

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Aim

The purpose of Katie Wright School of Dance Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is to ensure every child at our organisation is safe and protected from harm.

This means we will always work to:

- Protect children from maltreatment.
- Prevent impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensure that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about the expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at our organisation.

Our organisation fully recognises the contribution it can make to protecting children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all children. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support. We believe that no child or young person should be the subject of neglectful or abusive behaviour. We will promote and maintain the welfare of every child in our care and seek to protect them from harm regardless of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief or any other form of identity or creed. We will create a safe and welcoming environment for all.

This policy applies to all our staff, volunteers, visitors and covers children under the age of 18. To protect children and young people in our care, we will:

- Value and respect children and listen to what they have to say.
- Work with children, parents and relevant organisations.
- Share our policy with all staff, parents and students.
- Ensure all required checks are made when hiring staff and that those in regular contact with children hold a current DBS check (or non-UK equivalent).
- Provide appropriate training and support to all staff.
- Take responsibility for children and young people's safety when in our care.
- Seek permission from parents before taking images (photographs or film) of students and inform them how and where the images will be used.
- Report suspected neglect or abuse to the nominated member of staff, relevant organisation, or police (for UK members an appropriate relevant organisation will be their local council's Safeguarding Team).
- Ensure that this policy is regularly updated.

Our Ethos

Our organisation will establish and maintain an ethos where our children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children will be able to talk freely to any member of staff, volunteer or regular visitor to our organisation if they are worried or concerned about something.

All staff, volunteers and regular visitors will, either through training or induction, know how to recognise a disclosure from a child and will know how to manage this. We will not make promises to any child and we will not keep secrets. Every child will know what the adult will do with whatever they have been told.

We will provide activities and opportunities that will equip our children with the skills they need to stay safe.

Recognition of abuse or neglect

Abuse or neglect of a child is caused by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or more rarely by a stranger.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when someone fabricates the symptoms of illness or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

Emotional abuse is the persistent, emotional ill treatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or guardian failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Staff should know how to recognise and act upon indicators of abuse or potential abuse involving children. There is an expected responsibility for all members of staff to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child, in accordance with these procedures.

It is good practice to be as open and honest as possible with parents/guardians about any concerns.

However, you must not discuss your concerns with parents/guardians in the following circumstances:

- where sexual abuse is suspected;
- where organised or multiple abuse is suspected;
- where contacting parents/guardians would place a child, yourself or others at immediate risk.

What to do if a child talks to you about abuse or neglect?

A child may decide to disclose information that may indicate they are suffering from abuse or neglect. A child chooses to speak to an adult because they feel that they will listen and that they can trust them. The adult needs to listen to what the child has to say, and be very careful not to 'lead' the child or influence in any way what they say.

It is important that the adult remembers to:

Stay calm.

Listen and be supportive.

Not ask any leading questions, interrogate the child, or put ideas in the child's head, or jump to conclusions.

Not stop or interrupt a child who is recalling significant events.

Never promise the child confidentiality – it must be explained that information will need to be passed on to help keep them safe.

Avoid criticising the alleged perpetrator.

Tell the child what must be done next (the safeguarding process must be followed).

Record what was said immediately as close to what was said as possible. Also record what was happening immediately before the child disclosed. Be sure to sign and date the record in ink.

Contact the designated person immediately - Katie Wright.

Seek support.

Initially, talk to our safeguarding officer, Katie Wright. If this person is implicated in the concerns, you should discuss your concerns directly with Children's Services, MASH – 0345 155 1071.

After consultation, if a referral needs to be made, we will contact the Local Authority and Police must lead any investigation in to any allegation regarding

safeguarding so that the enquiry can be undertaken by the appropriate agency and any necessary action can be undertaken.

If your concern is about abuse or risk of abuse from someone not known to the child or child's family, you should make a telephone referral directly to the Police and consult with the parents.

If your concern is about abuse or risk of abuse from a family member or someone known to the children, you should make a telephone referral to Children's Services.

Action to be taken after the referral

Ensure that you keep an accurate record of your concern.

Put these concerns in writing to Children's Services within 48 hours of the referral.

Record the action agreed in detail or if no further action is needed.

All information relation to a referral must be kept confidential and in a secured place.

If your concern is regarding a member of staff please contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) directly.

Child protection officer onsite

Katie Wright - 07545 339224