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Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company Child Protection Policy and Procedures

This document applies to all employees and freelance production personal of Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company

December 2017

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INTRODUCTION

This policy establishes the responsibilities of all employees, and freelance staff hired by Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company with regard to the protection of children and young people when working with, or when brought into contact with, children and young people.

In the context of child protection, children and young person refers to anyone under-18 years of age. For the purposes of this policy young persons can be regarded as children under-18 years of age.

Given the nature of our industry and the interaction which takes place with various people such as staff, members of the public, contractors, freelancers, independent companies and visitors these guidelines will apply to all concerned.

While it is not possible to legislate for every eventuality in this policy, Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company staff who engage with our members should be aware that the spirit of the policy as set out in Section 1 Child Protection Policy Statement as well as the precise wording of the detailed processes and procedures should be observed at all times.

SECTION 1 – CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company is committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children and young people. It is central to the philosophy of Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company that all children and young people who are members are unconditionally respected and kept safe from harm. It is important to ensure that normal practices and behaviour within our organisation actively promote the delivery of a safe engaging environment, where the welfare of the child/young person is paramount. These guidelines assist Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company in adhering to the principles as set out in the “Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children”, as issued by the Department of Health & Children and apply to all of staff and freelance personal. The guiding principles are:

- The welfare of the child or young person is the paramount consideration and should be at the heart of all productions that engage our members
- All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to protection from harm or abuse
- It is the responsibility of our company to promote the protection of children and young people, and to comply with this policy.

Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company undertake to:

- Treat children and young people with care, respect and dignity
- Employ appropriate people to be in direct contact with and in supervisory roles over children and young people and to ensure that these people are Garda Vetted
 - A person would be deemed inappropriate to work with the company if a previous history of child abuse (emotional, physical or sexual) came to light or any other criminal history which may mean that person could pose a threat to the welfare of children or young people
- Recognise that those working in Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company will be perceived by children and young people as trusted persons and therefore, all must comply with this policy
- Ensure that all staff know who the Designated Liaison Person (Company Manager) is and that they can get further information and discuss any concerns in confidence
- Ensure that the Designated Liaison person has the correct training and resources available to them
- Ensure communication with children and young people is open and clear
- Assess the risks posed to children when undertaking activities. This process must form part of the overall production risk assessment
- Ensure ALL Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company staff avoid unnecessary physical contact with children and young people except for reasons of health and safety, or performance under supervision
- Respond to any allegations appropriately and implement a disciplinary process as appropriate

Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company will review this policy every two years based on Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company’s experience of its operation and in light of any legislative changes which arise in the area of Child Protection.

SECTION 2 – REX LEVITATES DANCE CO CLG T/A LIZ ROCHE COMPANY'S CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

In order to ensure mutual protection, Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company staff and other freelance personal working with Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company need to be familiar with the following code. Where Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company, engage other companies, their senior managers must ensure that the behavioural requirements of this policy are communicated to, and clearly understood by those working with children.

Code of Behaviour: Child Centred Approach

- Treat all children and young people equally with respect for their age and individuality
- Use age appropriate language (physical and verbal) and temper language to the needs and sensitivity of the children present
- Respect a child's/ young person's personal space (i.e. going to the toilet or dressing). In the absence of a chaperone, tasks of a personal nature should only be carried out for a young child in an emergency or accident situation
- Ensure it is acceptable to a distressed or hurt child if offering physical comfort
- Those staff with responsibility for children on the day must identify themselves to the children at the earliest time.

Code of Behaviour: Good Practice

- Do not give any medication to a child under any circumstances, unless approved by parent or guardian in advance in writing
- Have emergency procedures in place and make sure all staff are aware of these
- Report/ record any incidents and accidents
- Keep parents/ guardians/ teachers informed of any issues that concern their children
- Ensure proper supervision
- Do not let a problem get out of control
- Physical contact when dancing should always be done with the child's welfare and best interest as a priority. These activities should never be done one on one but always in the presence of a supervisor. The young person should be consulted and listened to constantly and if any discomfort is raised the contact should stop.

Code of Behaviour: Inappropriate Behaviour

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children/ young people
- Do not use/ allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/ or verbal language
- Avoid the use of bad, foul or age inappropriate language
- Do not single out a particular child/ young person (for unfair favouritism, criticism or ridicule)
- Do not allow/ engage in unnecessary physical contact
- Do not hit or physically chastise children/ young people
- Do not socialise inappropriately with children/young people (e.g. outside of structured organisational activities).

Code of Behaviour: Health and Safety on Stage

A full health and safety risk assessment will be completed before bringing any child onto a location or stage. Where a child or young person is involved, the risk assessment must take account of their particular vulnerabilities, which will include child protection.

The risk assessment should also set out what arrangements are in place for their care and supervision, e.g. by a school, parent, guardian or chaperone and how these arrangements will be communicated to the appropriate parties. You will always work within statutory hours allowed for working with children; tutoring will be provided in line with current legislation as required. Particular attention will be given to scheduling in regular rest breaks and ensuring that refreshments are provided.

Producer should always receive a consent form from the parent / Guardian of the minor prior to the minor's commencement on stage. See Appendix I

Producers, staff and production staff agree to the following:

- Endeavour to provide, where reasonable clothing and facilities appropriate to the conditions involved for performing or filming,
- Not to leave children unattended/ unsupervised
- Manage any dangerous materials
- Provide a safe environment
- Be aware of accident procedure and follow accordingly
- Be aware of evacuation/ access/ egress procedures.

Code of Behaviour: Duty of Care

Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company's primary responsibility is to ensure the safety, health and welfare of children that we may come into contact with while carrying out our business.

Where incidents or difficulties arise with these relationships, we, our staff and contractors undertake to:

- Talk to the child and find out what the problem is
- Suggest methods to deepen their engagement in the activity
- If there is no improvement in the behaviour and disruption to the rehearsal or performance is likely to continue, take the child from the rehearsal area/ auditorium/ studio (ensuring some staff members are present) while their parent/ guardian is asked to collect the child
- Ensure that the child is adequately occupied or comforted if in distress.

Misconduct or inappropriate behaviour:

In the case of an observed incident of the above types of behaviour involving a child, staff are asked to respond as follows:

- Contact the parent / guardian to inform him or her about the behaviour
- Separate the children the instant the behaviour has been observed
- The alleged perpetrator of the behaviour may be asked to explain his/ her actions and to apologise where appropriate
- Observe further interactions between the parties involved

- Give the victim an opportunity to talk about the incident to a member of staff if s/he wants to

For protection of all parties, and in all cases where a child's behaviour is described as singular and disruptive, ensure that a written report is completed by the senior manager present.

- More than one staff member must be present when singular or out of the ordinary behaviour is being dealt with
- The senior manager present must write a report of the incident outlining in detail a description of the incident, the circumstances, the reasons, and people involved, and any resolution.
- In all cases, if there is an event which is out of the ordinary, which may have a negative effect on a child, any parent/guardian collecting the child must be informed of the event and any action/s taken.

SECTION 3 - CHILD WELFARE: TRANSPORT AND ATTENDING ON SITE

3.1 Transport

Children and young person's participating in production (and their accompanied parent, teacher or guardian) will report to their production contact at a pre-arranged location. Depending on the nature of the engagement, during their time on-site children will be managed and supervised in line with Section 3.2 below. The following principles must be observed:

- Where children and young persons are being transported on behalf of Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company they must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, chaperone or teacher. When on a bus every child must wear a seat belt. Kneeling up on a seat to chat to the person behind, or standing or moving around the bus, is not allowed
- It is not permitted to transport one or a number of unaccompanied children/ young persons in a taxi
- Avoid giving a lift to a child/ young person. In exceptional circumstances, if this is required, make sure that the parent/ guardian is informed in advance and that a child seat is available where required. Another individual must accompany you if you are transporting a single child or young person.
- At no time should a child be left alone or unattended while waiting for transportation or after being transported from the location to the base.

3.2 On site at premises

- Irrespective of the nature of the visit to stage/location, as a general rule, the following procedures should be observed while a child or young person is on stage/location
- Avoid private interaction on your own with a child. If this is not possible then it should be in an open environment with the full knowledge and consent of parents/ guardians/ teachers
- Maintain awareness around language and comments made. If you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, then try to address in a sensitive manner as soon as possible
- Create an atmosphere of trust and provide children with an opportunity to report cases of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour
- Boundaries on behaviour and related sanctions will be discussed with children/ young people and parents/ volunteers
- Avoid the occurrence of rough physical games among children
- Be aware of a child/ young person's time limitations (e.g. school/ exams) when scheduling rehearsals/activities
- Be apprised of the necessary medical information (information or limitations which could arise from same)
- Respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race and sexual orientation
- Provide appropriate training for staff, and staff engaged on our behalf

3.2.1 Children as audience participants

- Children attending as part of such an audience should be accompanied by a parent, guardian, teacher or other responsible adult. Tickets for audiences attending such shows should preferably be distributed through schools, youth clubs, etc., or at the request of parents or guardians. Tickets should not normally be issued on a casual basis to children.
- Children should not normally be admitted into the audience for pieces that are not child appropriate.

Chaperones

Where it is not possible for a child's parent or guardian to accompany the child while on the stage/location, the production will appoint a chaperone who will be a suitable and competent person by virtue of their experience of such work, and the production's knowledge of their abilities and character

- The chaperone will supervise the welfare and discipline of the child on the stage/location at all stages during the production process, up to and including the point at which the child is brought to a pre-arranged meeting point to be transported from the stage/location
- The chaperone will normally be a member of the production team whose role on the day will be to look after the children involved in the relevant production. The chaperone may change within the course of the day depending on availability. Directors, presenters, researchers, etc. cannot do this work in addition to their own work
- The chaperone will provide the child with food and drink. Children should be offered nutritious and balanced meals, having due regard for any medical or dietary conditions
- Create appropriate break time or downtime within performances/rehearsals in line with recommended best practice.

SECTION 4 - REPORTING PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Process

It must be remembered that staff or production staff may be subjected to erroneous or malicious allegations. Therefore, any abuse allegation must be dealt with sensitively and with support. While the primary goal must be to protect the child, care must be taken to ensure that the employee is treated fairly. It is critical that a proportionate response is taken to each and every case that arises specifically because of the nature and type of abuse which could be the subject of the allegation.

The following applies to ALL staff and all freelance staff of Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company

As soon as an allegation has been made, these steps must be followed:

A senior staff member present will, as a matter of urgency, take any necessary protective measures to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk. These measures will be proportionate to the level of risk. The reporting staff member must make a written report to the Company Manager (Relevant Person) on the day of the incident.

That report is immediately sent on a confidential basis to the Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company Governing Body

Following consultation with the Governing body based on the content of the report, a decision to contact the regulatory authorities is made.

The first point of contact is Tusla

- The parent/ guardian collecting the child will be informed of the incident
- The Company Manager will follow up the allegation of abuse in consultation with the Governing body.
- In cases where there is prime facie evidence of a breach of these regulations against a staff member this will be dealt with in accordance with Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company Policy and Procedures and in line with the Children First Guidelines
- In order to ensure the integrity of this process the issue of confidentiality must be maintained for all of the parties concerned
- All records of whatever nature relating to any incident relating to this policy will be retained in a locked cabinet under the control of the Company Manager.

Dealing with a Disclosure

If a member of staff has a concern for the Health, Safety or Welfare of a child they are duty bound to report that concern to the company manager. In circumstances where a child discloses a case of abuse to a staff member s/he should strive to act as follows:

- Stay calm, and do not panic or show distaste or shock
- Listen to the child sympathetically
- Reassure the child
- Aim to ensure that you are witnessed speaking to the child, but cannot be overheard

- Reassure the child that s/he was right to tell and is not to blame
- Not be judgmental
- Not speculate or make assumptions
- Not make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- Not make promises to the child
- Be honest with the child about what we can and cannot do. Tell them that we cannot keep secrets and inform them what will happen next
- Not confront the individual who is alleged to be responsible
- As soon as we have finished talking to the child, make a detailed written note of all that was said and pass the information on as soon as possible to the Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company Relevant Person (Company Manager) where the decision for a referral to Tusla will be taken in consultation with the Board.

Dealing with a retrospective Disclosure

In circumstances where a child discloses a retrospective case of abuse to a staff member the same procedure applies as above. The same actions will be taken to avoid other children being exposed to potential abuse.

- As soon as we have finished talking to the child, make a detailed written note of all that was said and pass the information on as soon as possible to the Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company Relevant Person (Company Manager) where the decision for a referral to Tusla will be taken in consultation with the Board.

Reasonable Grounds for Concern

“Tusla should always be informed when you have reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. If you ignore what may be symptoms of abuse, it could result in ongoing harm to the child. It is not necessary for you to prove that abuse has occurred to report a concern to Tusla. All that is required is that you have reasonable grounds for concern. It is Tusla’s role to assess concerns that are reported to it. If you report a concern, you can be assured that your information will be carefully considered with any other information available and a child protection assessment will be carried out where sufficient risk is identified.

Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way
 Any concern about possible sexual abuse
 Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect
 A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused
 Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed
 An account from a person who saw the child being abused”

IF any LRC staff member permanent or casual has reasonable grounds for concern about the welfare of a child they should speak to the Designated Liaison Person (company manger) immediately.

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES FOR PERSONS ALLEGED TO HAVE BREACHED GUIDELINES

If you are accused of abuse, and subject to the procedures above, it is recommended that you observe the following points:

- Make notes of all your contacts/ actions with the child in question as soon as possible
- Seek access to advice on your own behalf

APPENDIX I - CONSENT FORM AND VITAL INFORMATION FOR MINORS

Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company will produce a consent form for each production and this consent form will include vital information about the minor which should be completed by all parents / legal guardians of minors.

This document should be received by the on-set co-ordinator of the minor prior to the commencement of the minor on-set. The document should be kept safely but in a way that it can be easily accessible by the co-ordinator if required.

This document contains the following:

- Contact number for both or nearest trusted relative
- Details of any medical conditions, or allergies, food or otherwise
- Specific written permission and instructions if any form of medical intervention is to be administered
- Name and contact details of their child's medical practitioner
- Date of birth
- Home address
- This document must be signed by a parent/ guardian

SECTION 1: About the Project

| | |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| Name of Project: | Date(s) of participation: |
|------------------|---------------------------|

SECTION 2: About the child

| | | | |
|----------|--|---------------|--|
| Name: | | | |
| Address: | | | |
| Tel No: | | Date of Birth | |

SECTION 3: About you

| | |
|--|--|
| Please state your relationship to the child: | |
| If you are not able to be present with the child during the course of the Project please nominate the person acting as loco parentis for your child. | |
| Name of person acting as loco parentis: | |
| Please state their relationship to the child: | |

SECTION 4: About the child's health

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------|---|-----------|---|----------------|---|
| Has the child EVER suffered from any of the following complaints? | | | | | | | |
| Asthma | Y <input type="checkbox"/> n <input type="checkbox"/> | Skin Complaints | y <input type="checkbox"/> n <input type="checkbox"/> | Allergies | y <input type="checkbox"/> n <input type="checkbox"/> | Heart problems | y <input type="checkbox"/> n <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Epilepsy | y <input type="checkbox"/> n <input type="checkbox"/> | Back Problems | y <input type="checkbox"/> n <input type="checkbox"/> | Migraines | y <input type="checkbox"/> n <input type="checkbox"/> | Phobias | y <input type="checkbox"/> n <input type="checkbox"/> |

If yes please give details:

Does the child have any specific requirements, e.g. sight, hearing dietary or other? If yes please detail:

Please describe any support requirements related to the health issues outlined above

If your child has a hearing impairment, please tell us how they like to be communicated with: lip reading, BSL or interpreter support?

Please describe any coping or calming techniques you use with your child in relation to health issues outlined above.

Is the child on any form of medication, if so what type and for what?

SECTION 5: About the child's doctor

| | | | |
|----------|--|--|--|
| Name: | | | |
| Address: | | | |
| Tel No: | | | |

Please sign below to confirm that the child is physically fit to participate in the project and that the above information is correct.

| | | |
|---------|-------------|-------|
| Signed: | Print Name: | Date: |
|---------|-------------|-------|

(Parent/guardian)

APPENDIX 2 - KEY PRINCIPLES AND DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE AS ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & CHILDREN 1999

Key Principle

“THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE” (Children First, 1.9 Principles of Best Practice in Child Protection)

It is important that everyone working, participating, volunteering or conducting Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company events is aware of the forms of Child Abuse that they may encounter, which is why Rex Levitates Dance Co CLG T/A Liz Roche Company includes the definitions in the main body of our Child Protection Policy Guide lines. Under the Children First Guide lines it is the responsibility and duty of everyone working and engaging with children to ensure that the protection and welfare of children is paramount. Therefore, the significance of understanding the following forms of abuse and the signs and symptoms is vital. If all our codes of behaviour, policies and procedures are constantly put into practice, the likelihood of children being vulnerable to abuse should not arise.

Definitions of Child Abuse (taken from Children First)

This can take any of the following forms:

1. Neglect
2. Emotional abuse
3. Physical abuse
4. Sexual abuse.

Neglect

Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse usually happens where there is a relationship between a parent/ guardian/ carer and a child rather than as a specific incident or incidents. Unless other forms of abuse are present it is usually not evident in physical signs or symptoms. Rather, it can manifest in the child's behaviour or physical functioning including 'anxious' attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental under achievement and uncooperative or hostile behaviour.

The threshold of significant harm is reached when interaction is predominantly abusive and becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/ guardian/ carer.

Examples of emotional abuse in children include:

- Imposition of negative attributes on children, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming
- Emotional unavailability by the child's parent/ guardian/ carer
- Unresponsiveness, inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of the child
- Premature imposition of responsibility on the child
- Unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the child's capacity to understand something or to behave and control him/herself in a certain way
- Under or over-protection of the child
- Use of unreasonably harsh discipline
- Exposure to domestic violence.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is characterised as any form of non-accidental injury, or injury as a result of wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child. Examples of physical abuse include:

- Physical Shaking of the child
- Use of excessive force in handling
- Deliberate or threatening behaviour
- Invading a child's personal space
- Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves the use of a child for gratification or sexual arousal by a person for themselves or others.

Examples of sexual abuse include:

- Exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child
- Intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification
- Sexual intercourse with a child
- Sexual exploitation of a child including exposing a child to sexually explicit material
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an under-age person

As far as is possible and consistent with the safety of the child, confidentiality will be respected where such suspicions are raised

APPENDIX 3 - USEFUL CONTACTS AND LINKS

Tusla, Child and Family Agency

General enquiries: Jan Perrin

Children First Information and Advice Officer,

Child and Family Agency, Block B, Civic Centre, Main St, Bray, Co Wicklow

Phone: (01) 2744245

Mobile: 086 3803926

E-mail: jan.perrin@tusla.ie

Reporting a Child Protection concern

Child and Family Agency, Bridge House, Cherry Orchard Hospital, Dublin 10

Phone: 076 6955749

Garda Vetting - 1890 488 488

Childline - 1800 666 666

Disability Federation of Ireland - 01 4547978

Children's Ombudsman - 1800 20 20 40

Liz Roche Company – 01 6794962

Designated Liaison Person and Relevant Person Moyra D'Arcy 087 2314183

Relevant Legislation and Guidelines

Children First: national guidelines for the protection and welfare of children

<https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-guidance-and-legislation/>

Information on all the relevant legislations is contained within this guidance

APPENDIX 4 - DUTIES OF A CHAPERONE

What is a chaperone?

A chaperone acts in loco parentis to the child or Children under his/her care when they are modelling, performing on stage, or taking part in a film production, radio or television program. A chaperone is expected to exercise the same care and control as a parent would with a view to securing a child's safety, health, comfort, kind treatment and moral view.

Who can apply to be a chaperone?

You need to have Garda Vetting and professional experience with minors, such as teachers, drama school teachers, crèche workers etc.

What are the duties of a chaperone?

- Your primary duty is to the care of the children. To do this you will need to get to know them well and be aware of their needs.
- Whilst on the set you must be alert to all health and safety issues. A chaperone is the key person to whom the child looks at for guidance, protections, safety, clarification & support.
- The chaperone shall be in charge of the child at all times, except when the child is in the charge of their parent or a tutor
- A chaperone shall be responsible for the proper care and control of the child, including the child's health, comfort, kind treatment and moral welfare.
- A chaperone is expected to exercise the care in which a parent might be reasonably expected to give. Except while they are in charge of an approved tutor or parent, children must be under the supervision of the chaperone at all times when at the place of performance. When at a film studio, the chaperone must keep a record of the times the child is on set.
- The chaperone must see the child has the right breaks for rest and meals, has suitable opportunities for recreation and is protected from stress, strain, bad weather, and any other conditions likely to harm him/her.
- A child must not perform when unwell, and if they are ill they should be sent home under proper escort. In the case of serious illness/accident the child should be sent to hospital and the parents informed immediately.