



Emerald School of Dance Child Protection Policy

This policy applies to all staff, including volunteers working on behalf or with Emerald School of Dance.

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect children and young people who receive Emerald School of Dance classes.
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection;

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children

We recognise that:

- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

Definitions:

Emerald School of Dance adopts the definition used in the Children Act 2004 and in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.

This can be summarised as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Safeguarding relates to a wide range of aspects of a child's life which are interconnected including:

- health and safety including pupils' health and safety
- pupils' attendance and wellbeing
- meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions
- safe use of images
- safer recruitment and DBS checks
- first aid
- equality and diversity

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Adopting child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.

Procedures

- Ensure we have a designated person for child protection
- Ensure every member of staff (including volunteers) knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy.

- Keep records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely.
- Develop and follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer and report to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), as appropriate
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed, by ensuring staff are DBS checked at the appropriate level.
- To raise the awareness of all staff, students and volunteers to the need for child protection and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children thought to be at risk.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all staff.
- To develop a structured internal procedure to be followed by all members of the dance school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To ensure all new staff and volunteers are informed about the dance school's child protection and safeguarding policy during their induction.
- Ensure all staff receive safeguarding updates at least annually.
- To seek advice from and report cases to social care when appropriate.

Procedures for dealing with disclosures:

It is vital that our actions do not abuse the child further or prejudice further enquiries.

If a member of staff receives a disclosure from a child they should:

1. **Listen**
 - take what the child says seriously
 - accept what the child says
2. **Stay calm**
 - and in control.
3. **Reassure**
 - and make the child feel safe.
4. **Use open questions**
 - such as “is there anything else you want to tell me?” or “yes?” or “and?”
5. **Do not ask leading or probing questions**
 - it is not our role to investigate
6. **Make notes**
 - about what was said – noting the position of any physical injuries/marks if appropriate, on a body map.

7. Don't promise confidentiality

reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing, and explain whom you will have to tell (the Designated Safeguarding Lead) and why.

8. Inform the designated teacher

– as soon as possible and give them the notes made.

USE TED – Tell me what happened, Explain how this happened, and Describe how this happened.

Confidentiality

Pupils and their families are entitled to confidentiality but dance school staff have a duty to share confidential information with other professionals if a pupil is at risk, particularly investigating agencies.

A child's welfare will always take precedence in information sharing.

If a pupil confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively that he/she have a responsibility to refer for the child's own sake. Within that context, the child should, however, be reassured that the matter will be disclosed only to the people who need to know about it.

Personal information about all pupils' and their families is regarded by those who work in this dance school as confidential. Staff who receive the information about children and families in the course of their work should have the information only within their professional context.

All records relating to child protection incidents will be maintained by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, stored securely and only shared as is consistent with the protection of children.

Under the Data Protection Act parents have a right to see all notes, unless the content could jeopardise a child's safety.

Physical Contact

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children.
- Adults will only touch children when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.
- Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

Sometimes in lessons it may be useful to help guide a student into the correct position by moving their arm for example. Physically 'spotting' children when developing new skills in our Acro classes is also often required, for example, holding the students legs whilst they are learning a handstand. Where physical touch is necessary, teachers at Emerald School of Dance will always seek consent from the child first, and explain clearly what it is they will be doing.

Photographs and images of children

- Emerald School of Dance will always seek written consent from parents and guardians for the use of photographs of children during classes/rehearsals and performances. It is the parents and guardians decision whether to give consent or not and we respect each families decision individually. Where permission is given we understand there are risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs on web sites and in other publications such as theatre programmes. Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information and can also be used or adapted for inappropriate use.

Where permission is given to photograph children we will-

- Never name children on any of our social media platforms or share other personal information such as the child's age or location.
- Assess potential risks of any images taken before sharing, regarding the type of clothing the child is wearing and whether it may reduce or increase the risk of inappropriate use.
- Any images taken will be kept safely and securely.
- During shows and performances, audience members will be made aware before any performance that they should not photograph other children, and should not share photographs or other children on social media. There may be shows and performances where the use of any photography is strictly prohibited, this will be made clear in advance.
- The use of cameras or mobile phones with camera or filming capability in dressing rooms and other inappropriate environments is forbidden, and all volunteers/chaperones/children will be made aware of this.

E-Safety

Most of our children will use mobile phones and computers. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some men, women and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings.

- Children who have their own mobile phones and bring them into classes must have them switched off and stored safely away. They are not permitted to use mobile phones or any other type of smart device during lessons.
- During shows we do not allow the use of smart devices or mobile phones back stage. This is to protect our children from potential risks.
- Teachers and any other staff working with Emerald School of dance will not communicate with children via their phone or email, but with their parents.
- Cyber-bullying by children, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying.

Accidents

- During all classes/performances/shows/competitions, Emerald School of dance will always have a qualified and appointed first aid person present to carry out first aid if needed.
- If an accident occurs, it will be recorded in our accident book and signed by the parent or guardian collecting the child to acknowledge they have been given a thorough explanation of what happened and if first aid was carried out.
- To avoid accidents, children will be advised of "house rules" regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. Children will be advised of the clothing and footwear appropriate to the work that will be undertaken. This applied to chaperones in a place of performance.

- If a child joins a production with an obvious physical injury a record of this will be made in the accident book. This record will be counter-signed by the person with responsibility for child protection. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later, and will also be a record that the child did not sustain the injury while participating in the production.

Chaperones for performances.

- Chaperones registered with their local authority, will be appointed by the organisation for the care of children during the production process. The chaperone is acting in loco-parentis and should exercise the care which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give to a child. The maximum number of children in the chaperone's care shall not exceed 12.
- Potential chaperones will be required to obtain a chaperone registration from their local authority and to supply this registration to the organisation once the local authority has approved them as a chaperone.
- Chaperones will be made aware of the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Chaperones may have unsupervised access to children in their care consequently a criminal record disclosure will be sought as a requirement of the local authority, before the grant approval for the chaperone
- Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the producer. If changes cannot be made satisfactorily the chaperone should consider not allowing the child to continue.
- If a chaperone considers that a child is unwell or too tired to continue, the chaperone must inform the producer and not allow the child to continue.
- Under the Dangerous Performances Act no child of compulsory school age is permitted to do anything which may endanger life or limb. This could include working on wires or heavy lifting. Chaperones should tell the producer to stop involving children in dangerous performances, and should contact the local authority.
- During performances, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the stage door and signing them into the building.
- Children will be kept together at all times except when using separate dressing rooms.
- Chaperones will be aware of where the children are at all times.
- Children are not to leave the place of performance unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parents.
- Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets.
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms.
- Chaperones should be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the venue, and will ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger.
- Chaperones should ensure that any accidents are reported to and recorded by the organisation.
- Chaperones should examine accident books each day. If an accident has occurred, the producer is not allowed to use that child until a medically qualified opinion has been obtained (not just the word of the parent or child).
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances. If someone different is to collect the child, a telephone call should be made to the parent to confirm the arrangements.
- Children should be signed out when leaving and a record made of the person collecting.
- If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child until arrangements have been made to take the child home.

Designated Safeguarding Lead- Robyn Cox- 07455022058

Date of policy: November 2024

Date of last review and update- 11th December 2024

