SAFE STAFFING POLICY

Policy Owner: Head Office
Governance Oversight: Grand Council
Applies to: Staff, examiners, Teacher Members, contractors, volunteers and partner organisations
Review Cycle: Annual or following legislative or operational change
Last updated: 9th February 2026

1. Purpose

International Performing Arts & Theatre Limited (I-PATH) is committed to ensuring that children and young people are supervised safely and appropriately during all activities delivered under the I-PATH name.

This policy sets out how I-PATH:

- ensures safe and appropriate staffing levels
- protects the welfare of children and young people
- supports safe delivery of education, examinations and events
- meets DfE safeguarding expectations and Ofqual requirements
- aligns staffing decisions with risk, context and learner needs

2. Scope

This policy applies to all activities involving children and young people, including:

- classes, lessons and rehearsals
- examinations and assessments
- workshops, masterclasses and intensives
- holiday clubs, camps and extended-day programmes
- trips, events and off-site activity

It applies whether activities are:

- face-to-face
- delivered in third-party venues
- delivered as part of a school or centre programme

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by and compliant with:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

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- Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Equality Act 2010
- Ofqual Handbook (learner protection, governance, risk management)

4. Core Principles

Safe staffing decisions are based on the following principles:

- **Child-centred** - safeguarding and wellbeing come first
- **Risk-based** - ratios and supervision reflect activity, age and need
- **Qualified supervision** - staff are competent and appropriate
- **No lone working** - children are not supervised by a single adult
- **Dynamic review** - staffing is adjusted where risks change

5. Staffing Ratios

5.1 Standard Ratio

The standard staffing ratio for I-PATH activities is:

1 suitably qualified and/or experienced adult per 15 children
with a minimum of 2 adults present at all times

This applies to all routine teaching, rehearsal and examination-related activity unless increased ratios are required.

5.2 Minimum Two-Adult Rule

At all times:

- at least two responsible adults must be present
- this applies regardless of group size
- this includes examinations, rehearsals and events

This rule supports safeguarding, supervision and emergency response.

6. Qualifications and Experience

All staff involved in supervising children must:

- be aged 18 or over
- have relevant experience appropriate to the activity
- be suitable to work with children and young people
- meet DBS requirements in line with the DBS Policy

Performing arts activities must be led or overseen by a suitably qualified and experienced practitioner.

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7. Increased Staffing Requirements (Special Circumstances)

Staffing levels will be increased where necessary, including (but not limited to):

7.1 Age and Dependency

- where 40% or more of participants are under 7, or
- where children have higher dependency or additional needs

7.2 Off-Site and Unfamiliar Environments

- trips
- temporary venues
- unfamiliar or higher-risk locations

7.3 Activity Risk

- physically demanding activity
- extended sessions
- performance-intensive programmes

7.4 Extended-Day Programmes

- extended-day activity may operate only where at least two adults are present at all times
- staffing levels must reflect fatigue, breaks and safeguarding needs

All increases are determined by Head Office following risk assessment.

8. Examinations and Assessments

For examinations:

- staffing arrangements must not compromise assessment integrity
- teachers may not act as sole supervisors
- examiners retain authority to pause or stop activity if staffing is inadequate
- concerns must be escalated immediately to Head Office

These requirements align with the Assessment, Online Examinations, and Safeguarding policies.

9. Supervision, Conduct and Safeguarding

All staff must:

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- maintain professional boundaries
- avoid lone working with children
- follow safeguarding reporting procedures
- act in accordance with the Code of Professional Standards

Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately.

10. Risk Assessment

- Safe staffing forms part of activity risk assessment
- risks are reviewed before and during activity
- staffing levels may be adjusted dynamically
- records are retained for audit purposes

11. Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- suspension or cancellation of activity
- withdrawal of centre or staff approval
- investigation under the Safeguarding, Health & Safety, or Sanctions policies

12. Governance and Review

This policy operates under the oversight of:

- Head Office
- the Examinations & Standards Committee (where assessments are involved)
- the Grand Council

It is reviewed:

- annually
- following legislative change
- following safeguarding incidents or near misses

13. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding Policy
- DBS Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Online Examinations Policy
- Risk Assessment Procedures

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- Governance Framework

14. Contact

For questions or concerns relating to safe staffing: info@i-path.org

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