

Buntingford School of Dance Ltd (hereafter 'BSD')

Safeguarding Policy

BSD is committed to protecting children from all forms of neglectful or abusive behaviour. This policy covers all children under the age of 18 years.

The [key guidance for child protection is "Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (Department for Education, 2018). This states:

- everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe
- everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play in sharing information and identifying concerns.

In addition, Section 11 of the [Children Act 2004](#) places a statutory duty on certain agencies to co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This includes:

- local authorities
- NHS services and trusts
- police
- probation services and young offenders institutions.

The BSD Principal (Philippa McMeechan) is the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and will be responsible for Safeguarding. The DSL will endeavour to ensure that BSD Safeguarding policies and procedures are adhered to.

This policy applies to all Staff, Volunteers & Chaperones and anyone carrying out work on behalf of BSD which necessitates access to children.

BSD believes that:

- all children and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse;
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- all members of BSD should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

BSD will ensure that:

- all children will be treated equally and with respect and dignity
- the welfare of each child will always be put first
- bullying will not be accepted or condoned
- all adult members will provide a positive role model
- action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour
- it will keep up to date with changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children

Safeguarding Measures/Procedures

Responsibilities of BSD

- Ensure that children are supervised at all times while in classes.
- Identify at the outset of each class/production the person(s) with designated responsibility for child protection for that class/production. (Unless otherwise stated to the contrary, the person responsible for child protection of each individual class is the teacher teaching the class).

Responsibilities of Sub-Contracting Staff

- Staff should hold an Enhanced Full Disclosure document / Staff may also be required to complete an additional application on behalf of BSD
- Temporary sub-contracting staff, who 'cover' classes short term, will be required to produce their own CRB check and provide the Principal with a copy, prior to teaching the class.

Parents and Guardians

- BSD believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents/guardians and them.
- A parent/guardian will be advised where they can view/obtain a copy of this Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring the safe collection and transportation of their children to and from classes, rehearsals and performances. It is not the responsibility of BSD to collect/deliver children to/from their home, nor to supervise children who are waiting for classes.

Unsupervised Contact

- In the case of Private Lessons, where there is a one-on-one teaching situation, appropriate precautions will be taken to minimise the risk of harm or abuse. These involve the parent / guardian having the option to remain with their child during the lesson.

Physical Contact

- All adults will apply only appropriate physical contact with the children e.g. holding hands.
- Except in an emergency, adults will only touch children when it is absolutely necessary for the activity as detailed in the Registration form.

Photos and Other Personal information

- Permission is sought via the Registration Form, which all pupils/parents complete, for the use of photographic and video material featuring children for promotional, advertising, training or other purposes.
- Permission will be sought from a parent/guardian for the disclosure of any personal information that relates to their child through any medium, including the website.
- Videos are a useful tool for the learning and revision of dances. Students may wish to record a class dancing in order to be able to learn and practice dances at home. Permission of all students in the class will be sought before any videos take place. Pupils will also be reminded that no recording should be shared with anyone else or by any means.
- At the end of term parents and friends are invited to watch classes. Parents may take photos and record, however they must not share any photos or recording by any means (e.g. social media) if they include any other child.
- Children not to take photos or videos in dressing rooms. Children may not 'post' any photos or videos on social media without first asking permission of all those who may be in the photo or video.

Signs of Possible Abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

Signs of Possible Physical Abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or rough games
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Bruises, bites, burns and fractures, for example, which do not have an accidental explanation
- The child gives inconsistent accounts for the cause of injuries
- Frozen watchfulness

Signs of Possible Sexual Abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- The child has an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour for their age, or regularly engages in sexual play inappropriate for their age
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains
- The child is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares which sometimes have overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia.

Signs of Possible Emotional Abuse

- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety, changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- Seeking adult attention and not mixing well with other children
- Sleep or speech disorders
- Negative statements about self
- Highly aggressive or cruel to others
- Extreme shyness or passivity
- Running away, stealing and lying

Signs of Possible Neglect

- Dirty skin, body smells, unwashed, uncombed hair and untreated lice
- Clothing that is dirty, too big or small, or inappropriate for weather conditions
- Frequently left unsupervised or alone
- Frequent diarrhoea
- Frequent tiredness
- Untreated illnesses, infected cuts or physical complaints which the carer does not respond to
- Frequently hungry
- Overeating junk food

Suspicion of Abuse

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of BSD, please make this known to the DSL.
- Please make a note for your own records of what you suspect or witnessed as well as your response, in case there is any follow-up in which you are involved.
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of BSD, chaperone, venue staff etc, that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the classes, rehearsal rooms, etc. and will not have any unsupervised involvement with any child within the care of BSD.

Disclosure of Abuse

If a child confides in you that abuse has taken place:

- Remain calm and in control, but do not delay in taking action.
- Listen carefully to what has been said.
- Do not ask leading or probing questions
- Do not promise to keep it a secret. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share the information with others who need to know and who will be able to help. Take the first opportunity available to share this information with the person with responsibility for child protection.
- Reassure the child that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone, and explain what you are going to do next.
- Make a record of what you were told. Note the time, date, names involved/mentioned and with whom you shared the information. Sign and date this record.

Recording of Disclosure of Abuse

The DSL will ensure that:

- In all situations, (including where a disclosure was made in confidence) the details of an allegation or reported incident will be recorded, regardless of whether the concerns were shared with a statutory child protection agency.
- The record will be securely stored and shared only with those that need to know about the incident.

Additional Information on how to report concerns about a child's welfare

- If you think a child is in immediate danger, contact the police on 999. If you're worried about a child but they are not in immediate danger, you should share your concerns.
 - Follow your organisational child protection procedures. Organisations that work with children and families must have [safeguarding policies and procedures](#) in place.
 - Contact the NSPCC Helpline on [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000) or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk. Our trained professionals will talk through your concerns with you and give you expert advice.
- Contact your local child protection services. Their contact details can be found on the website for the local authority the child lives in.
- Contact the police.

The above services will risk assess the situation and take action to protect the child as appropriate either through statutory involvement or other support. This may include making a referral to the local authority.

Rights and Confidentiality

- If a complaint is made against a member of BSD, he or she will be made aware of their rights under this policy and of the appropriate disciplinary procedures.
 - No matter how you feel about the complaint, all affected parties will have the right to confidentiality. Remember also that any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.
- Remember that in criminal law the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.