Cheshire Dance

SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY AND ACTION PLAN

Reviewed February 2021
Next Review February 2022

Cheshire Dance celebrates and values the diversity of individuals. Equality underpins all of our work. We make space for, listen to, engage, learn and celebrate with participants, audiences, artists and other organisations to enable everyone's dancing voice to be nurtured and heard.

Create
Learn
Experience

Contents

1. Cheshire Dance Mission

2. Cheshire Dance Values

3. Policy Statement and Commitment

4. Aims and Objectives

5. Who the policy applies to

6. Rights under the policy

7. Responsibilities

8. Legislative Framework and National Context

9. Monitoring and Review

10. Current Position (inc. Covid 19)

11. Action Plan

1. Cheshire Dance Vision and Mission

To ensure everyone has access to dance and can benefit from its transformative power.

2. Cheshire Dance Values

Cheshire Dance understands and evaluates its understanding of excellence through a set of creative values. These values underpin our work as a creative dance agency, both in terms of our creative practice and how we work with independent artists.

We support dance artists, group leaders, performers, participants and audiences to develop their engagement in ways that are inspiring to them. In sharing our 6 values we emphasise learning, exploring and debating in the knowledge that they are open to interpretation, requiring dialogue as part of deepening understanding of person-centred practice, excellence and diversity.

Awareness
Of self and others, both physical and emotional as well as the space, environment and context

Flexibility
Adapting to others needs and aspirations, the environment and changing circumstances

Authenticity
True to our own unique way of moving, encouraging people to be themselves

Diversity
Celebrating difference as a source of creativity

Enquiry
Forever curious, exploring boundaries, open to new ideas and challenges

Ownership
Developing belonging and personal/group progression

3. Policy Statement and Commitment

Cheshire Dance celebrates and values the diversity of individuals and equality underpins all of our work. Everyone working on behalf of Cheshire Dance has a duty of care to the public, employees and themselves.

Cheshire Dance is committed to:-

- Providing a fair, supportive and discriminatory-free environment that promotes equity of opportunity and values diversity.
- Championing access for all people to the arts as practitioners, participants and audience members.
- Providing services which embrace diversity and which promote equity of opportunity.
- Creating an environment where all staff, artists, customers, suppliers and stakeholders are treated with respect and dignity and valued for who they are and the contribution they make to the organisation and their community.
- Making diversity a driver of creativity and artistic practice

The successful implementation of this Single Equality Policy is dependent upon its integration into other policies and procedures', therefore ensuring good practice is threaded throughout the management of the organisation and its artistic programme.

4. Aims and Objectives of this Policy

This Policy aims to:-

- Support Let's Create in particular the Investment Principle Inclusivity & Relevance, including the Creative Case for Diversity
- Promote equality of opportunity for all and actively oppose and eliminate all forms of unfair and unlawful discrimination, bullying and harassment.
- Ensure the commitment in this policy is reinforced by our Values of Creative Practice and is embedded in our day to day working practices.
- Remove any unfair or discriminatory practices within the company and learn from complaints.
- Actively encourage a full contribution from all communities in which we operate by promoting good relations between different groups in those communities.
- Provide a service that does not discriminate against its staff, artists, customers, suppliers and stakeholders in any means by which they access the services and goods supplied by us.
- Identify, as early as possible, any individual requirements that may need to be met in order for our artists, customers and stakeholders to fully access our services and to be responsive to changing needs and requirements.
- Provide clear, meaningful information about what we do and how we do it, to everyone engaged with Cheshire Dance in the way that best suits their individual needs.
- Celebrate our similarities and diversity.
- Ensure that no employee or job applicant is placed at a disadvantage by

requirements or conditions that cannot be objectively justified. See Employment Policy.

- Ensure that recruitment, promotion, training, development, assessment benefits, pay, terms and conditions of employment, redundancy and dismissals are determined on the basis of capability, qualifications, experience, skills and productivity. See Employment Policy.
- Actively encourage our freelancers and partners to develop and implement positive equal opportunities and diversity policies, practices and procedures - emphasised through line management and CPD provision.
- Create a work culture which values diversity, inclusiveness and respect and empowers our employees to reflect those values in their dealings with artists, customers and all other stakeholders.
- To ensure Cheshire Dance maintains an artistic programme that consists of delivery of dance in a broad range of different contexts throughout Cheshire and beyond and well as the delivery of a regional / national CPD programme by:-
    - Ensuring the company identifies and seeks to address issues of inequality of opportunity or lack of diversity. We aim to ensure at least 70% of delivery meets an identified inequality need as identified by Arts Council England's Protected Characteristics and Creative Case for Diversity.
    - Actively encouraging integration where appropriate, but doing so only having ensured a safe environment.
    - Ensuring inclusive practice and a diverse range of artists are involved in our CPD and artist development programme.
    - Promoting a diverse range of dance forms across our programme.
    - Taking positive action towards supporting and promoting the artistic voices of those with an identified inequality need through our artistic programme
    - Develop specific collaborative projects with partners to include artists from protected characteristics group across all strands of our programme, including on our Board, those we employ, engage in CPD Artist Development and support in volunteering.

5. Who the policy applies to

Under the Equality Act 2010 the relevant protected characteristics are:
Age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

This policy specifically relates to our staff, artists, participants, audiences, partners, suppliers and other stakeholders.

For the avoidance of doubt staff includes:-

- Permanent and temporary employees
- Freelancers, contracted artists and other specialists
- Volunteers

6. Rights under this policy

This policy provides many rights for staff, artists, participants, audiences, partners, suppliers and other stakeholders:-

- The right to be treated fairly at all times with respect and consideration in observing their religious and cultural traditions, as well as religious and cultural practices.
- The right to participate in the activities of Cheshire Dance and achieve their full potential.
- The right to receive full support from Cheshire Dance should they need to raise any concerns or challenge any unacceptable behaviour.
- The right to challenge and remove any unfair barriers that hamper progress.
- The right to be valued and respected as an individual.

7. Responsibilities

All staff and board members of Cheshire Dance are fully committed to the implementation of this policy. They will:-

- Demonstrate a commitment to the policy
- Champion and embed equality and diversity in all aspects of Cheshire Dance's work.

Board and Directors

The Board and Director will co-ordinate implementation of the policy and will;

- Ensure the terms of this policy are adhered to and that all staff, particularly those with managerial and supervisory responsibility, are aware of, understand and implement the requirements of this policy.
- Ensure appropriate structures and procedures are in place to implement equal opportunities and diversity throughout the artistic programme and management
- Collect and analyse monitoring information and make appropriate changes as a result.
- Ensure all other stakeholders are aware of the policy through its inclusion in induction packs for freelancers and on our website.

Staff, Artists, Customers, Suppliers, Stakeholders

It is important for staff, artists, participants, audiences, partners, suppliers and other stakeholders to recognise and accept individual responsibility for equality and diversity. We will

- Advocate the use of appropriate behaviour and language that does not infringe the rights of others and actively supports their right to be called by names and terms of their own choosing. For example – a commitment to stop the use of reductionist acronyms (see #BAMEover statement)
- Challenge unacceptable language and behaviour when we see it
- Adhere to all Cheshire Dance's policies
- Co-operate with all measures by Cheshire Dance to promote and implement equal opportunities and play an active part in the implementation of Cheshire Dance's Single Equality Policy and action plan
- Bring to the attention of management any discriminatory acts or practices which

should then be reported and recorded on the Cheshire Dance shared drive.

They are further expected **NOT** to:

- Unlawfully or unfairly discriminate against colleagues, participants, audiences, suppliers and stakeholders
- Encourage, instruct or pressurise other members of staff to unlawfully discriminate
- Harass, bully, abuse or intimidate other members of staff, participants, audiences, partners, suppliers and other stakeholders.

8. Legislative Framework and National Context

This policy has been developed within the framework of existing equal opportunities legislation. This commitment to continual evaluation will ensure that all new or anticipated legislation will be reviewed and incorporated within the policy as appropriate. The policy will be formally reviewed every two years unless legislation or other proposed changes have amended it in the meantime.

Our action plan reflects our aim to make space for, listen to, engage, learn and celebrate with participants, audiences, artists and other organisations to enable everyone's dancing voice to be nurtured and heard. We reject racism, discrimination and hatred of any kind, and will not tolerate institutional and structural discrimination in the dance industry or any other. We acknowledge that it is of vital importance that discrimination be further addressed in order to ensure that leaders, artists, participants and communities from protected characteristics groups can thrive within our dancing community.

Cheshire Dance is a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) with Arts Council England (ACE). The ACE new Let's Create Strategy and in particular the Investment Principle 'Inclusivity & Relevance' is at the forefront of our plan. As an NPO we must show how we contribute to the Inclusivity & Relevance three core characteristics, Communities, Workforce Leadership & Governance, and Creative Case for Diversity.

Communities
Actively listening to, and taking account of, the views of the local community, children and young people, artists, practitioners, and stakeholders we work with. Actively forming relationships with our underserved communities.

Workforce, Leadership and Governance
Have a workforce, leadership and governance which fully reflects and represents the communities we are serving. Have an inclusive organisational culture which values and develops the talent of all the people we work with. Fostering a safe workplace where harassment and discrimination can be challenged and eliminated.

Creative Case for Diversity
Our programmes and activities reflect the culture and talent of creative practitioners and cultural workers drawn from all backgrounds.

In order to ensure we meet our aims and the terms of our NPO funding our Single Equality

Policy, Action Plan and information monitoring must be up to date, relevant and robust.

Coupled with monitoring and performance information required by our other funders, this has informed and targeted our Action Plan, which follows in Section 11.

9. Monitoring and Review

Cheshire Dance is a good practice organisation due to the very nature of its purpose. As a dance organisation that specialises in participation and continuing professional development Cheshire Dance's core business is deeply concerned with recognising and celebrating diversity as well as ensuring good practice in delivery. In so doing, Cheshire Dance has always recognised the need to take positive action where necessary.

Cheshire Dance monitors the delivery of its activities through various means:

- Specific qualitative evaluation
- Performance indicator information
- Team and partner review meetings
- Board meetings
- Annual retreat

Cheshire Dance reviews its approaches to ensuring Equality on a continual basis as part of:-

- Recruitment, selection and employment
- Artistic programming, planning and delivery
- CPD programming and delivery
- Internal and external reporting
- Policy Review

10. Current Position

Main Achievements since implementing Single Equality Policy

Awards

- ❖ Cheshire Dance was awarded Outstanding Project Partner by Cheshire Downs Syndrome Support Group 2019 awards ceremony
- ❖ Jody Morgan awarded Dance Health Practitioner in the One Dance UK awards 2019 for her work with older people, particularly those living with dementia.

- ✓ All groups that Cheshire Dance sustains on a weekly basis target Protected Characteristics (or young people living in low income neighbourhoods)
- ✓ Taken positive action in the area of 'Race' equality through the 'Cultural Diversity in Dance' roundtable event at NOW Dance 2017, the subsequent focus on and selection of culturally diverse dance artists for Inquiring Bodies 5 (January 2018) and the programming of Now Dance 2018, Quay to the Streets 2018, Roots of Rumba 2018 and commissioning Movema and Juba do Leao for Now Dance 2019, Now Northwich Festival 2019 and 2021
- ✓ Deepened collaboration with Movema through hosting World in a Box training and supporting the 3 co-Artistic Directors is business planning and their Elevate

application – now developing Associate Artist Programme together for artists from African, South, East, & South East Asian diasporas
- ✓ Undertaken Makaton training and achieved Makaton Friendly status
- ✓ Deepened the diversity of group engagement alongside championing accessibility of Now Northwich 2019 (more volunteer stewards, NCT tent, quiet space, Makaton signage, highlighted changing places in the town as well as all accessible parking locations. All this information was summarised in a handy access document on the website and was downloaded more than 2,000 times)
- ✓ Board members deepened understanding of ACE Creative Case of Diversity
- ✓ In 2019 ACE upgraded Cheshire Dance's Creative Case rating to 'Strong'' (previously 'Good'').
- ✓ In 2020 Board members began to examine the ACE Let's Create Strategy outcomes and investment principles
- ✓ Implementation of standardised Induction Document.
- ✓ Advertisement of Board Vacancies through Better Board Bank.
- ✓ Identified specific networks for distribution of job vacancies, volunteering and participation opportunities – targeting disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, transgender, race and ethnic minority groups.
- ✓ Engagement of an Equality and Diversity professional to advise on 2013 review and update (John Dyer of Credibility)
- ✓ Single Equality Policy and Action Plan reviewed and updated (February 2021)
- ✓ Established an annual timescale for monitoring and policy review.
- ✓ More and better information being collected.
- ✓ Launched the Values to embed diversity into all areas of the Artistic Programme.

Covid-19

The Covid 19 pandemic which began in early 2020 has had a devastating economic and social impact on our country that will be felt for many years to come. Peoples' physical and mental health & well-being has been challenged, social isolation has increased and financial pressures have compounded what is an unprecedented challenging situation. The pandemic has disproportionately impacted upon those from who already faced inequality of opportunity (including those in protected characteristic groups), many of whom are forced to go out to work in risky or unsafe environments, or who must self-isolate for long periods of time with even more limited access to support, contact and cultural activities, particularly as carers focus on other basic needs. Freelance artists have also found themselves in precarious situations with hugely reduced incomes and less support from central Government – forcing many to leave the sector and seek alternative employment.

It is therefore imperative that our Single Equality Action plan focuses upon embedding diversity within Covid recovery so that we ensure all those who previously danced with us, are able to do so again, as well as creating more opportunities for those who find themselves vulnerable following the pandemic and initiatives to deepen practice with artists and participants from protected characteristic groups and low socio-economic groups.

Covid-19 recovery is an opportunity to re-evaluate our current approaches and systems, to challenge assumptions and to forge new, more equitable ways to develop our work which truly value and reflect the diversity and creative wealth of our society.

11 Action Plan 2021 – 2022

Cheshire Dance acknowledges that simply having a Single Equality Policy on its own means nothing. Therefore, we will demonstrate our commitment by producing and communicating to all staff a programme of action to make this policy fully effective.

Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact be monitored?	Early success indicators	Who is responsible for implementing?	Timescale
All	Develop systems for assessing number of people from 'protected characteristics' that are engaging with Cheshire Dance.	Performance indicator monitoring Monitoring forms updated Ensure that each regular session and CPD participant is given a monitoring from so that the information on protected characteristics is collected as widely as possible When using Google forms for event sign up – include questions on protected characteristics Explore use of Dance Biz to collect and analyse protected characteristics information	Analyse information gathered to inform future actions and determine areas of underrepresentation in the Artistic Programme Artistic Programme is targeted and addressing identified needs/areas in its programming	General Manager Administrator Creative Director	Review every Dec as part of business planning and annual programme development

Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact be monitored?	Early success indicators	Who is responsible for implementing?	Timescale
All	Single Equality Action Plan and Policy Review annually	At the Autumn/Winter Board meeting Through regular reviews in Cheshire Dance team meetings and at Annual Retreat	The Investment Principle 'Inclusivity & Relevance' including the Creative Case for Diversity is embedded within Business Plan and Artistic Programme	Director/Creative Director Chair of the Board	Every Dec
All	Embed diversity within Artistic Policy as key driver of creative practice and art form innovation	Artistic Policy and programming	Diversity is embedded in 2018-23 NPO and Business plans 2019-23 Artistic programme is representative of diverse artists and participants	Creative Director	March 21 Reviewed annually Dec 2017-Mar 2023 – reviewed annually
All	Maintain Artistic Programme focused on participation of protected characteristics groups at over 90% - developing specific strands as identified	Monitor through performance Indicators Continue to engage with specific, expert partners Keeping sessions accessible (location, cost, content etc.) Developing our three key programme strands – older people, young people and people with disabilities	Programme continues to be targeted and well attended New elements of programme developed to further increase inclusion across our work.	Director Creative Director Dance Development Artists	Report through Annual Review May/June and to the Board Sustain and review annually at Annual Retreat (Oct)

Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact be monitored?	Early success indicators	Who is responsible for implementing?	Timescale
Disability	Grow participation of people with disabilities in dance sessions to at least pre-pandemic numbers	Collect data on number of attendances of people with disabilities and compare with pre-pandemic numbers	Re-starting 5 live dance sessions for people with learning disabilities Training for adult services staff	Cheshire West Dance Development Artist Creative Director	By 6 months after restrictions allow return of face to face classes (approx. end 2021) Apr-June 2021
Disability	Deepen and grown provision of dance for people with Profound Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities (PIMD) and their representation in dance programming through: • Programming Frozen Light performance for Now Northwich 2021 • Now Northwich Community film project removes barrier to live performance participation • Delivering dance training for carers of	Data collection around number of people with PIMD attending Now Northwich compared against whether they have attended in previous years. Data collection on no. of performers identifying as having PIMD. Collecting data from care staff	More people with PIMD engaging with NOW Northwich festival (as audience and performers) Artists feel more confident in delivering dance for people with PIMD People with PIMD starting to be involved as co-creators in making of creative dance content (i.e. film)	Creative Director	Now Northwich Oct 21 Now Northwich Oct 21 Apr-Jun 21

	people with PIMD	on their experiences of			
Equality Strand	**Action**	**How will the impact be monitored?**	**Early success indicators**	**Who is responsible for implementing?**	**Timescale**
Contd…	• Developing PIMD dance research project with UCLan and Vivo Care Choices • Running National PIMD Dance practice sharing groups	supporting people with PIMD to dance Capture no. of artists attending meetings and qualitative experiences of impact	CD growing national profile in supporting dance for people with PIMD		Submit application by end 2021 Bi-annually March and September
Age	Prioritise fundraising for continuation and development of Older adults programme (dance and dementia, dance and falls prevention, dance in care homes)	Submitted funding bids for older adult work Monitor no. of sessions for older adults	Sessions for older adults begin to return to pre-pandemic numbers	Director Creative Director General Manager	Review progress and action plan quarterly
Class/Socio-economic status (& all)	Pay freelancers to engage in CPD required/directly linked to their work Remove pay barriers to CD CPD/Artist development programme for freelance artists	Monitor in no. of freelancers engaging in regular CPD Monitor attendance of artists from protected characteristics groups and low socio-economic groups in CD CPD Monitor freelancer's sense of satisfaction with and belonging to CD	Freelance team becomes more diverse in terms of protected characteristics and socio-economic status Freelancer sense of satisfaction with and belonging to CD improves	Director and Creative Director	Begin Apr 2021 using existing resources Embed within 2023NPO application

Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact be monitored?	Early success indicators	Who is responsible for implementing?	Timescale
Race	Run Associate Artist scheme for 3 artists from African, South, East, & South East Asian diasporas (in partnership with Movema)	Consultation with artists and co-creation of their bespoke programme throughout scheme. Built in reflection phase (artists paid to engage) Data collection on % of artists from African, South, East, & South East Asian diasporas paid to engage in CD Artistic Programme (delivery and CPD) Data collection on dance styles being delivered through CD Artistic programme	Engagement of more artists from African, South, East, & South East Asian diasporas in Cheshire Dance programme Broader variety of dance styles included in CD regular programme	Creative Director Administrator/General Manager Creative Director	Associate artist scheme begins Apr 21, first cohort complete by Spring 2022
Race	All staff to take part in training/education on systemic racism and anti-racism Creative Director to engage in Inc Arts programmes	Capture key learning points and shifts in attitudes from staff following training Learning is implemented across CD programme and through wider groups such as DCNW, CWaC Cultural Consortium	CD culture is strongly anti-racist and all staff are confident in use of respectful and appropriate language and practices CD (and other CWaC Cultural Consortium organisations) make a commitment to ongoing anti-racism work and unconscious bias training	Creative Director in partnership with CWaC Cultural Consortium Creative Director	July 2021 Renew annually Ongoing

		Financial investment in developing ethnically diverse artists and associated programmes (i.e. Associate Artist Programme)	More artists from ethnically diverse backgrounds working with CD.	Director/Creative Director	May 2021
Equality Strand	**Action**	**How will the impact be monitored?**	**Early success indicators**	**Who is responsible for implementing?**	**Timescale**
All	Establish and run regular Board Diversity Working Party group	Working parties planned at regular intervals Minutes from meetings are shared and actions followed up	Board members more present 'on the ground' and connected to Cheshire Dance activity More people from protected characteristic groups are exposed to and connected with the board. Board meetings become more accessible	Chair of Board	First meeting April 2021, quarterly reviews