

Suffolk Festival of Performing Arts 2023 – Dance Section Report

The dance section has remained in its new slot in March, which seems to work well for everyone and clashes with other dance events avoided through request to adjust the programme.

Numbers were to be capped at those like last year's festival but there was no need as the closing date arrived with entries at the same level. We were able to keep our later start times and earlier finishes. We had two presentation ceremonies and a special Thank You for all our volunteers, these worked well and were appreciated.

Leading up to the Festival we had some problems with regards to Adjudicators, and the realisation that there has been mis-communication in previous years and we needed to apply for a Body of Person's Licence. This was particularly stressful at the time but with the support of both SCC and the Dance Schools we were able to get the application in and license approved.

After an inspection on the first weekend of the festival, we were praised by both the schools and SCC for our organisation. SCC wish to hold us up as an exemplary Festival on which others should look to base themselves.

The initial miscommunication led to misunderstanding which in turn made it seem like the festival did not fully understand the Licensing requirements, as a result of this process and the inspection, I feel we would have no problem continuing to fulfill the requirements for all areas of the festival.

For the Dance Section however I feel we would need to ensure equity across the support received from all Dance Schools and make it a requirement of entry, as by the second weekend we had two dance schools that ended up providing cover for the whole Festival, which also meant some of them missed being in the audience for their own children's performances.

There were no attempts to enter privately this year, however three schools with smaller numbers have only provided parent Licensed Chaperones and not been able to support the festival. To ensure we are meeting the requirements of our BOPA, we will need to ensure this does not happen in future years.

The successful BOPA application meant we were able to charge entry, being a last-minute opportunity and having previously stated we did not charge spectators, our entry fee was low but still brought in much needed revenue. This can be reviewed and adjusted for next year.

Being sponsored for medals of 1st, 2nd and 3rd, was welcomed and our Suffolk Festival lanyards went down well with performers. Although the cost was not recovered, we envisage by next year we will have covered the cost and made profit. In addition to medals, we were sponsored for a cup and given discount on replacing three cups. Consideration should be given to the state of some of our cups and shields for future years.

Our adjudicator Angela Whittle, stepped up very last minute and brought a whole new sense of enjoyment to the festival for the adjudicators team. She provided useful and

positive support to all performers, and we would not hesitate in bringing her back in future years.

Whilst we did not make a profit this year, with the continued support of the Dance Schools and careful planning for next year I am confident the festival will financially and generally thrive.

Sarah Jessup
Dance and Social Media Secretary
SFofPA – 25th March 2022