

# English National Ballet School

## Absence and return to training (after Illness, Injury, Mental Health) Policy

### 1. Illnesses

#### 1.1 Exclusion from School

Students should not attend to the School if they are feeling unwell or if they can be infectious to other students.

Some relevant examples of infectious diseases that require absence or caution are:

- **Respiratory infections, including coronavirus:** Students should not attend if they have high temperature and they are unwell. Moreover, if they have a positive COVID-19 test, they should not attend to the ENBS for 5 days after the test.
- **Diarrhoea and vomiting:** Students can return 48hr after it has stopped
- **Athlete's foot:** Students should not be barefoot in the School (i.e. showers or studios), and should not share towels, socks or shoes with others.

A comprehensive list of illnesses can be found in the Health Protection in Children and Young People Settings document (HPECS) (See Appendix 1)

#### 1.2 Absence due to illness

Students are asked to email the night before or first thing in the morning when they are going to be absent, and each of the following days.

The School may request a sick note from the GP or other medical professional should the student be ill regularly or be a cause of concern. A Fit to dance certificate could also be requested.

### **1.3 Return to dance after illness**

In the case of significant illness and or if absent for longer than 5 days, the student will need to have a return to dance assessment with the Head of Healthcare / School Physiotherapist.

After this appointment, a plan will be made for the student to return to full schedule.

This plan will also be communicated with the relevant teachers.

This is to ensure that students do not return to full class too early and either get injured or develop post-viral fatigue.

In case of concerns or failure to progress as expected, the student will be referred to the School Sports Doctor/GP for evaluation and guidance.

## **2. Injury**

### **2.1 Injury procedure**

Students experiencing an injury while in the School or during term time should discuss this as soon as this happens with the School Physiotherapist. Students are also asked to proactively notify their teacher of their injury or problem.

After discussing your injury with the Head of Healthcare or School Physiotherapist, they will make a referral and arrange a medical appointment with the School Sports Doctor (or other relevant specialist), if appropriate.

Should the student have any concerns or wish to have a second opinion, this can be arranged after discussion with the Head of Healthcare (see Appendix 2 for Injury Procedure Chart).

In case student gets injured outside term time, for example during a Summer School, the student will notify the Head of Healthcare to enable liaison with the local doctor/physiotherapist.

## **2.2 Class modification**

When the student is still able to dance, the Head of Healthcare/School physiotherapist will discuss modifications with the student. They will also liaise with the tutors and teachers to bring appropriate modifications to the training and to the Schedule.

Should the student not be able to dance at all due to the injury, the School Physiotherapist will liaise with the tutors and Welfare officer to agree on a “lighter” schedule in the School when possible.

## **2.3 Return to Training**

In case of a significant injury (i.e. fracture) the School Physiotherapist will support the students in the progressive return to dance. Based on our experience and research, class load should be progressive, as a rapid return to dance post-injury can lead to a quick relapse.

The Head of Healthcare / School Physiotherapist will provide the student with a timeline to plan a safe return to dance and this will be shared with your teachers. As a general rule, after a long-term injury, the student will progress as per the protocol (see Appendix 3)

## **2.4 Absence due to injury**

In the rare circumstances where the student may be struggling to cope due to being unable to dance because of an injury, the Head of Healthcare will discuss the possibility of the student returning home for a short period of time. This is always done in consultation with 1) the student and the family, and 2) the ENBS team including Performance Psychologist, Artistic Director, Artistic Team, Head of Wellbeing and Safeguarding, and Head of studies, and any other relevant member of the medical team.

### **3. Mental Health**

The School understands that returning to training after a period of absence due to mental health can be difficult.

In case of absence due to mental health illness, the process will be the same as for other illnesses or injury. Therefore, the student will have an initial evaluation with the Head of Healthcare and Performance Psychologist, where a plan for progressive return will be made.

Moreover, the Head of Healthcare and the Performance Psychologist will be following up the student closely to evaluate progression and make sure they have adequate support.

### **Appendix 3**

**Stage 1** Barre (3-4 weeks)

**Stage 2** Centre Practice 1-2 weeks

**Stage 3** Allegro (2-4 weeks) with periodise jumping

**Stage 4a** Incorporate 1-2 classes per week (2-6 weeks)

**Stage 4b** Rehearsals (Summer Term)

**Stage 5** Performance/ Assessment participation