

## **Dance Consortium's Safeguarding Policy Statement**

At Dance Consortium, we prioritise the safety and well-being of all participants involved in our learning and engagement events. Whether it's in person at our member venues or through online platforms, we strive to ensure a secure and thoughtful environment, particularly for children and vulnerable adults. Our aim is to promote good practice, supervision, support, and prevention, while also increasing awareness among our staff and visiting company personnel.

We recognise that the welfare and interests of children and adults at risk are of utmost importance. Our policy is designed to ensure inclusivity for everyone, regardless of age, gender, religion, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background. We communicate this policy to all our staff, visiting companies, volunteers, contractors, and participating artists.

As part of our safeguarding policy, we commit to:

- Prioritising the safety and well-being of children and adults at risk
- Ensuring that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding and receives appropriate training to recognise and respond to signs of abuse, neglect, and other concerns
- Implementing robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures to mitigate risks
- Protecting all children, young people, and adults involved from potential harm online, while acknowledging the opportunities and risks of the digital world
- Respecting and valuing the opinions and experiences of children, taking them seriously and listening to them
- Taking appropriate action in the event of incidents or concerns of abuse and providing support to individuals who raise or disclose concerns
- Preventing the employment or deployment of unsuitable individuals
- Maintaining confidential, detailed, and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns securely

We follow the procedures outlined in the Department for Education's "Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children" (2018) and the NSPCC's "Social Media and Online Safety" guidance. Additionally, considering our engagement with international companies, our policy aligns with the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991).

This policy undergoes review every two years and may also be updated whenever there are changes in government guidance, legislation, or organisational structure. The designated Safeguarding Lead is Claire Morton, Senior Producer.

For a copy of the full Safeguarding - Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy, please contact [admin@danceconsortium.com](mailto:admin@danceconsortium.com).

## **Dance Consortium's Safeguarding Policy**

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### **SECTION A: SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Dance Consortium is committed to providing exceptional international dance experiences for UK audiences. Our outreach and learning activities bring dance into schools and community groups, with the involvement of dancers, choreographers, technical and production staff from touring companies. We highly value these learning and participation experiences and recognise the importance of ensuring the safety of all participants, particularly children and vulnerable adults. This includes both in-person and online activities. We take all suspicions and allegations of inappropriate behaviour seriously and respond promptly and appropriately.

#### **DEFINITION**

In the context of this policy, a "child" refers to any individual under the age of 18, as defined by the Children Act 1989. However, the policy also applies to young people and vulnerable adults engaging with Dance Consortium activities. Whenever the term "child" is used in this document, it includes young people and vulnerable adults as well.

The term "vulnerable adult" refers to instances when an adult is receiving or accessing a service that renders them vulnerable at that time.

## **1. AIMS OF THIS POLICY**

This policy aims to ensure a safe physical environment for all participants involved in Dance Consortium's learning and outreach activities, both at our Member Venues and other locations such as schools and community groups. The policy also addresses risks and safety associated with online activities produced and presented by Dance Consortium. Specifically, it outlines Dance Consortium's commitment to:

- Promoting and prioritising the safety and well-being of children, young people, and adults at risk.
- Respecting and valuing children, taking their opinions seriously and listening to them.
- Ensuring that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and providing appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify, and respond to signs of abuse, neglect, and other safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring the safety and well-being of children and young people when utilising online platforms and social media.
- Implementing robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures.
- Taking appropriate action in the event of incidents or concerns of abuse and providing support to individuals who raise or disclose such concerns.
- Preventing the employment or deployment of unsuitable individuals.
- Maintaining confidential, detailed, and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns securely.

## **2. WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO**

This policy applies to all activities organised by Dance Consortium involving children, whether in person or through online workshops and events. It also applies to all individuals involved in delivering these activities, whether paid or unpaid. This includes permanent and temporary staff, freelance staff, casual staff, student placements, volunteers, and contractors. The Designated Safeguarding Lead at Dance Consortium is the Learning and Participation Producer, who is required to hold an Enhanced DBS Referral. The Programme Coordinator (Ailey Project) also serves as a safeguarding contact and holds an Enhanced DBS Referral.

## **3. RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE POLICY**

The Learning and Participation Producer is responsible for maintaining this policy and ensuring compliance with current legislation. All individuals identified in Section 2 are responsible for implementing the Safeguarding Policy and should act on any concerns, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant. When working with children and young people during Dance Consortium events, all staff (paid or unpaid) are in positions of trust. It is crucial that guest artists, staff, and volunteers understand that they may be seen as role models by children and young people, and they must always act appropriately. All staff should adhere to the best practice guidelines. Dance Consortium and visiting companies should always ensure that capable and suitable individuals are employed to work with children and that all employees and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities under this Policy.

## **4. THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) reviews the Safeguarding Policy every two years and reports to the Executive Director and Directors as necessary. The DSL raises awareness of safeguarding measures with visiting companies, Dance Consortium Member Venues, and relevant project partners as required. The DSL proactively ensures that all events have appropriate risk assessments, supervision levels, and safety measures in place. The responsibilities of the DSL are outlined below:

## **DSL RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **1. Managing Referrals and Record Keeping**

- a. Refer any cases to the appropriate authorities, such as Social Services or the Police, if a crime has been committed.
- b. Provide support, advice, and expertise to staff members regarding child protection and safeguarding matters.
- c. Maintain written records of child protection and safeguarding concerns.
- d. Create a file for each safeguarding incident.
- e. Ensure that all records are kept confidential and securely stored.

### **2. Inter-Agency Working and Information Sharing**

- a. Collaborate with Children Social Care as necessary, following the guidelines outlined in section 47 of the Children's Act 1989.
- b. Share relevant information with other agencies as appropriate.

### **3. Training**

- a. Undergo appropriate training every two years and update knowledge and skills annually.
- b. Ensure that staff members understand and have access to our Safeguarding Policy.
- c. Conduct staff briefings for freelance staff and visiting company artists as needed, and distribute the code of conduct to all staff involved in learning and participation activities.

### **4. Awareness Raising**

- a. Review the Safeguarding Policy every two years and report to the Executive Director and Directors as required.
- b. Make the Policy Statement publicly available and raise awareness of it among visiting companies and Dance Consortium member venues.

### **5. Quality Assurance**

- a. Monitor the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and practices and conduct an annual audit report.
- b. Provide annual reports to the Executive Director and Directors.
- c. Take the lead in addressing any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in safeguarding arrangements.

Regarding visiting company artists who may not have a DBS referral, additional safeguarding measures must be implemented if they directly engage with children or vulnerable adults in a manner that aligns with UK safeguarding standards. This should be communicated to Member Venues and external organisations when setting up events. Typically, a school teacher, youth group leader, or another DBS-checked group leader can provide necessary supervision for their own group. Alternatively, the presence of a member of the Member Venue's Learning and Participation staff is sufficient. The Dance Consortium's Learning and Participation Producer or the Programme Coordinator (Ailey Project) can fulfill this role if required and agreed upon in advance.

Most staff involved in delivering Dance Consortium tour activities are not engaged in regulated activity concerning children or adults, so DBS referrals do not apply since unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults is not expected.

Staff briefings will be organised for freelance staff and visiting company artists as appropriate, and the code of conduct will be distributed to all staff involved in learning and participation activities. The DSL will manage referrals and maintain all necessary records.

## **SECTION B: SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE**

### **1. CATEGORIES OF ABUSE AND ONLINE SAFETY RISKS**

The following are categories of abuse and online safety risks outlined in Dance Consortium's safeguarding policy:

**Neglect:** When adults fail to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, leading to the serious impairment of the child's health or development. This may also include a refusal to provide love, affection and attention to children.

**Physical Abuse:** When someone physically harms or injures children through actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning or causing any other physical harm to a child.

**Sexual Abuse:** When children are exploited to satisfy someone's sexual needs. This includes acts such as full sexual intercourse, fondling, showing children pornographic material, as well as online risks like sexting and grooming.

**Emotional Abuse:** The persistent emotional mistreatment of a child, resulting in severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This may involve conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only based on meeting someone else's needs. It may also include imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations, causing fear, constant shouting, threats, taunting, severe bullying, or any form of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is present in all forms of mistreatment of a child.

The above definitions were adapted from the 'Department for Children Schools and Families Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018). Additional guidance on various issues can be sought from the GOV.UK website, including child sexual exploitation, bullying (including online bullying, sexting, and grooming), domestic violence, drugs, faith abuse, slavery, radicalisation, forced marriage, gangs and youth violence, gender-based violence/violence against women, honor-based violence, mental health, self-harm, and suicidal behaviour.

### **2. RECOGNISING ABUSE**

The following list provides indicators that may help recognise if a child is experiencing abuse. This list is not exhaustive:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries, such as bruising, cuts, or burns, especially in unusual body locations.
- Inconsistent explanations for injuries.
- Disclosure from the child describing abusive acts involving them.
- Concern expressed by someone else (a child or adult) about the welfare of another child.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour, such as becoming extremely quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour (in person or online).
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty making friends.

- Prevention from socialising with other children.
- Altered eating patterns, including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Increasingly poor personal hygiene.

This list is not exhaustive, and a child may exhibit more than one indicator. It is the responsibility of all staff members or contractors to take necessary action if they believe abuse is occurring.

### **3. DISCLOSURE AND RESPONSE PROCEDURES**

Dance Consortium recognises the importance of having clear procedures in place to guide staff in handling situations where a safeguarding concern arises. The term "disclosure" refers to when a child or vulnerable person informs an adult about inappropriate behaviour or abuse. It is not the responsibility of anyone working for Dance Consortium, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to determine whether child abuse has occurred. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting them to the Designated Responsible Person at Dance Consortium or the Member Venue, and, when appropriate, to the relevant authorities. Concerns may also arise when a disclosure is made by another child or adult. All disclosures, regardless of the source, should be taken seriously.

Staff and artists working with Dance Consortium should follow the procedures outlined below and complete the Safeguarding Incident Report Form:

#### **Responding to a child - The Four Rs:**

##### *Receive*

- Listen to the child.
- Take the child seriously.
- Maintain an open mind.

##### *React*

- Stay calm and professional.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Avoid criticism.
- Explain the next steps.
- Contact Dance Consortium's designated safeguarding lead.

##### *Reassure*

- "You've done the right thing!"
- Be honest about possible outcomes.
- Never promise confidentiality; find an appropriate opportunity to explain that information may need to be shared with others.

##### *Record*

- Make immediate and brief notes.
- Keep the notes secure.
- Record the specific words used by the child or vulnerable adult.
- Maintain impartiality in recording the information.

## REPORTING

### Designated Safeguarding Lead

[claire.morton@danceconsortium.com](mailto:claire.morton@danceconsortium.com) Senior Producer

Or

[Joe.Bates@danceconsortium.com](mailto:Joe.Bates@danceconsortium.com) Chief Executive

Iona Waite - Nominated Safeguarding Director (on the board)

### The NSPCC (National Centre)

42 Curtain Road, London, EC2A 3NH  
0808 800 5000

### Social Services or Police

Contact local authority or unitary borough where activity is based.

Contact local or regional police where activity is based.

### Further Information:

NSPCC - Safeguarding guidance: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection>

Childline - Safe reporting guidance: <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

NSPCC - Online Safety and social media guidance:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/social-media-and-online-safety>

CPS - Child Protection in sport guidance on online safety:

<https://the cpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/online-safety/#heading-top>

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## SECTION C: GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES, ONLINE CONTENT, PERFORMANCE CONTENT AND USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

### 1. GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Creating a safe and positive environment is essential for promoting the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable individuals. Dance Consortium personnel should uphold exemplary behaviour to reduce the likelihood of issues and false allegations. The following guidelines are designed to foster a safe and positive culture for effective working:

Good practice in **planning an event/project** involves:

- Conducting a risk assessment at the outset and regularly monitoring risks throughout the project.
- Designating responsible individuals for safeguarding and ensuring touring artists and company members are accompanied by a representative from the Member Venue or Dance Consortium for off-site activities.
- Establishing systems to maintain good relationships with parents/carers and other stakeholders.
- Involving parents, guardians, and designated adult leaders whenever possible, ensuring supervision is conducted in pairs if necessary.
- Considering the content/themes of the work and their potential impact on children, young people, and vulnerable individuals.
- Knowing how to contact local authority social services to report concerns.
- Ensuring separate changing spaces for adults and children, with children accompanied by parents or staff members with appropriate background checks.
- Having emergency contact details readily available during workshops.

- Avoiding the use of inappropriate or offensive language in front of children, young people and vulnerable individuals.
- Obtaining parental consent before taking photographs or video recordings.
- Familiarising oneself with emergency procedures at the venue and ensuring only qualified first aiders administer first aid.
- Notifying the group lead or parents/carer about any accidents during sessions.
- Conducting a safety inspection of the space before admitting the group, addressing any foreseeable dangers with venue staff or finding alternative arrangements if necessary.
- Maintaining a register of attendance for each session.
- Ensuring children only consume food and drinks they bring, excluding water, to account for allergies.
- Ensuring all children are collected by their parent/carer, with a supervision plan in place if a child is not collected promptly.
- For remote teaching, online meetings or livestreams, conducting a risk assessment covering personal information protection, online safeguards, and maintaining an appropriate and professional background environment.

Good practice in **delivering a confident, well-planned, creative workshop or event** includes:

- Wearing appropriate clothing and removing jewellery.
- Starting sessions on time, fully prepared with necessary music or resources.
- If team teaching, planning sessions in advance and clarifying responsibilities with all involved parties.
- Selecting appropriate movement material and adapting texts to safeguard children, young people, and vulnerable individuals.
- Treating all participants with respect and using appropriate language throughout the workshop.
- Using designated staff facilities for personal needs.
- Following the policy of outreach or community locations when working off-site, including signing in and out as required.
- Conducting a safety inspection of the space before admitting the group, addressing any foreseeable dangers with venue staff or finding alternative arrangements if necessary.
- For remote teaching, online meetings, or livestreams, maintaining an appropriate and professional background environment.
- Informing the group lead or parents/carer about any accidents that occurred during the session.
- Protecting vulnerable or unconfident learners when teaching mixed age or ability ranges and ensuring sensitivity to those uncomfortable with certain activities.
- Avoiding nudity and intimate contact in lessons.
- Being mindful that others may interpret actions or words differently, regardless of intentions.
- Exercising caution when discussing sensitive issues with children or young people, such as performance themes/content, cultural or social issues or body awareness.

Good practice in **appropriate physical contact** involves:

- Maintaining a safe and respectful distance from participants.
- Physical contact during dance workshops is expected for correctional purposes only. Seek permission from individuals before initiating any physical contact.
- Accurately record any injuries sustained according to the relevant accident policy of the school, theatre, or community organisation.



- Immediately inform a colleague and the parents if there are concerns about a child potentially making an allegation against you, such as accidental injury or signs of distress.

Good practice **in interpersonal dealings** entails:

- Always working in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations, and promoting transparency.
- Treating all individuals with respect and dignity.
- Serving as a positive role model by refraining from smoking or consuming alcohol in the presence of children.
- Valuing and taking participants' contributions seriously, involving them in activity planning whenever possible.
- Creating a fun and enjoyable atmosphere.
- Prioritising the welfare of each participant above achieving goals.
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust, empowering children, young people, and vulnerable adults in the decision-making process.
- Providing enthusiastic and constructive feedback instead of negative criticism.
- Exhibiting excellent role-model behaviour in all interactions.
- Avoiding personal association with children met through work, including on social networking sites. Communication with children, young people, or vulnerable adults should occur through official Dance Consortium or professional email addresses only. Staff should not add current project participants or students as friends on social networking sites like TikTok, Facebook or Twitter.
- Recognising that disabled children or young people may be particularly vulnerable to abuse.

Good practice in **managing sensitive information** involves:

- Establishing a policy and procedures for capturing, using, and storing photographs or images of children, young people, or vulnerable adults.
- Exercising caution and monitoring web-based materials and activities.
- For marketing, social media, and communications purposes, ensuring no surnames, locations, or identifying information that may lead to a child's identification are used.
- Implementing agreed-upon procedures for reporting suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- Ensuring confidentiality to protect the rights of employees, contractors, and volunteers, including secure handling, storage, and disposal of any provided information about artists, workshop facilitators, or other individuals involved in projects (DPA 1998).

Good practice in **online behaviour and remote delivery** includes:

- Using only the agreed/organisational platform for communication. Staff should communicate with children and young people through authorised social media/communication accounts provided by the organisation and not their personal accounts.
- Keeping all communications relevant to the project and organisation's work.
- Using age-appropriate language in all interactions.
- Considering the implementation of an online safety agreement with young people and their parents/guardians in consultation with project partners.
- Being aware of the digital footprint and ensuring personal social media accounts are free of inappropriate or harmful content and do not disclose personal information such as email addresses or phone numbers.
- If setting up online communities on forums or instant messaging, establishing clear guidelines among administrators regarding acceptable content, moderation policies, and whether children can post or submit content.

Good practice **in residential/overnight safeguarding** includes:

- Conducting a thorough risk assessment for all residential activities, encompassing project schedules, meal times, leisure activities, and accommodation arrangements.
- Ensuring accommodation arrangements meet the needs of the group, such as twin rooms on the same floor in a hotel setting.
- Securing written parental consent, at the beginning of a child's involvement/contract, to act in loco parentis in case emergency first aid or other medical treatment is required.
- If supervising children of mixed genders, ensuring there are both male and female staff members.
- Providing a comprehensive handbook to young people and their parents/carers to prepare them for residential situations.
- Employing qualified and vetted chaperones.
- always maintaining a safe and appropriate distance from children during residential events. Adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their own rooms.
- Ensuring all staff and guests associated with the residential activity understand their responsibility to be exemplary role models, including refraining from smoking or consuming alcohol in the company of children.
- Questioning any unknown adults attempting to engage with children who enter the residential premises.

Good practice in **professional development** involves:

- Staying up to date with health and safety practices in artistic practice
- Participating in relevant development and training opportunities.
- Ensuring designated personnel attend required safeguarding training.

### **Practices to be avoided:**

The following situations should be avoided unless they are necessary emergencies. If any of these situations arise, they should be undertaken with the full knowledge and consent of management or the child's parents. Otherwise, please refrain from the following:

- Being unsupervised with any child at any time during the workshop.
- Arranging to meet a child, young person, or vulnerable adult outside the theatre or workshop setting.
- Accepting friend requests on personal email or social media accounts from children.

### **Practice never to be sanctioned**

You should never:

- Allow children to use inappropriate language in person or in online discussions unchallenged
- Allow allegations made by a child to be ignored, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Share a room/cubicle with a child
- You must not be under the influence of either drugs or alcohol.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do by themselves
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised
- Be the only adult present with a child or children

## **2. CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN ONLINE WORKSHOPS OR EVENTS**

Dance Consortium is alert to the opportunities running online events and meetings presents, especially for engaging new audiences including those who may experience barriers in engaging with so-called traditional arts and culture presentations and activities. Dance Consortium is committed to ensuring it uses online platforms responsibly, by putting appropriate safeguards in place to protect children from potential risks or communicating with them online. This includes guidelines for all personnel involved, including guests and visiting company artists, to mitigate risk and promote good practice.

Parents or children online safety agreement - parents to consent for filming of sessions, to agree to be in the room for part/all of the session (or not).

## **3. CHILDREN ATTENDING PERFORMANCES**

Children can attend performances as part of a school group or with their family and friends. The responsibility for children's safety and wellbeing while they are attending a performance remains with the adult always accompanying them.

With organised groups is important to ensure that there is an adequate level of supervision that is appropriate to the age group and needs of the children attending, in line with the host Member Venue's safeguarding and groups policy.

## **4. PERFORMANCE CONTENT**

Where a performance contains more adult themes or explicit language which may be considered inappropriate for children or young people, the Executive Director and Directors will collaborate on what guidance should be communicated to patrons and whether there should be any restricted entry. Relevant information to be shared with all venues to cascade through relevant teams such as programming, marketing and box office.

## **5. USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO OF CHILDREN**

There are times when photographs are taken of children and young people as audience members or participating in learning and participation events and voluntary activities for purposes of publicity. There is the potential to misuse the content of such photographs.

The following protocols govern the taking of photos or video footage of children/young people:

- Do not take any photos of children/young people except for purposes of publicising Dance Consortium or related touring activities.
- The purposes should be explained to the child or young person according to their age, development and understanding and to the parent/carer. A child or young person must not be photographed if they do not wish to be or if their parent/carer does not wish them to be.
- A consent form must be signed by a parent/guardian. This is the responsibility of Dance Consortium or the DC Member venue and in some cases external partners or schools.
- The use of photography or reproduction of photographic images or the use of videos must always have a clear and child-centred purpose.
- Children/young people must be clothed and their torsos covered when being photographed or videoed.

- When photos have been taken by Dance Consortium staff, these images must be downloaded and stored to Dance Consortium equipment only. Personnel must not download images of children/young people to personal computers or send them/take them to their own home. Personnel must not keep the images of children/young people in their private possession.
- Staff must not use mobile phones to take pictures of children and young people.
- The name of the child/young person in the image must not be used, unless the agreed purpose of using the picture includes naming the child/young person e.g. for a celebration of an achievement, in which case written consent from the parent/carer must be secured
- Photographs taken for publicity purposes may be kept for three years. If the image is to be used for website publicity this must be stated on the consent form.
- Images must be stored securely. All photographs must be labelled and dated. At the end of three years all images are to be destroyed.

**APPENDIX 1: SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

To be completed by the member of staff who has the concern

Your name:
Your position:
Child's name:
Child's address (if known):
Child's contact telephone number (if known):
Parent/guardian/carers name and address (if known):
Child's date of birth (if known):
Your observations, including a description of any visible bruising or other injuries:
Exactly what the child said and what you said: (Remember do not lead the child - record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if required)
Date and time of incidents and any other relevant information:
Action taken so far:
Name and details of witness if applicable:
Signature:  Print name:  Date: