

# **Shockout Arts**

## **Health & Safety**

### **Safe Dance Practice**

Shockout aspires to:

- Excellence in dance performance
- Health and effective dance training/teaching
- Fit, healthy, confident, accomplished dancers providing positive role models for future generations.
- Responsible employment taking into account dance specific industry recommendations in addition to statutory health and safety requirements.
- Continuing professional development.

All dancers have a right to:

- Be taught safely and effectively by an appropriately qualified and experienced Dance Lecturer/Choreographer.
- Education in and access to up-to-date information on healthy dance practice, injury prevention and dance science.
- Access to affordable and fit for purpose medical healthcare and dance science services.
- Safe and appropriate spaces to work in.
- A working environment that is conducive to psychological as well as physical health in order to meet the performance demands of the dancer.

### **Dance Education and Training**

The will include the following for Students.

- A basic introduction to warming up and cooling down, nutrition and applied anatomy (including the growth spurt), demonstrated through teaching.
- Clarity from the dance lecturer for students on why these are important and how to apply to healthy dance practice (see attached table).
- Signposts to further information for students.
- Education in how the interrelated areas of anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, psychology and nutrition apply to dance practice and performance.
- Essential information on injury and management as outlined in this document.

- Essential information on the growth spurt.
- Dance spaces – what the requirements for safe and optimal dance (see attached) practice are and how to mitigate risk in circumstances that aren't ideal.

### **Dance Lecturers/Choreographers**

To include the above and the following:

- The application of the above in and through the teaching of dance.
- Basic first aid and the contents of a dancer's first aid box.
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on the above subjects to be undertaken at least every 6 months.
- Being a member of appropriate network/organisation that will provide access to up to date information and news of development in the field.

Professional dancers, choreographers, dance lecturers and guest teachers will keep themselves regularly updated on the latest best practice for dancers' health, wellbeing and performance appropriate to their position.

Students to ensure they have:

- Regular assessment – musculoskeletal, health, fitness, - to monitor for improvements/problem areas, helping to assess effectiveness of the training for that individual.
- Supplementary training provided as needed and recommended for individuals following individual assessments.
- Access to (at minimum) a dance knowledgeable physiotherapist, pilates, (or other body conditioning practitioner) nutritionist and counsellor as well as registration with a local GP.
- Longitudinal monitoring of injury for analysis in order to spot trends, mitigate identified causes of injury and inform resource provision and training.
- Access to an appropriate medical insurance scheme.

## **Injury Prevention and Management**

1. Dance Lecturers/Choreographers/Guest Teachers to ensure that appropriate warm up is performed at the beginning of each class.
2. Ensure that stretching is emphasised to students after each class
3. Lean exercises/activities are performed in a smooth, careful manner
4. Increase in amount of training is gradual to avoid any stress fractures
5. Any student injured do not take place in any dance classes until they are fully recovered from injury.
6. Dance Lecturer/Choreographers/Guest Teachers to be aware of any student who will be going through the growth spurt.

Also ensure that students are fully aware of Safe Dance Practices as per attached.

## **Working Environment**

The dance studio within Church Street premises requirements offer safe and optimal dance practice are:

- Clean, suitably sprung floor with the appropriate surface for the relevant classes.
- High ceiling to allow jumping, leaping and lifting without obstruction.
- Enough space so that when limbs are outstretched each dancer has enough personal space not to come into contact with an obstruction/fellow dancer.
- Natural lighting (for regularly used rehearsal spaces and studios).
- Well ventilated studios, air conditioning to be used as and when required.
- Heating able to be maintained at a comfortable 21c not going below 18c

## Health & Safety & Safe Dance Practice for Students

All students whilst participating in dance and movement should feel comfortable, safe and be able to participate without risk or injury.

- **Medical Form** - This form should be completed at audition stage by all students before commencement of any courses at Shockout Arts Dance School.
- **Fit to Dance?** It is always advisable to consult your doctor before beginning a new dance course and essential if you have a pre-existing health problem.
- **Clothing** - make sure that your clothing is comfortable and not restrictive ie. Leggings or stretchy trousers. Please wear appropriate soft soled footwear for the relevant dance class. A notepad is useful for your own notes.
- **Warm up** – At the beginning of the day all students warm up at 8.30 am. The importance of a warm up to prepare the body for physical exertion this cannot be emphasised enough.
- **Cool Down** – Each dance class should also include a cool down when the lesson ends. The cool down is as important as the warm up to prevent you suffering muscle pain, strain or injury.
- **Stretching** – This cannot be emphasised enough stretch, stretch, stretch after a full day of dancing. You can stretch before you go to bed if you have to!!
- **Self Awareness** – You are encouraged to pay attention to how your body feels when moving. You do not need to stress and strain to attain perfect technique as this can cause injury. Relax and maintain good posture and spend plenty of time practicing! Students should learn to listen to their own bodies and interpret its signs in order to avoid pushing themselves too far.
- **Posture affects** your breathing and it can make or break your dance; it affects how your body feels, moves and looks and good posture is essential to ensure non injury. You will be constantly reminded to check your posture and will be corrected if necessary.
- **Technique** – Technical knowledge and correct application of a movement is essential to avoid injury. You will be observed and corrected if necessary. Further breakdown and advice may be given. If you are not sure please ask!
- **Alignment** – The proper body alignment for dancing is crucial. The head, neck, chest and abdomen should be in alignment so that the weight is even and centred, with minimum of effort and strain on muscles and ligaments.
- **It is important** to feel grounded and centred when you begin, remember to bring down your energy and centre yourself in your lower belly/pelvis area, tying a scarf around your hips will help to focus on that area. Maintain even breathing.
- **Take care of yourself** and remember that pain is not progress but can often be a warning sign that the body has gone too far. If you are struggling, ask for help, take time to stop and observe you can still learn whilst watching. Stop at once if you feel dizzy or have any pain.
- **Be responsible.** Please show respect to your teacher and the other members of your class. If you arrive late/leave early/sit out for long periods; you shall be responsible for warming up/cooling down and stretching to avoid injury.
- **Nutrition** – It is important that you had a balanced nutritious diet and drink plenty of water daily.
- – ensure all your personal belongings and outdoor clothing are stored in a safe way to avoid hazards. Eg. Hallways around the building, changing rooms.
- If you are pregnant or have any health issues please inform your dance teacher, as this will not stop you participating, but there are precautions that you should be aware of.
- Finally - There is a lot to take in and think about just remember when taking part in classes and workshops that everybody learns at their own pace and every body is different. You will find some of the moves easier to do than others this is normal. It is always best if you want to become a



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A Step above the rest

professional dancer you have to train, practice and listen. As we say here at Shockout Train Insane or Remain the Same!

- *Relax, enjoy the dance course and have fun at the same time* 😊