



# THE ROYAL BALLET SCHOOL

## **Policy for Sponsors regarding Access to Students**

The Royal Ballet School and its students benefit greatly from the generosity of many individuals, families, trusts and other organisations who agree to contribute financially to the training and welfare of certain students within the school. We welcome the interest shown in these students and are delighted to be able to provide a number of opportunities throughout the year for the Sponsor to be able to see these students in performance and to meet with them in less formal situations about the school.

### **Background**

The school has become increasingly aware through the development of its child protection policy, through child protection training undertaken by staff and through Government publications such as 'Every Child Matters' that there must be very close control over the access granted with our students regardless of the support provided by benefactors. It must also be said that this is a two way process and that certain benefactors have required some protection from the unwelcome demands placed on them by the sponsored student and/or their families. It is for these positive reasons that we felt it important to devise guidelines for Sponsors regarding appropriate access and communication with their Students and would ask that the following procedures are followed.

### **1. Contacting the Student**

The advice of child protection specialists is that there should be no direct contact with students by phone, text message or email. We therefore ask that any communication with a student is made via the School's Development and Publicity Office at the address below. We expect our students to keep Sponsors informed of their progress through letter or card and this would be our preferred method of communication. Sponsors are strongly discouraged from giving their own personal contact details to students and their parents

### **2. Offering Additional Assistance**

We ask that Sponsors refrain from making informal approaches to students offering additional assistance such as financing flights, summer schools or topping up their maintenance grants. Although this is greatly appreciated we would ask that any additional assistance is offered through the Development and Publicity Office at the School. Should the Sponsor be approached by the student or their parents for additional assistance they should immediately inform the School's Development and Publicity Office who will investigate and advise the Sponsor on an appropriate response.



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### **3. Presents and Other Gifts**

A number of Sponsors have in the past sent gifts to students at the school. Whilst we appreciate the sentiments behind such gifts they have occasionally been known to cause ill feeling from other students and sometimes created a situation where the student felt under pressure to reciprocate in some way. We are happy for token gifts, such as a card or flowers to be sent to students on their birthday or following a performance. Once again however these should be sent via the Development and Publicity Office

### **4. Entertaining Students**

The School's child protection policy dictates that Sponsors may not take students out from the School unless they have current Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance through The Royal Ballet School. Where there is CRB clearance, Sponsors may invite a student, with at least one friend (or parent or member of staff from the RBS), but this should be arranged through the Development and Publicity Office. The student should never attend the Sponsor's home alone and the Sponsor would also be advised to ensure that there is always another adult present at any meeting at their own home attended by students from the School. A similar protocol should be applied to taking students out for a meal or to the theatre. Once again such invitations should be made through the Development and Publicity Office and students must always be accompanied by a friend or a chaperone and Sponsors should where possible, also have another adult with them.

### **5. Transport**

Sponsors should never be alone in a car with one or more students.

### **6. Age Restrictions**

The School accepts that once a student becomes 18 they assume the status of an adult within the law and are responsible for taking their own decisions independently of their parents. However students aged 18 and above, who remain members of the School, are still the School's responsibility as they follow our system of training. We hope that Sponsors will be happy to comply with the above procedures whilst our students remain members of the Royal Ballet School and thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

#### **Development & Publicity Office:**

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*This document will be revised in line with changes in best practice and legislation. These changes will be notified to all concerned. Questions or comments should be directed to the appropriate member of the Senior Management Team.*