



LONDON VOCATIONAL
BALLET SCHOOL

Diversity, Inclusion and Equality Policy

Introduction

London Vocational Ballet School aims to nurture classical ballet dancers of the future while ensuring a balanced academic curriculum to each individual student. The school's philosophy is to inspire in its students the love of learning, music, and freedom of expression through dance. Skills gained through encouragement and discipline in the ballet and academic classroom can be applied to all aspects of their life. By celebrating diversity and actively promoting equality, we want students and staff to feel valued, know that they are valued and respect others within a culturally inclusive environment. In order to ensure everyone can thrive and meet their full potential, it is essential that inclusion and equality of opportunity be at the core of the school's ethos. We aim to promote inclusion, actively tackle any form of discrimination and actively foster social cohesion in all areas of school life. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards creating a cohesive community.

Links

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by government publications and other external guidance, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (last update December 2020)
- Teacher Standards 2011 (introduction updated 2013)
- Independent School Standards Regulations 2023 • Statutory Framework for EYFS (updated September 2023)
- Data Protection Act 2018 Overview and GDPR (updated Aug 2020)
- Equality Act 2010 (updated June 2015)
- Charities Act 2011 This policy works in conjunction with a range of internal school policies and procedures, including:
 - Safeguarding Policy (updated Sept 2023)
 - Young Dancers Academy Code of Conduct (Staff handbook September 2023)
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Cyberbullying Policy
 - Online Safety Policy
 - IT Acceptable Use Policy
 - Staff Recruitment Procedures

- Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy & Managing Allegations

This policy is available on the school website and can be made available on request from the Executive Director. This policy applies equally to current and prospective members of the school community, including parents and visitors. The school is committed to a zero-tolerance policy in relation to less favourable treatment on the grounds of any protected characteristic under The Equality Act 2010. The protected characteristics are defined as:

- Age
- Gender
- Disability
- Gender identity or reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race and ethnic origin
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation Any behaviour, comments or attitudes (including ‘banter’) that undermine or threaten an individual’s self-esteem on these grounds will not be tolerated.

Policy Aims

The aims of this policy and the school’s ethos as a whole are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics
- Eliminate all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that an individual has a learning difficulty or special educational need, or because English is an additional language
- Promote equality of opportunity for all members of the school community
- Comply with the School’s equality obligations contained in The Equality Act 2010 • Provide a secure environment in which all our children can thrive and achieve all the outcomes of Keeping Children Safe in Education 3
- Provide a learning environment and curriculum where all individuals feel valued and feel they have a sense of belonging
- Celebrate and value diversity at school and in society as a whole

- Prepare students for life in a diverse and inclusive society in which everyone can take their place in the local, regional, national and global community
- Include and value the contribution of all families and our wider community to our understanding of equality and diversity
- Provide and promote positive information about the diversity of UK society
- Actively challenge discrimination and ensure that all members of the school community learn from these experiences
- Embed equality and inclusion throughout staff development, our curriculum and cocurricular provision

To achieve our aims we will:

- Involve, where reasonably practicable, all members of the school community in the development, review, evaluation, and impact assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures

* Adopt and foster an inclusive culture and ethos where every pupil is recognised and respected enabling them to thrive vocationally and academically.

- Promote openness at all stages of engagement of the admissions and recruitment processes, recognising that early awareness of need leads to better provision and arrangements

- Help to overcome any potential barriers to learning by providing for students' diverse needs and learning styles including any learning or pastoral support needs and/or disabilities a student may have

- Offer a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum that provides equal opportunity for all students, irrespective of difference, to maximise their potential and thrive

- Ensure the wider school curriculum promotes and celebrates equality and diversity, remaining aware of a hidden curriculum and agenda and subjects that may suggest unconscious gender bias

- Operate a clear zero tolerance policy towards abusive or discriminatory behaviour

- Actively challenge stereotyping, bias and discrimination within all aspects of school life and literature, ensuring we learn from these experiences

* We will work in partnership with staff, families and the community to establish, promote and disseminate inclusive practise and help tackle discrimination recognising inclusion cannot be realised without involvement of all members of the school community.

- Work in partnership with staff, families and the wider community to establish, promote and disseminate inclusive practice and help tackle discrimination, recognising that inclusion cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the school community.

The Legal Framework Discrimination can take the following forms, including:

- Direct Discrimination - This occurs where a person is treated less favourably than others because of their (or a family member's) actual or perceived protected characteristic.
- Indirect Discrimination - This occurs by applying a provision, criterion or practice, which disadvantages people on the grounds of a protected characteristic, and which cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- Victimization - This occurs where an individual has exercised their rights under equality legislation (or has indicated that they intend to do so) and is treated less favourably as a direct result. It applies equally to a person who is supporting (or indicates that they intend to support) another person who is exercising their rights under the legislation.
- Harassment – This is defined as unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose OR effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating a hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.
 - Disability Discrimination - This includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.
- Discrimination by association – This includes treating a person less favourably because they are linked or associated with a protected characteristic.

Responsibilities

It is the Trustees' responsibility to:

- Ensure that the school's policies and procedures are monitored in light of this policy and the school's wider equality obligations
 - From time to time be involved alongside directors in dealing with serious breaches of this policy.

It is the Senior Management Teams responsibility to:

- Ensure effective implementation of this policy and its procedures
- Ensure that all staff are sufficiently aware and trained within equality & diversity
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice within the school, be it by staff, students, parents or visitors
- Have procedures in place to deal effectively with any reported incidents of discrimination, victimization or harassment
- Ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, this policy.
- Monitor school data to identify where bias may be playing a role in decisions or outcomes, a number of areas will be routinely monitored, including: admissions data,

bursary applications, recruitment data, examination results and post 16 destinations. This will be done within the GDPR and confidentiality of personal information protocols and will be reported in such a way that does not identify any individuals.

It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- Positively role model inclusive and anti-discriminatory behaviour, including a spirit of reflection and willingness to be open to challenge.
- Support and participate in any measures introduced to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and report any issues associated with equality and diversity in accordance with this policy
- Be alert to and actively challenge any forms of discrimination, victimization, harassment or bullying, including banter
- Promote an inclusive curriculum, identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the school's culture, taking all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation from taking place
- Make effective and reasonable adjustments where appropriate to meet the individual needs of staff, students and visitors. The school expects staff to commit to broadening their knowledge, confidence and inclusive behaviour by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources. It is important to appreciate that an employee is personally responsible for their own acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation carried out during their employment, whether or not the employer is also liable. Any attempt to instruct, cause or induce another person to discriminate, harass or victimise a third person will also amount to unlawful discrimination and any employee doing so will be subject to disciplinary action.

It is the responsibility of a students to:

- Positively promote inclusive and anti-discriminatory behaviour, including a willingness to reflect on attitudes and/or behaviours and be open to challenge.
- Support any measures introduced by the school to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and report any issues associated with equality and diversity to their teacher, directors or DSL.
- Be alert to and actively challenge any forms of discrimination, victimization, harassment or bullying, including banter. This includes identifying and using the school's reporting systems to challenge bias and stereotype within the curriculum and in the school's culture, taking all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation from taking place. These responsibilities run alongside the school's behaviour expectations.

The school places a high premium on:

- Respect for Self
- Respect for Others

- Respect for our Environment and our Community. This is fundamental to all that goes on at LVBS. Any actions, words or attitudes which show a lack of respect for others will be taken very seriously. Instances of discrimination and bullying will be dealt with firmly and sensitively.

We require students to avoid any form of unfair bias, discrimination and unkindness to another member of the community. We also require anyone made aware of any such behaviour to report it. Incidents are recorded on MyConcern. The school's approach to wellbeing means we aim to educate, help and support Students to understand their responsibility towards others, feel heard and valued and learn from their experiences. Bullying and discrimination will not be tolerated. Anyone who continues to bully or discriminate against others will have their place at the school reviewed by the directors and trustees.

Inclusion within the life of the school.

No student or staff member should be made to feel uncomfortable because they differ from the majority, e.g. in ethnic or social background, in terms of academic ability, neurodiversity, being from financial disadvantage, having English as an additional language or a special educational need and/or disability. The principles of equality and diversity are embedded in our academic, dance and wider curriculum.

The curriculum will aim to:

- Normalise diversity in the content and examples utilised
- Stress the contribution and achievements of all kinds of individuals and cultures, actively challenging bias and stereotyping
- Reinforce the importance of embracing difference and of equality of opportunity as a desirable aim
- Provide inclusive and accessible activities, including educational trips and co-curricular provision. Resources and activities should be monitored for possible bias, reinforcing stereotypes and ethnocentric elements.

Pastoral Care

The school's pastoral care system promotes respect and understanding of ourselves and others, acknowledging that our community is strengthened by diversity. Wellbeing, social cohesion, dance and academic resilience underpin the sense of belonging and acceptance our students need to overcome challenges effectively and develop a strong sense of self. Whilst all staff are responsible for the pastoral care of our students the DSL and directors have a duty to ensure equality, diversity and inclusive practice are upheld.

Senior Management should aim to:

- Acknowledge and celebrate the positive impact of diversity within the school.
- Deliver dedicated assemblies and class time activities stressing the school's shared values of inclusion, tolerance, kindness, care and unconditional respect for members of the school and wider community.

- Actively challenge and report bias and stereotyping during tutor time and student interaction outside the classroom.
- Encourage students to celebrate their unique contribution to the school through their class monitors or head girl and boy.
- Understand the impact of discrimination on student wellbeing and mental health, remaining alert to our own bias and the impact of power dynamics between dominant and minority groups. This includes having an awareness of how intersectionality (understanding how aspects of a person's social and political identities
- Provide inclusive and accessible support systems, ensuring that access to counselling, mentoring and external agencies reflect the diversity within our community.
- Work with parents regarding factors such as caring responsibilities, disability, gender reassignment and family relationships to reduce barriers to learning and support equality of opportunity.
- Encourage students to develop their own voice.

The school will endeavour to:

- enhance and develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential, irrespective of background or employment status
- promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution made by our staff, trustees, parents, students and the wider community
- Equip employees with the skills to provide personal and organisational solutions to discriminatory practices and behaviour and to promote inclusive behaviour generally.
- Ensure that employees are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for their own learning and development in the context of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy.
- Respond to changing and emerging training needs, providing opportunities for reflection, feedback and shared learning. Use of The National College to promote learning.
- Ensure that the everyday look and feel of the school reflects our diverse student body.
- Ensure that all visitors to the school whether in a teaching role or as visitors, contractors or casual users of school premises will be expected to act in accordance with the principles of the Equality and Diversity Policy. All members of the school community will be expected to act in accordance with the principles of this policy when in contact with others, outside the school.
- Staff supervising visitors or on educational visits may need to support students with bias encountered in the wider society, reporting this through our pastoral system.

Admissions

- The school treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy and the School's Admissions Policy. The school accepts applications from, and admits, students irrespective of any protected characteristic.
- Parents must inform the school when completing the registration form of any special circumstances affecting their child (such as learning support needs) which may affect the child's ability to fully participate in the education or dance provided by the school.
- The school acknowledges its responsibility to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage, for example by taking positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting a group because of a protected characteristic. For example, taking positive action to support students if there is evidence that they are being disproportionately subjected to sexual harassment or stricter behaviour or effort expectations for a

Raising Concerns

- The school will seek to provide a supportive environment for those who believe they have been subjected to discrimination and/or harassment. Students should report discrimination through the DSL or directors. Staff should report discrimination to the directors of trustees
- Any member of the school community who harasses another on the grounds of any protected characteristic will be subject to the school's disciplinary measures in accordance with the school's Staff Code of Conduct.
- If parents or visitors feel this policy has been breached, they should raise their concern with the directors.
- All breaches of the policy will be rigorously followed up using the appropriate procedures and reported to the School's Senior Management Team. We recognise that students need to learn from mistakes to develop a strong sense of self and an awareness of how their behaviour impacts others. Ill-considered, rather than deliberate, incidents should therefore be dealt with immediately and informally, where possible taking the opportunity for a teaching discussion. These should all be reported through the DSL. Intentional and/or sustained incidents should be reported directly to the DSL and directors.

Staff Recruitment

The School is committed to:

- ensuring that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position.
- increasing the ethnic diversity of the teaching staff, and increasing the diversity of all staff, with a focus on underrepresented groups – such as the ethnic diversity of staff and the number of women in senior roles

- Recognising that diversity broadens people's range of role models, helps others overcome unconscious bias and improves organisational change. Application and recruitment processes will be monitored to actively target a more diverse applicant.

This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis to evaluate its effectiveness and ensure appropriate steps can be taken to eliminate discrimination.

This policy document will be reviewed and publicised, at least annually and, if necessary, more frequently in response to any significant incidents or new developments in national, local and organisational policy, guidance and practice.

Policy written by Kerry Williams – Head of Pastoral Care and Safeguarding
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