IDTA safer recruitment policy

1. Policy statement, purpose and scope

Safer recruitment is a central element of safeguarding children. At the IDTA we recognise our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people as outlined in the Children Act 1989 and 2004. We recognise the importance of adopting safer recruitment and selection procedures as part of our safeguarding duty and ensuring we always act with openness, honesty and candour on this matter. Robust recruitment practices help us identify and reject any unsuitable applicants and a safer recruitment policy helps us to respond to any concerns that may be raised during the recruitment and selection process.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the IDTA safeguarding children policy and the IDTA managing allegations policy. Within this policy any use of the language children or young people applies to ALL up to their 18th birthday.

At the IDTA we understand that having a robust safer recruitment procedure in place will help us to identify anyone who is unfit to work with children and young people. That it will deter those unsuitable or unsafe from applying to our association for work and that this will in turn **minimise the likelihood of children or young people being harmed by those in a position of trust.**

For any and all posts appointed with the IDTA a thorough recruitment process will be followed. This policy addresses aspects of the recruitment process that will be followed for any and all roles that involve working with children and young people.

2. IDTA employees: safer recruitment

Safer recruitment practice: For positions that involve working with children: Employed staff:

At all stages of the recruitment process attention will be paid to the safeguarding of children and young people:

2.1 Planning

Planning: Considering time scales, interview panel planning, considering how the role will be advertised and deciding what skills and qualities are needed for the role will all help to prevent application from unsuitable candidates

2.2 Advertising

Advertising: When the role is advertised it should be made clear if this is a role that involves working with children and young people.

Within the advert the IDTA's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people will be clearly stated.

It will also be made clear at advertisement stage if this is a post for which the post holder must undertake a disclosure and barring check.

2.3 Job description and person specification

Job description: When the job description is written it must clearly include not only the main duties of the post but the extent to which the post holder will have responsibility for the safety and welfare of children and young people.

The job description must highlight the individual's responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of those children.

Person specification: The person spec. will include the essential and desirable qualifications and experience for the role and this will include requirements and competencies to perform the role in relation to safely working with children.

2.4 Candidate information and applications

Information for candidates and application form: Within the application pack given to candidates alongside the application form, explanatory notes, job description and person spec the applicant must be able to view a copy of the organisations safeguarding policy statement (full policy documents are publicly available on the IDTA website).

The application form will include identifiers; the candidate's full name and previous names, their postal address and NI number.

It will also include academic and vocational qualifications as appropriate, a statement of skills and abilities and a full employment / education history from the end of secondary education onward (with no gaps).

The application form should also include details for 2 references one from the current or most recent employer, not a colleague but a manager). If the post is relating to working with children a reference should be obtained from the most recent role that involved working with children.

Information should also be requested on any previous or spent convictions, cautions, reprimands, warnings or bind overs.

2.5 Shortlisting

Shortlisting: In the shortlisting process incomplete applications should not be accepted and all applications must be carefully checked for gaps in employment history and the reason for these gaps should be explored.

In short listing for interview attention should be paid to potential problem indicators such as repeat and unexplained changes of employment.

2.6 References

References: Will always be sought directly from the referee and general open letters of recommendation will not be accepted in replacement of reference.

References will include safeguarding questions such as whether or not the referee feels the candidate is suitable to work with children and if not why and whether the candidate has a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibility.

In asking for references we will aim to establish whether the applicant has been subject to any disciplinary sanctions and whether the applicant has had any allegations made against them or concerns raised that relate to the safety and welfare of children or the applicant's behaviour toward them.

If necessary, a reference request will be followed up with a telephone conversation after the reference has been checked to establish further details.

2.7 Interviews

Interview: At interview it will be stressed that a DBS check will be a requirement for a successful candidate.

All candidates will have their identity checked at interview and photographic ID must be seen.

Proof of qualifications must be seen and alongside proof of identity this will be kept by the IDTA.

In interview the candidate's values and attitudes toward working with children should be assessed as should be their ability to support the safeguarding agenda of the IDTA.

Any gaps in employment history must be explored.

The candidate must be offered the opportunity to disclose any information relating to the requirement for a DBS check.

The interview should also include questions on the motivation to want to work with children and the ability to maintain appropriate professional boundaries where necessary.

All interviews shall be carried out by more than one interviewer

2.8 Conditional offers

Conditional offer of employment: All employment is conditional and dependant on proof of identity and qualifications, appropriate references and a DBS check. These must all be proved in writing.

Conditional offers of employment can be withdrawn where the candidate is found to be on barred lists or they have been disqualified from working with children by the courts.

Where the applicant is found to have provided false information on or in support of their application or where there are serious concerns about the candidate's suitability to work with children.

2.9 Induction and training

Induction period: During staff induction all new workers should be made familiar with the IDTA safeguarding policies and procedures and understand clearly how to report a safeguarding concern.

They must be made aware of their safeguarding duties and responsibilities and recognise the need to follow organisational policy and procedure.

All staff with direct / regulated contact should undergo basic safeguarding training.

2.10 Agency and overseas staff

Checks should be made on **overseas staff** as for all other staff.

Where staff are **recruited through an agency**, confirmation should be obtained that the appropriate checks have been undertaken. Similarly, safe recruitment practices need to be observed with **freelance workers** who will be working with direct / regulated contact with children and young people.

3. IDTA members and member teachers

IDTA members:

3.1 Member safeguarding expectations

The IDTA expects all members and all those working or volunteering in their schools to hold necessary training and DBS checks of an appropriate standard inline with legislation, government guidance relevant to out of school settings and best practice. We recognise variance in roles and responsibilities and recognise DBS checks are a legal process and variation will exist in appropriate application but expect all members to take the highest form of protection for staff, students and their schools practical, including their approach to DBS checks.

In line with the IDTA code of conduct all member teachers if the IDTA are expected to maintain an in date (within three year) DBS check.

All IDTA members are expected to hold a current Enhanced DBS check where their work is eligible for that level of check. Members undertaking eligible regulated activity with children are expected to hold an Enhanced DBS check including a children's barred list check. The Association's expectation is that members undertaking eligible work with children obtain the children's barred list check as part of their Enhanced DBS check.

This expectation applies to members teaching children and to those teaching adults. Members working with adults, including adults who may be at risk, are expected to obtain an Enhanced DBS check where the nature of their duties makes them eligible. A children's barred list check is not required for work exclusively with adults; an adults' barred list check may only be obtained where the role meets the separate legal eligibility requirements. Where an Enhanced DBS check is not legally available for a particular role, the member must obtain the highest lawful level of check appropriate to that role and follow all other safeguarding requirements.

All IDTA members are expected to undertake and maintain Level 2 or equivalent safeguarding training covering awareness, recognition and responses to safeguarding concerns. It is the individual responsibility of each member to ensure that their criminal record checks and safeguarding training remain appropriate, current and available as evidence when required. Safeguarding training must be renewed in line with the Association's stated three-year requirement or sooner where necessary.

3.2 Admission and annual renewal

When a new teacher is admitted to the IDTA they will be asked to submit their DBS check and Safeguarding training certificate to the IDTA as part of the module 1 portfolio for their level 4 qualification. New members will not be admitted to membership until a DBS check and safeguarding certificate has been submitted.

All members are offered the chance to self-disclose any concerns and where appropriate a risk analysis and assessment will be undertaken.

As membership is annually renewed members will be asked to confirm their status to ensure training is kept up to date and there is no change in DBS status.

3.3 DBS verification and changes in status

DBS checking and verification arrangements

The IDTA may adopt a proportionate programme of spot checks of members' DBS and safeguarding training evidence, recognising the number of members and the individual responsibility of teachers operating their own private businesses. Spot checking does not remove the responsibility of every member to maintain the appropriate checks and training. Where safeguarding concerns come to light, additional checks may be requested of the member or members concerned in accordance with the Association's safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

It will be considered gross misconduct for the IDTA not to be informed of a change in DBS status. It will be considered gross misconduct if a member is found not to have an appropriate DBS check or to have undisclosed content on their check.

Where concerns arise relating to a member's suitability, the IDTA may require the member to provide their current DBS certificate, evidence of appropriate safeguarding training and any further information reasonably necessary to assess those concerns. Failure to provide required evidence, without reasonable explanation, may be treated as gross misconduct under the IDTA's relevant disciplinary procedures. Any information disclosed will be considered fairly, confidentially and through an appropriate safeguarding risk assessment.

3.4 Overseas members

Overseas IDTA members who live and work outside the United Kingdom should ordinarily obtain a criminal records check, police clearance certificate or Certificate of Good Conduct from the country in which they live, rather than seeking a UK DBS check through the IDTA for work undertaken overseas. They should hold the appropriate criminal records clearance required or recommended in their country of residence, together with safeguarding training appropriate to their work and any training recommended by the relevant local authority, regulator or government in that country. Members remain personally responsible for meeting local legal requirements and for providing evidence to the IDTA when reasonably requested. Where an overseas member also undertakes eligible work in the United Kingdom, the appropriate UK DBS requirements must be considered separately.

4. Specific IDTA contracts, commissions and appointments

4.1 Self-employed and commissioned roles

Self-employed or commissioned roles:

Where an individual is hired by the IDTA on a self-employed or commissioned basis, checks must still be made to their suitability. This must include a DBS check, in date within the last three years and a safeguarding certificate as a minimum. Where a person is undertaking regular work references, including safeguarding questions and a CV including appropriate, in date CPD must also be made available. It is essential that it is understood that those working for the IDTA on any contractual basis represent the organisation and are responsible for upholding its good name and reputation. Safety and welfare are at the heart of the work IDTA do and all contractors must abide by the guidance outlined in the IDTA safeguarding children and adults policies.

4.2 Examiners

For some affiliated positions for example IDTA examiner an additional complex and thorough process including testing of practical skills and subject specific knowledge is also undertaken.

All IDTA examiners will be expected to hold in date DBS checks and Safeguarding training and this will be checked on entry to the IDTA examiner training programme.

4.3 Adjudicators and lecturers

All adjudicators and lectures whether or not they are IDTA members, will be expected to provide a DBS check and safeguarding certificate before undertaking any work for the Association. This must be checked by the relevant committee or events team. Failure to do so will be considered misconduct.

4.4 All IDTA appointments and affiliated roles

The IDTA expects all those applying for or nominated for roles affiliated to the IDTA for example those on IDTA committees or IDTA examiners who have contact with children and young people through their role will uphold the good name of the IDTA by ensuring they have in date DBS checks and safeguarding training at all times.

All those undertaking work for the IDTA in any capacity, including IDTA examiners, will have their appropriate DBS checks and safeguarding training evidence checked by the Association. These checks will be undertaken on appointment and reviewed as required by the role and organisational procedures.

5. IDTA directors, committees and head office

5.1 Directors

All directors of the IDTA will be expected to hold current DBS checks due to their all-area access at IDTA events.

All directors of the IDTA will be required to hold in date safeguarding training on awareness, recognition and responsibilities regarding safeguarding due to their advisory and disciplinary roles within the organisation.

5.2 Head office staff

All relevant staff at IDTA head office will undertake safeguarding awareness training to ensure they are able to identify safeguarding concerns raised to the organisations swiftly and manage them effectively.

6. Events, competitions and volunteers

6.1 Volunteer DBS checking

The IDTA offers a volunteer DBS checking service for eligible volunteers associated with an IDTA member or their dance school community. This may include student helpers aged 16 to 18 and adult volunteers, such as parents or carers, supporting shows, events or partnering dancers in classes. The correct level of check, and any barred list information, will depend on the volunteer's actual duties, frequency of activity, supervision arrangements and legal eligibility. A volunteer check must only be requested where the role qualifies under the DBS rules; the service does not mean that every helper is automatically eligible for an Enhanced DBS or barred list check. Members should ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements and supervision are in place for all helpers, whether or not a DBS check is available.

6.2 Competitions, demonstrations and chaperones

All IDTA competitions and demonstrations must apply for the appropriate body of persons approval and must ensure, through Local authority checks, that appropriately licenced local authority registered chaperones are always on site to safeguarding and support children and young people.

7. DBS checks and safeguarding training: general provisions

7.1 Appropriate levels and eligibility

DBS checks: The correct level of check (standard or enhanced) must be completed for the role applied for or being undertaken. The DBS eligibility checker can be used to confirm this information.

For work involving children, an Enhanced DBS check with a children's barred list check should be obtained where the duties are eligible for both. The statutory rules governing regulated activity, including the supervision exemption, must be applied to the actual role.

The IDTA expects safeguarding checks to be considered for those working with adults as well as children, recognising that adults who may be at risk are not always immediately identifiable within a dance community. Enhanced DBS checks for adult-only roles must be supported by the applicable legal eligibility criteria; applications made via DDC (Due Diligence Checking) on behalf of the IDTA will benefit from definitions outlined by the IDTA and DDC which ensure the correct checking for the correct roles.

For the purposes of this policy, checks must be appropriate to the role, workforce and legal eligibility criteria. A children's barred list check must only be requested where the duties meet the statutory requirements for that check. Making checks through the IDTA's partnership with DDC (Due Diligence Checking) will support members to ensure the correct level of check is applied for.

7.2 Recording and confidentiality

A record should be kept of the date when the disclosure was obtained, by whom, level of disclosure and unique reference number. The DBS check will not be kept by the IDTA either in its original or as a copy as it is the property of the individual.

Details of Disclosure and Barring Service checks should be treated as confidential and kept secure.

7.3 Further checks and Update Service

Further Disclosure and Barring Service checks on staff should always be considered when there has been a break from employment of 3 months or more (unless they subscribe to the online service) or there are grounds for concern about the person's suitability to work with children.

The disclosure and barring service operates an online update service designed to reduce the number of DBS checks requested.

Instead of a new check being necessary whenever an individual applies for a new paid or voluntary role working with children/vulnerable adults, individuals can opt to subscribe to the online Update Service. This will allow them to keep their DBS certificate up to date, so that they can take it with them from role to role, within the same workforce.

The IDTA acknowledged the limitations of the update service but remains accepting of checks on the update service as part of a more comprehensive picture including teacher training, membership criteria, codes of conduct, safeguarding policies and ongoing training commitments.

Employers do not need to register, but can carry out free, instant, online status checks of a registered individual's status with their consent. A new DBS check will only be necessary if the status check indicates a change in the individual's status (because new information has been added).

The IDTA accepts use of the update service as this is a more streamlined and cost effective way to maintain a DBS check than regularly applying for a new check.

7.4 Currency of training and checks

Safeguarding training will be considered in date if it was issued within the last three years.

DBS checks will be considered in date if issued within the last three years or on a rolling check.

8. Safeguarding concerns and whistleblowing

8.1 Criminal records and risk assessment

Regarding any **criminal record** NOT relating to working with children and young people the IDTA will consider making a judgement about suitability, taking into account only those offences which may be relevant to the post in question. The decision shall be based upon, the nature of the appointment, the nature of the offence, the age at which the offence took place, the frequency of the offence. This will be a thorough process of risk assessment, decisions made will be objective and will be recorded by the IDTA. Please see the IDTA policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders for further details.

8.2 Information sharing

Throughout this process if an issue of concern arises it may be necessary for the IDTA to contact the police or the Local Authority Designated Officer to share information. It is illegal to work with children if an individual is barred from working with children and on the DBS children's barred list.

8.3 Whistleblowing

Whistle blowing: Working Together to Safeguard Children sets out an expectation that organisations will have clear whistleblowing procedures. These procedures should be referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and help foster a culture which enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed. The procedure should set out mechanisms for raising a concern about any behaviour towards children which is abusive, inappropriate or unprofessional. This includes conduct which is a breach of the law, conduct which compromises health and safety and conduct which falls below established standards of practice with children.

The whistleblowing mechanism should discourage anonymous reporting, provide for the reporter identity to be revealed only with consent and provide support for the reporter, e.g. in giving evidence. This process can be used to report concerns about an individuals failure to meet the safeguarding or DBS requirements of the IDTA.

9. Policy review and responsibility

Reviewing officer Victoria Race

IDTA safeguarding consultant and designated safeguarding lead