young person;
- Inform the primary carers on an on-going basis unless this action puts the child or young person at further risk;
- Where there are child protection and welfare concerns we are obliged to pass these on to the Duty Social Worker and, in an emergency, the Gardaí.
- In the event of a complaint against a member of staff, we will immediately ensure the safety of the child/young person and inform primary carers as appropriate.

As a child-centred organisation, we are committed to putting the interest of the child/young person first. To that end we will:

- Contact local Health Service Executive and Gardaí where there is a child protection welfare concern;
- Encourage primary carers to work in partnership with us under the guidelines set out by our organisation to ensure the safety of their children;
- Have a designated contact person available for consultation with primary carers in the case of any concern over a child or young person's welfare.

## Dealing with allegations against staff

Two separate procedures must be followed:

1. In respect of the child/young person the Designated Person will deal with issues related to the child/young person.
2. In respect of the person against whom the allegation is made the Designated Person will deal with issues related to the staff member.
  - The first priority is to ensure that no child or young person is exposed to unnecessary risk;
  - If allegations are made against the Designated Person, then the Deputy Designated Person should be contacted;
  - The reporting procedures outlined above of these guidelines should be followed. Both the primary carers and child/young person should be informed of actions planned and taken.

- The child/young person should be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner;
- The staff member will be informed as soon as possible
    1. Of the nature of the allegation;
    2. The staff member should be given the opportunity to respond;
  - The chairperson/head of the organisation should be informed as soon as possible;
  - Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee should be taken in consultation with Health Service Executive and Gardaí;
  - After consultation, the chairperson/head of organisation should advise the person accused and agreed procedures will be followed.

## In the event of complaints or comments:

- Complaints or comments will be responded to within 2 weeks;
- The DP or DDP has responsibility for directing complaints/comments to the appropriate person;
- Verbal complaints will be logged and responded to.

## Accidents Procedure

- Bellvue Academy of Performing Arts will maintain an up to date register of contact details of all children/young people involved in the organisation.
- External organisations with whom our organisation has dealings must provide proof that they have public liability insurance
- First-aid boxes will be available and regularly re-stocked
- The location of the first-aid box (es) will be made known to staff
- Availability of first-aid should be in accordance with the organisation's Health and Safety guidelines. The location of accident/incident books will be made known to staff
- Take cognisance of responsibility for first-aid on off-site trips

# Parents Co-operation

**In order to help ensure children and young people's safety and welfare we ask parents to:**

- ✓ Bring and collect children on time for the activities. Staff at Bellvue academy of Performing Arts are not responsible for children outside of programme hours.
- ✓ Give us any relevant information (e.g. health, ability, emergency contact).
- ✓ Follow directions of staff (facilitators/leaders) when requested.
- ✓ Complete and sign registration and consent forms for programmes as requested.

**Signed:**



Keith Dwyer Greene



Lisa Kelly

07.04.20