



## **ASCOT - BERKSHIRE DANCE ACADEMY**

### **SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

#### **Policy Aims**

1. Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Ascot- Berkshire Dance Academy
2. To provide guidance and support for all staff, volunteers and adults to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.
3. Identify children who are at risk of harm and act promptly
4. Work in partnership with parents careers and external safeguarding agencies.

All staff, volunteers and adults at Ascot - Berkshire Dance Academy must adhere to this policy and must understand their duties and responsibilities regarding safeguarding. A copy of this policy will be available at all times.

All staff, volunteers and adults have a strict duty never to subject a child to any form of harm or abuse. Failure to adhere to these procedures will be treated as gross misconduct.

#### **Our Responsibility**

Here at Ascot - Berkshire Dance Academy we recognise we have a responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of all children and young people we work with and have an explicit duty to do so under the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and the Education Act 2002 (England). We believe that no child should be treated any less favourably than others in accessing services that meet their needs and that all children, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.

A “child” is anyone under the age of 18 and we therefore have a duty to protect anyone attending Ascot - Berkshire Dance Academy within this age bracket when it comes to safeguarding and child protection.

We have a duty to ensure our staff are fully aware of our procedures and policies. We do this by making our staff have a copy of our policies and that our policies are accessible to all staff members, chaperones, parents and volunteers.

#### **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people means:**

- Protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of a child’s health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to ensure that children have the best life chances.

We do this by:



- Identifying and responding to concerns about a child or young person
- Providing a safe and happy dance environment
- Having policies available on the website and accessible at any time
- Thinking about equality and diversity and representation and support in your school
- Using safer recruitment strategies such as all staff having DBS check and references before they join your team

At Ascot - Berkshire Dance Academy all concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously. It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers and adults to take steps to protect children, to keep them safe from hazards and to take appropriate action in the event of an accident. It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers and adults to take reasonable steps to protect children and young people from harm and abuse while in contact with our school and our staff and to report any incident of or suspicion of abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or in their absence directly to the appropriate statutory authority.

All individuals working at Ascot - Berkshire Dance Academy as staff or chaperones and have contact with children and young people are required to hold a valid, clear DBS check. All staff and volunteers will be recruited in line with safer recruitment guidance. Ascot - Berkshire Dance Academy will ensure that all recruitment procedures comply with safer recruitment standards such as:

1. DBS checks for staff working with our students.
2. Verification of identity, right to work and professional references
3. Safeguarding training for safeguarding within sport

### **Digital and Online Safety**

Ascot Berkshire Dance Academy does not use the internet as part of its dance training, we do have a social media account as we recognise that children may access online content relating to dance. Therefore we will:

1. Remind children and parents about online safety when appropriate
2. Ensure that any photos or recordings taken are stored safely and with consent
3. Report any concerns about online abuse to the designated safeguarding lead.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

Designated Safeguarding Lead is **Gemma McDonagh**  
[gemma.berkshiredanceacademy.co.uk](mailto:gemma.berkshiredanceacademy.co.uk)  
**07586807715**

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is **Eva Whittall**  
[evawhittall22@gmail.com](mailto:evawhittall22@gmail.com)  
**07825135787**



## Managing Allegations

If any member of staff or volunteer has concerns about the behaviour or conduct of another individual within the organisation the nature of the concern should be reported to **Gemma McDonagh** as Designated Safeguarding Lead or **Eva Whittall** DSL deputy lead. The member of staff who has a concern or to whom the allegation or concern is reported should not question the child or investigate further. **Gemma McDonagh** and/or **Eva Whittall** will report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). If an allegation or concern is raised about a member of staff, outside of work, this may still present a risk of harm to children for whom that member of staff is responsible and as such the general principles of this policy still apply.

## Harm to Children

Everybody working with children at Ascot - Berkshire Dance Academy must be alert to the needs of children and the risk of harm. All staff, volunteers and adults should be able to recognise, and know how to act upon evidence that a child's health or development is being impaired or that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. We will make every effort to protect children from harm when they are visiting our attending our classes.

## We Will Ensure

- Appropriate recruitment and selection procedures.
- Provision of safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers hold clear current DBS checks.

## Where We Suspect Harm and Abuse

1. Every member of staff has a duty to be alert to the signs of harm and abuse.
2. Where they have concerns, these should be recorded carefully and accurately.

All concerns should be discussed with the Ascot - Berkshire Dance Academy's Designated Safeguarding Leads. A decision shall then be made regarding sharing this concern onward to children's social care/ children's social work services or the police. Where possible and only if it is safe to do so the teacher who has the concern or the Designated Safeguarding Lead should let the parent / carer of that child know if they intend to raise that concern with children's social care/children's social work services and they should seek their permission to share information.

All information sharing must be Data Protection Act and GDPR compliant. Sharing must be discrete, appropriate, honest and accurate but it is important for all staff and volunteers to be aware GDPR and Data Protection law does not create a barrier to sharing safeguarding information and all concerns MUST be shared with the DSL and children's safeguarding as necessary.

## Recognising Harm and Abuse

Below are the definitions of harm to children and young people use these to help you recognise harm and ensure you cause no harm.

**Physical abuse:** A form of abuse that 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 a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately causes illness in a child.

**Emotional abuse:** The persistent emotional maltreatment 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, unloved, inadequate, or valued in so far as they meet the needs of another person only, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as the over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (or cyber bullying), causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse:** Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, touching outside of clothing. They may also include non contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Neglect:** The persistent failure to meet a child's physical and/ or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home and abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers); ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include an unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

**Contextual/Online Abuse:** harm occurring outside the home or through digital means

If A Child Tells Us They Have Experienced Harm and Abuse:

- Always listen to what the child has to say with an open mind
- Do not ask leading or probing questions

- Never stop a child who is talking freely about significant event
- Make a note of the discussion, taking care to record the timings, setting and people present, as well as what was said
- Do not ask children to make a written statement
- Never promise a child that what they have told you may be kept secret.
- Explain that you have responsibility to share information
- Inform the DSL for your organisation immediately.

### **Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers**

Any allegation that a member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that harmed or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk

MUST be reported to the DSL and referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day

### **Promoting Good Practice**

Child abuse can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and outside environments. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported to the principals.

### **Good Practice Guidelines**

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations.

### **Use of Photographic/filming equipment at events/class**

We have requested parental consent for any photographs or filming that takes place. If any child has a photo taken of them without permission or without them knowing, this will be classed as gross misconduct.

### **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information about children and families will be shared only when necessary and in line with data protection legislation. Safeguarding concerns will not be treated as confidential if doing so would put a child at risk.

### **Bullying**

If bullying is suspected, the following actions will take place:



- All children will be encouraged to speak about their concerns. The victim will be helped to speak out and to tell someone in authority.
- All allegations will be investigated and actions taken to ensure the safety of the victim.
- Victims and alleged bullies will be spoken to separately
- Victims will be reassured that they can trust who they are speaking to and they will be helped, but promises must not be made to tell no one else. Any concerns must be reported to staff immediately so appropriate action can be taken.

To help the victim and to prevent bullying, all signs of bullying will be taken very seriously.

Please note that if there are any safeguarding concerns, these must be reported to Gemma McDonagh and/or Eva Whittall immediately as the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

WE ALSO USE THE NATD CHILD PROTECTION POLICY ALONGSIDE OUR OWN POLICY, WHICH CAN BE FOUND AT - <https://www.natd.org.uk/dance/natd-policies/>