



Torbay Dance Festivals 2024

**Information for Dance school Principals. Please share with your teachers/parents/carers as relevant.**

### **New Marking Scheme**

As you may be aware, the Festival Federation has introduced a new marking scheme, to be brought in from Spring this year. We will be one of the first dance festivals to use it, but it will gradually be used by all Federation festivals. This is a revised scheme from the one used in the trial at last year's festival and has been developed from the feedback that was provided. The Federation has made the following statement to explain the rationale for the change.

Why have we launched a new marking scheme?

From Spring 2024, BIFF will be rolling out our new marking scheme. The aim of the new marking scheme is to ensure that the performer is at the centre of everything we do. The new scheme promotes BIFF's core values, Perform | Educate | Inspire, with a greater emphasis on the written and verbal teaching points. The new scheme supports the provision of positive and constructive feedback to all performers to build confidence and self-esteem

Marks range from 65 – 95+ with a range of 5 marks in each descriptor band. This allows differentiation and flexibility, especially in larger classes. All three sections of the festival (Music, Dance and Drama) will use the new scheme.

BAND	BAND DESCRIPTOR
Developing Optional Marks 65-69	A performance demonstrating an awareness of technical skills requiring more consistency & artistry
Progressing Optional Marks 70-74	A performance showing development of technique and/or communication and commitment
Merit Optional Marks 75-79	A Competent performance showing some artistic awareness and/or technical ability
Commended Optional Marks 80-84	A convincing performance technically & artistically with increasing stylistic & communication skills
Honours Optional Marks 85-89	An excellent performance demonstrating fluent technical and artistic skills with emerging individuality
Outstanding Optional Marks 90-94	An impressive performance technically and artistically displaying spontaneity & clear individuality



Exceptional  
Optional Marks 95-100

A superlative performance, displaying exceptional artistic individuality.

It is important to note that this is a totally new mark scheme and therefore cannot be compared to the previous scheme or marks that have been achieved in other festivals. The mark achieved by the dancer/s will be written on the certificate along with a sticker showing the band achieved.

In Torbay, Dance, Music and Drama will be using the same scheme and we will be using numbers within the categories. Certificates will have a sticker to relate to the category achieved by the Dancer. There will be no reference to other categories that could be achieved, but the bands and band descriptor will be printed on the back of the report sheet. Criteria will not be printed on report sheets or in the programme, but using the QR code in the programme will allow you to see further details.

### **Changing Arrangements for Novice and Open Festivals**

We are following the system introduced by All England Dance – that is communal changing in Stage Left with intimate changing taking place in the female toilet area, male toilet area and a screened family and non binary area. In the communal changing area, dancers are not expected to appear in anything less than they would be happy to be seen in on a beach. If intimate changing is required, this should happen in the intimate changing areas which will be clearly signed.

A quick change area in one of the backstage dressing rooms will be provided.

In the sessions where groups take place, some dance schools will be allocated a backstage dressing room for the group sections only. This will also be the space that dancers wait in with their dance school allocated supervisor when they are not on the stage in group sections. Please access the backstage changing via the foyer door as we are avoiding opening the stage door for safety reasons.

For every session there will be a changing room manager on duty in Stage Left to ensure that everyone is OK and support with any questions or concerns.

### **On Stage rehearsals**

In response to teacher requests, we are reintroducing the opportunity for teachers to book a 10 minute on stage rehearsal slot for any age of dancer. These will be unsupervised sessions at the risk of the people involved and will require cooperation between dance schools, with equitable sharing of time available, particularly if a festival session over runs. Slots can be booked with Carolynne at the certificate table from day 1 of the festival. The theatre sound system cannot be used to play music for these rehearsals.

On the basis that stage rehearsal is now possible, there will be no rehearsing in the changing area. Dancers are welcome to individually stretch/warm up, including vocal warm up, but rehearsal is not permitted.



Dancers who are unfamiliar with the stage can take a look in the mornings between 9.00am and 9.20am for the Open festival and 8.30am to 8.50am for the Novice festival.

## **Props**

All large props should be brought backstage at the start of the festival day and be removed by the end of the day on which they are being used. Please do not bring props before the day that they are required as they may cause a hazard and will be removed. Please note that no prop should weigh more than 10kg. No prop should make any mess on stage. The Committee reserves the right to refuse props that do not comply with these requirements.

We were concerned from a Health and Safety perspective last year about the number of large props left backstage which were a tripping hazard and are keen to avoid this in 2024. The theatre will be clearing all theatre items from the backstage space, so it should be clear and therefore minimise risk. We will remove props that are left hanging around.

## **People other than dancers backstage during the festival**

We will be adhering to our rules about who can be backstage. We would like teachers to encourage their pupils within their festival preparation to be prepared to come to the stage without a teacher or parent. Our chaperones are kind and experienced and we feel that it is a good learning experience for dancers to be able to wait side stage with the support of our chaperones who will accompany them from the changing area, wait with them backstage and return them to the changing area. Please ask parents/carers not to try to grab their dancer for photographs etc on the return route between stage and changing area. The terms of our child performance license state that children should be accompanied at all times and a chaperone cannot wait with a group of children whilst pictures are taken or hugs given to individuals. Parents/carers/teachers can meet their dancer back in the dressing room where there are some great backgrounds for pictures to be taken.

Our rules state that side stage and wings are out of bounds to all except performers in the current class and Festival personnel. Exceptions to this rule allowing one parent/carer/teacher to accompany a dancer side stage are

- Open section dancers aged 6 years and under
- Novice section dancers aged 9 years and under
- Open section dancers aged 7 and over or Novice section dancers aged 10 years and over where additional needs require them to be supported. All requests to accompany Open section dancers 7 and over and Novice section 10 and over must be made in writing to the Dance Committee Chair before the start of the festival
- Group sections, where it is requested that a teacher or other responsible adult accompanies their group to ensure appropriate discipline



Specific exceptions can be made on the day by agreement of the Dance Chair, Lead Chaperone or Changing room manager if an exceptional circumstance occurs.

Where a teacher/parent/carer accompanies a dancer side stage, we respectfully request that they stay away from the wings when the child they are accompanying is not dancing (apart from the Novice 6 and under sections as detailed below.)

As there are large numbers of dancers in the Novice 6 and under Ballet and Modern sections, we have grouped these dances together into clusters from each dance school. We envisage that teachers/parents/carers will wait in the backstage and dressing room area with the dancers they are accompanying and move side stage with all their dancers at the point when their dance school pupils are performing. This will allow dancers to watch their dance school friends and the teacher to watch all their pupils. When the dancers from that school have completed their dances, the teacher and pupils will move from side stage and allow another dance school to move forward. Our chaperones will manage this process and make sure everyone is ready to dance and ready to go on for adjudication.

### **Certificate and report Collection**

Certificates and reports may only be collected by dance teachers. If a teacher from your school is not going to be present at the festival, please email me on [karen@peninsulatraining.co.uk](mailto:karen@peninsulatraining.co.uk) to give authorization for dancers to collect their own certificates and reports.

### **Dancer behaviour**

Please remind your dancers and parents/carers that the role of the Committee and volunteers is to ensure the Festival runs smoothly and safely and complies with the Child Licensing agreements under which we operate. If a committee member or volunteer asks for something to happen, please remind your dancers and parents/carers that they need to respect this. We had some very noisy dancers last year who were not prepared to listen to chaperones asking them to keep the chatter volume down.

### **Music**



All music should have been uploaded before the festival. The Committee has gone to great pains to ensure that the correct music is in place for each dance, despite the huge amount of uploading that does not comply with the labeling requirement. We have also been asked to make a significant number of changes after music has been uploaded and despite best efforts, this is where errors can creep in. Please ask dancers to have all music backed up on a phone and to bring the correct cable to attach their phone to the Wifi as the emergency measure if their music does not play or is the incorrect track.

### **Groups**

Where dance schools have more than one group in a section, please let us know in which order you would like them to perform, so that we can ensure the correct music is played. We will be contacting you soon for the names of the dancers appearing in each group which is part of our licensing agreement. If we do not have this information before the start of the session, the group will not be able to perform.

### **Arriving at the theatre**

Please don't arrive at the Stage Left changing room more than an hour before the festival is due to start as you may well not be able to get in and the presence of sufficient committee/volunteer personnel cannot be assured. That means no arrival before 8.00am for the Novice Festival and no arrival before 8.30am for the Open Festival. Please use the door from the street to Stage Left if the main theatre doors are not open.

### **Cups and Medals**

In both the Novice and Open festivals, all dancers achieving first, second and third places in solo, duet, trio and quartet classes will receive medals. Teachers may purchase medals for groups at the Certificate table, where festival lanyards will also be on sale.

All Novice festival solo classes will have a cup but there will not be cups for Novice duet, trio and quartet classes.

Aggregate Cups will not be awarded at the Open Festival this year.

### **Festival Committee and Volunteers**

As well as our identifying lanyards, festival committee and volunteers will either be wearing a dark turquoise festival polo shirt or a dark turquoise sash, so that we can be easily seen. Please speak to us if there are things you would like to discuss.

### **Open Festival Championships**



Please see the information on the syllabus and in the programme regarding the classes that feed into the Championships.

Championship qualification is automatic for those coming 1<sup>st</sup> in the relevant classes (where there are 6 or more performers in the class). All other places are at the Adjudicator's discretion and may not always be awarded to the dancer with the next highest mark. The names of all dancers invited to Championships will be available by Saturday night and will be added to the Facebook page.

### **Photography and Filming**

We will have official photographers at both festivals, with images available to purchase via their websites. Please remind parents/carers that photography and filming is forbidden in the auditorium and may result in the disqualification of the dancer being filmed. Details of how to purchase photos will be available in the programme for the Open Festival and on posters for the Novice Festival and on the Facebook page for both. Please note that it is also not permitted to film the monitor in Stage Left.

### **Information from the Theatre**

Only water should be drunk in stage left. If other eating/drinking is required, please use the allocated space in the Prop Store.

No tap shoes on the floor in Stage Left. Dancers may cover tap shoes with warm up boots or crocs (not socks) to walk across the floor, otherwise tap shoes should be put on and taken off outside of Stage left

Please clear as much litter as possible to the black bin bags that will be provided

Please do not block toilets with wipes, excessive amounts of loo roll etc.

Food will be available in the bar and this area is only to be used for eating food purchased in the theatre. It is OK to eat own food in the table area in the Prop Store.

Please do not use the theatre parking at the rear for parking or drop off. This is reserved for theatre staff and the Committee.

**Please talk to us.....**



If you have questions about this information or other topics related to the festivals, please speak to us or email me on [karen@peninsulatraining.co.uk](mailto:karen@peninsulatraining.co.uk). We are always happy to receive your feedback.