

Berkshire Dance Academy

Policy on Abusive, Threatening and Unacceptable Behaviour

1. Purpose and Statement of Intent

Berkshire Dance Academy is committed to maintaining the highest standards in all aspects of its work. Through clear policies and procedures, we aim to act fairly at all times and provide a safe, supportive and professional service to all who engage with the Academy.

All staff, teachers, volunteers, students, parents and carers who represent or engage with Berkshire Dance Academy are expected to uphold high standards of conduct and behaviour.

Learning—whether artistic, academic, social or personal—is best supported in an environment where individuals feel safe, valued, respected and motivated. Berkshire Dance Academy is committed to creating a positive learning environment in which behaviour expectations are clear, consistent and understood by all members of our community.

While the vast majority of interactions within our community are positive, this policy sets out the Academy's approach to addressing occasions where unacceptable, abusive or threatening behaviour occurs. The strong partnership between staff and families is central to our ethos; however, access to Academy premises and services is a **privilege, not a right**, and may be withdrawn where behaviour falls below acceptable standards.

2. Distribution of the Policy

This policy will be:

- Provided to all staff and volunteers
- Made available to parents, carers and members of the public upon request

3. Review and Monitoring

- This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation or statutory guidance
- Monitoring of this policy forms part of Berkshire Dance Academy's management and supervision processes

4. Principles Underpinning the Policy

This policy is based on the following principles:

- All members of the Berkshire Dance Academy community have the right to learn and work in a safe and secure environment
- All individuals are expected to behave in a respectful, considerate and lawful manner
- Berkshire Dance Academy is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- There is zero tolerance of violence, threatening behaviour, harassment or abuse
- Where unacceptable behaviour occurs, appropriate and proportionate action will be taken

5. Definition of Abusive, Threatening or Unacceptable Behaviour

Under the **Public Order Act 1986**, disorderly conduct includes verbal abuse, threatening, abusive or insulting language or behaviour, or any conduct likely to cause alarm, harassment or distress.

Within the context of Berkshire Dance Academy, abusive or threatening behaviour includes (but is not limited to):

- Shouting at staff, students, volunteers or visitors
- Aggressive, intimidating or confrontational behaviour, including body language
- Actual or threatened physical violence

- Harassment, abuse or intimidation via email, text message, voicemail or phone calls
- Defamatory, offensive or threatening content posted online or on social media
- Approaching staff members in an intimidating manner outside Academy premises

6. Malicious Commentary, Bad-Mouthing and Harmful Speech

Unacceptable behaviour also includes **malicious, defamatory or harmful commentary**, including:

- “Bad-mouthing”, gossiping or spreading rumours about staff, students, parents or carers
- Making derogatory, judgmental or demeaning comments about children
- Undermining the professionalism, authority or integrity of Academy staff
- Encouraging children or others to speak negatively about staff or other students
- Making unsubstantiated allegations or hostile comments that may damage reputation or wellbeing

This applies whether such behaviour occurs:

- On Academy premises
- During Academy events or activities
- Online (including social media, messaging platforms or group chats)
- In the presence of children or other members of the Academy community

Such behaviour may be treated as a **safeguarding, welfare or reputational concern**.

7. Parent and Carer Code of Conduct

Berkshire Dance Academy values the support and cooperation of parents and carers. This Code of Conduct exists to promote positive relationships and a respectful learning environment.

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Respect the Academy's caring and professional ethos
- Work in partnership with staff for the benefit of students
- Treat all members of the community with courtesy and respect
- Raise concerns calmly and appropriately with Academy staff
- Seek clarification from the Academy before drawing conclusions
- Support staff in managing student behaviour
- Correct their own child's behaviour where it may lead to conflict
- Avoid using staff or teachers as threats to discipline children

8. Behaviour That Will Not Be Tolerated

Berkshire Dance Academy does not tolerate:

- Disruptive behaviour that interferes with classes or Academy operations
- Loud, aggressive or offensive language, including swearing
- Threats of physical harm to any member of the community
- Physical aggression towards any adult or child
- Physical punishment of a child on Academy premises
- Chastising or disciplining another person's child
- Damage to or destruction of Academy property
- Sending abusive, threatening or harassing communications
- Malicious, defamatory or derogatory comments about staff, students, parents or the Academy

- Spreading rumours or engaging in harmful gossip
- Public or online criticism that is disrespectful or inflammatory
- Smoking, vaping, alcohol or drug use on Academy premises
- Bringing dogs onto Academy premises (except registered assistance dogs)

9. Consequences of Unacceptable Behaviour

Where unacceptable behaviour occurs, Berkshire Dance Academy may:

- Issue verbal or written warnings
- Require communication to be redirected through formal channels
- Restrict or withdraw access to Academy premises or events
- Terminate enrolment or services where behaviour persists or escalates
- Contact appropriate external authorities where necessary

10. Procedure Following an Incident

An incident report will be completed by the affected staff member or, where appropriate, on behalf of a student.

Step 1 – Verbal Warning

A Director or senior member of staff will speak privately with the individual, explaining that the behaviour is unacceptable and seeking assurance it will not be repeated.

Step 2 – Written Warning

A second incident will result in a formal written warning.

Step 3 – Final Written Warning

A third incident will result in a final written warning advising that further incidents will lead to serious action.

Step 4 – Exclusion from Premises

If behaviour continues or is considered serious, the individual may be banned from Academy premises and events.

Step 5 – Police Involvement

Any act of actual or threatened violence will be referred immediately to the police.

A person entering Academy premises after being banned may be treated as a trespasser under **Section 547 of the Education Act 1996** and charged under the **Public Order Act 1986**.

11. Safeguarding, Equality and Reporting

- Safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with the **Berkshire Dance Academy Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy**
- Racist or discriminatory incidents will be addressed in line with the **Equality Act 2010**
- Serious incidents may be reported to the Local Authority where required

12. Policy Status

This policy forms part of Berkshire Dance Academy's commitment to safeguarding, wellbeing, equality and professional conduct.