



ADF DANCE ACADEMY

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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PREPARED BY

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PRINCIPLE

Our Approach

ADF Dance Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. We maintain a safe, inclusive and respectful environment where students feel protected and supported emotionally, physically and creatively.

At ADF Dance Academy, safeguarding is not simply policy – it is culture. Dance is about far more than technique and performance; it is also about self-expression, belonging and joy. Every child and young person who enters the Academy should feel safe, valued and encouraged in an environment where students are supported to grow, comfortable expressing themselves and confident to thrive.

We recognise that parents/carers place their trust in us not only to teach, but to care. Safeguarding is reflected in how we guide, communicate, listen and respond across all aspects of Academy activity. Through professionalism, compassion and vigilance, we create a positive and nurturing environment where safeguarding remains at the heart of everything we do.

1. Purpose

Safeguarding and child protection involve both promoting the welfare of children and responding appropriately where concerns about safety, wellbeing or welfare arise.

This policy outlines:

- The Academy's safeguarding and child protection responsibilities
- Expectations for adults working with children
- Procedures for recognising, reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns
- How safeguarding is promoted throughout all activity at ADF Dance Academy

For the purpose of this policy, the term "child" refers to anyone under the age of 18.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all areas of ADF Dance Academy and to every individual involved, including staff, freelancers, volunteers, chaperones, students, parents/carers, visitors and external professionals.

It applies throughout:

- Classes
- Rehearsals
- Performances
- Competitions
- Workshops
- Trips
- Events
- Online and virtual Academy activity

This document should also be read alongside the Academy's related policies and procedures, such as:

- Code of Conduct
- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Photography, Video and Social Media Policy
- Concerns and Complaints Policy

3. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice applicable to child-focused settings. This includes Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), Working Together to Safeguard Children, Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidance, the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004, the Equality Act 2010, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018.

4. Safeguarding Principles

Our approach is guided by the belief that safeguarding is both protective and preventative and is central to creating a safe and positive experience for every child.

We will always:

- Put the child's welfare first
- Listen without judgement
- Act quickly and appropriately on concerns
- Work in partnership with families and professionals
- Share information only when necessary to protect a child
- Maintain professionalism and compassion in all situations

5. Roles and Responsibilities

We endeavour not only to respond to harm, but to create a culture where harm is prevented through awareness and care, recognising that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

All adults working with children are expected to:

- Prioritise student welfare
- Remain alert to safeguarding concerns
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Act promptly when concerns arise
- Follow Academy safeguarding procedures
- Contribute to a safe and respectful environment
- Take all concerns seriously

6. Designated Safeguarding Lead

Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead
Alexandra Gale
info@adfdanceacademy.com
07884 001630

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for safeguarding and child protection within ADF Dance Academy, ensuring these responsibilities are carried out with care, diligence and professionalism throughout all Academy activity.

Responsibilities include:

- Overseeing safeguarding and child protection arrangements throughout ADF Dance Academy
- Responding to safeguarding concerns and leading decision-making
- Liaising with external agencies and making referrals where required
- Maintaining secure and accurate safeguarding records
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and understand their safeguarding responsibilities
- Promoting and embedding a positive safeguarding culture throughout the Academy
- Monitoring safeguarding concerns and ensuring appropriate follow-up action

7. Raising Concerns

Concerns may arise in many forms — sometimes obvious, sometimes subtle. Recognising concerns at an early stage can play an important role in protecting children and ensuring they receive the support they need.

Examples of safeguarding concerns may include:

- Physical injury or unexplained marks
- Emotional distress, anxiety, withdrawal or low self-esteem
- Sudden behavioural changes

- Reduced attendance or engagement
- Disclosures from a child
- Neglect or unmet needs
- Bullying, peer conflict or online safety concerns

All concerns are taken seriously, no matter how small they may seem. Adults working with children are encouraged to remain professionally curious and to consider the wider context of a child's wellbeing where concerns arise. If something does not feel right, it should not be ignored and, if in doubt, always be reported.

8. Definitions of Abuse and Safeguarding Concerns

Abuse and safeguarding concerns can take many forms and may affect children in different ways. Understanding the types of abuse and wider safeguarding risks helps ensure concerns are recognised and responded to appropriately.

The four main categories of abuse are:

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse involves deliberately causing physical harm or injury to a child. This may include hitting, shaking, pushing, inappropriate restraint or any action that causes physical harm or places a child at risk of injury.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse involves persistent treatment that negatively affects a child's emotional wellbeing, confidence or development. This may include humiliation, intimidation, rejection, excessive criticism, bullying or making a child feel frightened, worthless or unsupported.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing, pressuring or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity or inappropriate sexual behaviour. This may include physical contact, non-contact activity, sexualised communication, image sharing or online abuse.

Neglect

Neglect involves the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional or developmental needs. This may include lack of supervision, inadequate care, failure to provide appropriate support or failing to meet a child's wellbeing or safety needs.

8.1 Other Forms of Abuse

Abuse and safeguarding concerns can also arise in wider contexts, including online, within peer groups or through inappropriate behaviour by adults or other children.

This may include:

- Bullying or cyberbullying
- Child-on-child abuse
- Discriminatory behaviour
- Online abuse or harm
- Grooming, exploitation or inappropriate relationships

8.2 Child-on-Child Abuse and Bullying

Every child deserves to feel safe in their peer environment. We take a zero-tolerance but supportive approach to child-on-child abuse and bullying, focusing on safety, education and appropriate consequences. Child-on-child abuse will never be dismissed as "banter", "part of growing up" or harmless behaviour and can take many different forms, including:

- Physical, verbal or emotional bullying
- Cyberbullying or online intimidation
- Exclusion, humiliation or intimidation
- Body-shaming or appearance-based comments
- Discriminatory language or conduct
- Inappropriate sexual comments or unwanted physical contact
- Sharing images, messages or content without consent

9. Early Help Intervention

Safeguarding is not limited to responding to immediate harm. Early support and intervention can prevent issues from escalating and help children and families receive support at the right time.

Early Help involves identifying difficulties at an early stage and providing support before circumstances become more serious or safeguarding intervention is required. Any matters relating to a child's wellbeing should always be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) so that appropriate support, guidance or action can be considered where necessary.

Situations where early support may be helpful include:

- Emotional wellbeing difficulties
- Anxiety or withdrawal
- Attendance concerns or emerging welfare needs
- Family circumstances
- Friendship challenges, bullying, self-esteem or body image issues

10. Reporting Procedures

The following procedures outline how safeguarding and child protection concerns should be reported, managed and responded to within ADF Dance Academy.

10.1 Responding to Concerns and Disclosures

Where a safeguarding or child protection concern arises, it is important that it is addressed appropriately and without delay. All safeguarding and child protection matters will be managed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will decide what action needs to be taken and whether external agencies should be involved.

ADF Dance Academy will not investigate safeguarding matters beyond gathering and recording appropriate information necessary to ensure a safe response and make referrals where required.

Adults working with children are expected to:

- Listen carefully and remain calm
- Take all disclosures seriously
- Not promise confidentiality
- Avoid asking leading questions or attempt to investigate matters themselves
- Record information clearly, factually and as soon as reasonably possible
- Write down, where practicable, exactly what has been said and observed
- Report all safeguarding matters directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay

Depending on the nature of the concern, this may include:

- Ongoing monitoring
- Speaking with parents/carers where appropriate
- Seeking safeguarding advice
- Making referrals to Children Services, the Police or other safeguarding agencies

Where a child may be at immediate risk of harm, emergency action and contact with emergency services will always take priority.

10.2 Concerns or Allegations Involving the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Where concerns or allegations involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or where it is not appropriate to raise matters internally, reports should be made directly to the appropriate external safeguarding agencies. This helps ensure that concerns are managed impartially, transparently and in the best interests of the child, without any actual or perceived conflict of interest.

The following contact details should be used where concerns or allegations involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or where independent safeguarding advice or intervention is required:

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – Surrey County Council

For concerns or allegations involving adults working with children

0300 123 1650

LADO@surreycc.gov.uk

Surrey Children’s Single Point of Access (C-SPA) / Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

For reporting safeguarding concerns about a child

0300 470 9100

cspa@surreycc.gov.uk

Emergency Duty Team (EDT) - Out of Hours

For urgent safeguarding concerns outside normal working hours

01483 517 898

NSPCC Helpline

For safeguarding advice, guidance or support

0808 800 5000

Police

For emergencies or immediate risk of harm

999 (emergency) | 101 (non-emergency)

10.3 Whistleblowing

We encourage a culture of openness and responsibility where safeguarding concerns can be raised safely and without fear. Anyone raising a genuine concern will be supported and treated with respect. No individual will be disadvantaged for raising a concern in good faith. Raising concerns through appropriate channels helps protect children and young people, promotes transparency and accountability, supports safe and professional practice, and helps ensure potential risks are identified and addressed at an early stage.

Whistleblowing involves reporting behaviour, conduct, practice or situations that may place a child at risk or fall below expected professional standards. Such matters can be raised by anyone working with or on behalf of the Academy and will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately. This may include unsafe practice, breaches of safeguarding procedures or unsuitable conduct.

10.4 Escalation and Professional Challenge

Effective safeguarding requires professional curiosity, confidence and responsibility. If someone feels that a concern has not been appropriately addressed, or that a child may still be at risk, the matter should never be ignored or assumed to have been managed by someone else.

Professional challenge involves respectfully questioning, escalating or seeking further advice where existing actions may not have been sufficient or a child may remain at risk. Appropriate follow-up should be taken where additional support, intervention or involvement from relevant agencies may be needed. This may include raising the concern again, seeking advice from safeguarding professionals or contacting external agencies directly.

10.5 Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers and Adults

Allegations relating to the behaviour or conduct of an adult working with children within the Academy will always be treated seriously and managed appropriately in line with safeguarding and child protection procedures. Such matters should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

This may include situations where an adult has:

- Harmed or may have harmed a child
- Committed a criminal offence involving a child
- Placed a child at risk of harm
- Behaved in a way that may pose a risk of harm to children
- Engaged in inappropriate physical, verbal, emotional or online interactions with a child
- Demonstrated behaviour that may indicate they are unsuitable to work with children
- Crossed professional or safeguarding boundaries
- Failed to follow safeguarding expectations or procedures

11. Safer Recruitment and Staff Suitability

A safe and supportive environment begins with ensuring that all adults working with children are suitable, qualified, professional and well prepared for their role. We are committed to upholding safer recruitment and suitability practices that help promote student safety and wellbeing. Appropriate recruitment and suitability procedures are followed for adults working with children. Enhanced DBS checks are obtained and additional safer recruitment measures may include reference verification, identity and qualification checks and ongoing monitoring where required.

Safeguarding is not a one-time process and safe working practice is expected to be maintained at all times. All adults working with children must complete safeguarding training and/or guidance appropriate to their role and responsibilities. Awareness and training will be reviewed and updated as required to help ensure responsibilities remain understood, current and consistently reflected throughout Academy practice.

12. Safer Working Practice and Professional Boundaries

Anyone working with children holds a position of trust and responsibility. Safe and professional working practices help create a setting where children feel protected, respected and supported. Clear and consistent boundaries form an important part of this approach and should be maintained throughout Academy activity.

Those working with children are expected to:

- Treat all students fairly and with dignity
- Prioritise student safety and wellbeing at all times
- Follow Academy safeguarding procedures and expectations
- Avoid situations where they are unnecessarily isolated with a child
- Communicate respectfully and maintain clear professional boundaries

12.1 Physical Contact and Safe Teaching

Physical contact can sometimes form a part of dance instruction, correction, support or injury prevention. Any contact used within teaching must always be professional, with students' comfort, dignity and wellbeing prioritised and alternative approaches considered where suitable. If physical contact is required, it must always be respectful, relevant to the activity or instruction being given, explained where possible and in line with safe teaching practice.

12.2 Low-Level Concerns

Small actions, behaviour or patterns of conduct can sometimes indicate a need for early support, guidance or intervention. These situations are taken seriously and recorded appropriately to promote a culture of openness and safeguarding awareness.

A low-level concern is any matter, however minor, that an adult's behaviour may be inconsistent with our professional standards or Code of Conduct. Where concerns meet the threshold of harm, they will be managed as safeguarding concerns in line with this policy.

This may include, but is not limited to:

- Over-familiar behaviour or unnecessary physical contact
- Favouritism towards individual students
- One-to-one situations in isolated or non-visible spaces
- Communication outside approved Academy channels

All low-level concerns must be:

- Reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Recorded clearly and factually
- Reviewed and responded to appropriately

Recording low-level concerns helps to:

- Identify patterns of behaviour at an early stage
- Support a culture of openness and accountability
- Reduce the risk of more serious safeguarding matters arising

13. Safe Environment and Supervision

Considerable time and care are taken to ensure that our environment, supervision arrangements and safeguarding practices support students' safety and wellbeing across all Academy activity.

This includes:

- Accurate attendance registers
- Safe arrival and collection procedures
- Following designated entry and collection points communicated by the Academy for each class, venue or activity
- Supervision arrangements for students attending directly from a school site before classes or other Academy activities begin
- Written permission for students to arrive or leave independently
- Ensuring agreed arrangements are updated where a student is to be collected by someone not previously authorised
- Written parental/carer consent where collection by a person under the age of 18 has been agreed
- Responding appropriately to missing child or welfare concerns
- Maintaining safeguarding expectations during all Academy activities
- Managing the safe and appropriate use of mobile phones and devices during Academy activity and venue spaces

Additional health, safety, first aid, photography, digital communication, risk assessment and emergency procedures are managed in line with the Academy's Health and Safety Policy, First Aid Policy and Photography, Video and Social Media Policy.

14. Online Safety and Communication

Online communication and digital activity can present safeguarding risks and should always be managed safely and responsibly. Communication with students must remain professional, transparent and Academy-related at all times and personal communication methods or private messaging with students are not permitted.

Online safety concerns may include:

- Inappropriate communication
- Image misuse
- Cyberbullying and harmful online behaviour
- Exposure to unsuitable content or online exploitation

15. Filtering and Monitoring

As an external hirer of facilities, we adhere to the relevant filtering, monitoring and online safety standards of the venue or education setting being used. Where technology or online content is involved in Academy activities, reasonable measures are taken to help maintain a safe and age-appropriate environment. This may include Academy-approved platforms and materials, supervised use of devices where applicable, and selection of age-appropriate content and resources. Further guidance on photography, social media, livestreaming and digital communication is provided in the Academy's Photography, Video and Social Media Policy.

16. Emotional Wellbeing, Mental Health and Body Image

The emotional wellbeing and self-esteem of children and young people are important aspects of safeguarding. Dance and performance environments can sometimes place additional pressures on self-image, body appearance and emotional wellbeing. As an Academy, we recognise that every child is different and may experience, express or respond to challenges, learning and teaching in different ways. We are therefore committed to creating a setting where students feel comfortable expressing themselves, supported as individuals and reassured that help and guidance are available where needed. Concerns relating to emotional wellbeing, mental health or body image should be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who can provide support or arrange further assistance as appropriate.

17. Lone Working and One-to-One Teaching

One-to-one teaching and situations involving lone working can present additional safeguarding considerations. Careful planning is undertaken to ensure that sessions are organised safely, professionally and in a way that is suitable for the age, stage and specific learning needs, recognising that children learn and respond in different ways. Where possible, one-to-one sessions should take place in open or visible environments. Parents/carers should be informed of session arrangements and content, professional boundaries must be maintained at all times and unnecessary isolation should be avoided to help ensure the safety, wellbeing and comfort of the child and the adult.

18. Changing Areas, Toileting and Privacy

Students are entitled to privacy, dignity and respectful treatment at all times. Appropriate supervision arrangements are maintained to support safety and wellbeing while respecting personal privacy, comfort and age-appropriate independence. Where younger children require additional support, assistance will be provided appropriately and in line with safeguarding expectations. Photography, filming and the use of mobile phones or recording devices are not permitted within changing or toilet areas.

19. Performances, Competitions, Trips and External Events

Performances, competitions, trips and external events are valuable opportunities within the Academy and can support confidence, personal growth, teamwork, friendships and a positive sense of belonging. While these may take place in a variety of settings, safeguarding expectations and professional standards remain in place throughout. All students are entitled to feel safe and supported during Academy activities, regardless of location, with appropriate safeguarding measures maintained at all times.

Careful consideration and appropriate arrangements for supervision, organisation, communication and student welfare are implemented for all external activities, with relevant safeguarding expectations and Academy procedures followed in line with the nature of the event.

20. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Safeguarding information is handled carefully, sensitively and with clear professional responsibility. Where concerns arise, records will be made promptly, stored securely, retained in line with safeguarding best practice and kept separately to general Academy records in accordance with data protection requirements. Information is only shared where necessary to help protect a child, respond appropriately to concerns or fulfil safeguarding responsibilities. Confidentiality will never prevent appropriate action being taken where a child may be at risk of harm.

21. Concerns and Complaints

Concerns and complaints relating to safeguarding will always be taken seriously and managed appropriately. Further guidance relating to concerns, complaints and communication procedures can be found within the Academy's Concerns and Complaints Policy.

22. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where required by legislation, safeguarding guidance, Academy practice or operational arrangements. Overall responsibility for monitoring and review rests with the Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

23. Final Statement

At ADF Dance Academy, safeguarding is more than a procedure – it is part of the care, responsibility and vigilance that underpins Academy life. We are committed to maintaining an environment where safeguarding and child protection remain central to all activity. Through professionalism, awareness and shared responsibility, we aim to ensure that children and young people can learn, develop and participate safely throughout their time at ADF Dance Academy.