

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Policy Statement

Berkshire Dance Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults. This policy complies with:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education, latest version)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

We believe that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, regardless of age, ability, gender, race, religion, or background, have an equal right to protection.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff and volunteers
- Contractors working on behalf of the dance school
- All students under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for:

- Acting as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns.
- Liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and other safeguarding partners.
- Maintaining secure records of concerns and incidents.
- Ensuring staff receive safeguarding training and updates.

DSL Contact Details:

Name: Charlotte Forster and Eva Whittle

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Recognising Abuse

Staff must be alert to the signs and indicators of:

- Physical abuse (e.g., unexplained injuries, frequent bruising)
- Emotional abuse (e.g., withdrawal, sudden changes in behaviour)
- Sexual abuse (e.g., inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour)
- Neglect (e.g., consistently poor hygiene, lack of medical care)
- Grooming and exploitation

Reporting Concerns

- If you believe a child is in immediate danger, call 999 immediately.
- For all other concerns:
 1. Record the concern accurately and factually.
 2. Report it to the DSL as soon as possible.
 3. Do not discuss the concern with others unless advised by the DSL or statutory services.
- The DSL will decide whether a referral to the Local Authority or police is required.

Procedures for Allegations Against Staff

If an allegation is made against a staff member or volunteer:

- Report it immediately to the DSL (or another staff member if the DSL is implicated).
- The DSL will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- The staff member may be suspended pending investigation, in line with disciplinary procedures.

Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

- Treat all children with respect and dignity.
- Avoid being alone with a child where you cannot be observed.
- Never use inappropriate language or behaviour.
- Physical contact must be appropriate to the activity and necessary for teaching purposes.
- Never promise confidentiality—explain that you may have to share information to protect them.

Safer Recruitment

- All staff and volunteers working directly with children must have an enhanced DBS check.
- References and identity checks will be completed before any work begins.
- Roles and expectations will be clearly communicated.

Training

- All staff and volunteers will complete safeguarding training at least every 2 years.
- The DSL will undertake advanced safeguarding training at least every 2 years.
- Safeguarding updates will be shared regularly.

Record Keeping

- Records of concerns, disclosures, and actions will be kept securely and confidentially.
- Records will be retained for at least 6 years after a student leaves.

Sharing Information

- Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis, in accordance with Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- If in doubt, seek advice from the DSL or statutory services.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or after any safeguarding incident.

Incident Log 2026

| Date/ Time | Child's Name | Details of Concern | Action Taken | Reported To | Outcome | Staff Name & Signature |
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Date of Issue: January 2026

Date of Next Review: January 2027