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## ***Policy for Safeguarding and the Protection of Children and Adults at Risk***

### **Table of Contents**

<u>1.0</u>	<u>Policy Statement and Code of Conduct</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>1.1</u>	<u>Prevention</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>1.2</u>	<u>Procedures</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>1.3</u>	<u>Supporting children and adults at risk</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>1.4</u>	<u>Preventing unsuitable people from working with children</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>1.5</u>	<u>Roles and Responsibilities of staff and other related policies</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>1.6</u>	<u>Four categories of abuse</u>	<u>22</u>
<u>1.7</u>	<u>Sources of further information</u>	<u>24</u>



## 1.0 Policy Statement and Code of Conduct

Dance4all recognises the responsibility it has under section 157/175 of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This responsibility is more fully explained in the statutory guidance for schools and colleges 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2022). All staff must be made aware of their duties and responsibilities under part one of this document, which are set out below.

Staff at Dance4all are required to read Part 1 and Annex B of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2022), 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for adults who work with children and young people in education settings' (2019) and 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners' (March 2015).

Dance4all acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and The People Dancing Professional Code of Conduct (<https://www.communitydance.org.uk/membership-and-insurance/professional-code-of-conduct>).

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children and adults at risk are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, everyone:

- has a positive and enjoyable experience of dance/exercise at Dance4all in a safe environment.
- are protected from abuse whilst participating in our dance/exercise classes or outside of the activity.

We acknowledge that some children and adults at risk, including those disabled or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

Everyone at Dance4all shares an objective to uphold the commitment of Dance4all to safeguard and promote the welfare of all its students, children, young people, and adults at risk, by adhering to the following principles as a code of conduct:

- Providing a safe environment in which to learn.
- Supporting children's development in ways which will foster a sense of self-esteem and independence.

- Fostering a learning environment in which every student feels valued and able to articulate their wishes and feelings in their preferred method of communication, in an atmosphere of acceptance and trust.
- Identifying and responding to children, young people, and adults at risk in need of support or protection.
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect its students, children, young people, and adults at risk from harm, discrimination, and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.
- Working to ensure that students, volunteers, parents, and carers all understand how to raise a concern and know how to ask for any help at any time.
- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents or concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual(s) who raise or disclose the concern.
- Ensure that confidential, detailed, and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.
- Record and store information securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.
- Prevent the employment or deployment of unsuitable individuals by recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.

This policy sets out how Dance4all discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are students at Dance4all. Our policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid, working in Dance4all and includes volunteers at external or special events. Teaching assistants, backstage helpers/chaperones, and office staff as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents/carers may also contact Dance4all.

Implementing a safe environment and a protective ethos suitable for a child also supports a respectful, safe, and protective environment for a young adult (up to age 25) or an adult at risk. We recognise, however, that the law requires a different process if a concern is raised where the subject of the concern is a legal adult (i.e., aged 18 or older). We will ensure that our staff are informed about the specific differences regarding consent and referral procedures that affect adults at risk. The cause for concern form template has a specific section to complete if the subject of the concern is an adult.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in Dance4all. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal or exclusion from Dance4all.

**There are four main elements to our policy:**

- 1. Prevention** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to all students, and the creation and maintenance of a protective ethos.

2. **Procedures** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
3. **Supporting children** particularly those who may have been abused or witnessed violence towards others.
4. **Preventing unsuitable people working with children.** Processes are followed to ensure that those who are unsuitable to work with children are not employed.

Dance4all has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsible for the maintenance and regular review of this policy in accordance with legal and statutory guidelines, as well as ensuring that all staff have read and agreed to abide by this policy. The DSL for Dance4all is Angharad Hughes. Dance4all also has a Deputy DSL, whose responsibilities are to support the DSL in their duties, and to step into the role of DSL in the absence or unavailability of the DSL.

This policy applies to:

- all children under the age of 18, whether their responsible adult is present or not,
- all adults at risk, and adult students where the application of good policy safeguards all participants,
- vulnerable people of any age who will benefit from similar safeguards – wherever the policy refers to children, this broader meaning applies, and
- all staff, contractors, freelance staff, volunteers, and consultants working within Dance4all or on our premises. In the case of contractors, it is the responsibility of the DSL to ensure that they are made aware of these guidelines.

Dance4all will therefore:

1. establish and maintain an environment where children feel safe, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to,
2. ensure children know that there are adults at Dance4all whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate, and
3. establish a protective ethos in which all individuals feel safe and respected and know who to approach if they are worried and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon.

This policy is available to parents/carers on request, is available in hard copy and via Dance4all's website. The implementation of procedures is subject to regular monitoring and review. Staff and volunteers will be encouraged to regularly report progress, challenges,

difficulties, achievement gaps, and areas where changes are required to the DSL. This policy will be reviewed every three years, or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- As required by the local safeguarding partnership or council
- As a result of any other significant change or event.

## **1.1 Prevention**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

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

We seek to prevent harm occurring. It is our policy that all Dance4all staff, teachers and volunteers will care, promote, and safeguard the wellbeing of all students, whether child, adult or considered at risk.

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends, and open and good quality lines of communication with all adults help to protect children and young adults.

We will endeavour to ensure that children and adult at risks are protected from harm while they visit or are attending classes. We will do this by:

1. making sure our staff are carefully selected,
2. providing training for staff on safeguarding issues and child protection, and working with adults at risk,
3. ensuring all staff undergo an Enhanced DBS Check and that at least two references are taken prior to any work is begun,
4. establishing and maintaining an ethos where all people, children, young people, and adults, feel secure and are encouraged to talk, to feel respected and listened to,
5. taking all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any child or adult at risk,
6. taking all reasonable steps to prevent any staff member, persons working for us, or member of the public from putting any child or adult at risk in a situation in which there is an unreasonable risk to their health and safety,

7. taking all reasonable steps to prevent any staff member, persons working for us or member of the public from physically, emotionally, or sexually abusing any child or adult at risk,
8. Reporting to the DSL any evidence or reasonable suspicion that a child or adult at risk has been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused in contact with us or anyone in Dance4all,
9. referring to statutory authorities, and
10. implementing this policy in conjunction with our policies already in place.

Everyone working or applying to work for Dance4all is to be made aware of this policy.

Furthermore, this document will be issued to all staff and other people who are likely to have contact with children as part of their work with us. All staff and volunteers will read and sign that they agree to abide by this policy before they start work at Dance4all.

## **1.2 Procedures**

Bedford Borough Council Safeguarding Children Partnership and The Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board websites are points of contact and resource setting out the procedures for both the safeguarding children board and the safeguarding adults board. We will follow the procedures set out here.

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/children-and-families/safeguarding-children-partnership>

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/adult-social-care/safeguarding-adults-board>

**1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection and Adults at Risk is:**

**Angharad Hughes**

**2. The Deputy DSL, who has received an equal level of Designated Person training:**

**Kat Addison**

**3. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:**

- 3.1 Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

- 3.2 Ensure that the DSL has the status and authority within Dance4all to carry out the duties of the post. The DSL will have the time, funding, training, resources, and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. (See 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, Annex B'). Ensure that the DSL and deputy have undertaken DSL training and that this training is updated **at least every two years**.
- 3.3 Ensure that in addition to the formal training set out above, the DSL and DDSLs refresh their knowledge and skills, e.g. via bulletins, meetings or further reading **at least annually**.
- 3.4 Ensure that every member of staff, paid and unpaid, knows who the Designated Personnel are and the procedures for passing on concerns from the **point of induction**.
  - 3.4.1 Staff members are required to complete a logging concern form and pass it in person or electronically to the DSL/DDSL immediately.
- 3.5 Ensure that a DSL or DDSL are always available to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- 3.6 Ensure every member of staff knows:
  - 3.6.1 the name of the designated person/s and their role,
  - 3.6.2 how to identify the signs of abuse and neglect,
  - 3.6.3 how to pass on and record concerns about a student,
  - 3.6.4 that they have an individual responsibility to be alert to the signs and indicators of abuse, and for referring child protection concerns to the DSL/DDSL,
  - 3.6.5 that they have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn, and
  - 3.6.6 the process for making referrals to children's social care.
- 3.7 Ensure all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. Ensure that staff training is regularly updated and that in addition to this training, all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required **but at least annually**.
- 3.8 Ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding children, and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies.
- 3.9 Ensure that parents/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on Dance4all and staff in relation to child protection by setting out these duties at Dance4all.
- 3.10 Ensure that this policy is available publicly either via Dance4all's website or on Dance4all's premises.

#### **4. Reporting a concern**



Anyone, (student, career, teacher, staff member, volunteer), may report a concern, and should feel that they will be listened to carefully and taken seriously when they do.

If you are concerned about a student or anyone at Dance4all, a specific incident occurs, or a situation arises that causes you concern, then you should report it as soon as is possible to the DSL/DDSL, to a member of Dance4all staff or teacher who is present. You may do this in person, by phone or in writing.

If you believe that the child is at immediate risk of harm, then do not wait to contact the DSL, report the concern immediately to the police or to children's social care.

The DSL can support and advise you on the details if needed, but it is best to state as clearly as possible what occurred, without 'colouring' or bias, what was said by whom and if possible, verbatim. The DSL will then decide whether this is an issue that requires further escalation, or, if it is a concern that does not reach the threshold for referral, should simply be added to a student's record.

Safeguarding referrals will be made by the DSL/DDSL as is required in Bedfordshire:

1. by phone to Children's Social Care Services,
2. To the Emergency Duty Team (Out of Hours), or
3. by contacting the police in the event of a serious emergency or life-threatening situation using the 999 service.

Where a referral needs to be made, the DSL will discuss this with the parents/guardians beforehand, unless there is a reason why the child would be put in harm's way if this discussion took place.

## **5. Liaison with other agencies**

Dance4all will:

- 5.1 continue to work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all students,
- 5.2 cooperate as required, in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children,' (July 2018), with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and providing written reports at child protection conferences and core groups, and
- 5.3 notify the relevant Social Care Team immediately if:
  - 5.3.1 it should have to exclude a student who is subject to a Child Protection Plan (whether fixed term or permanently),
  - 5.3.2 there is an unexplained absence of a student who is subject to a Child Protection Plan, or



- 5.3.3 there is any change in circumstances to a student who is subject to a Child Protection Plan.

When a student who is subject to a child protection plan leaves, information will be transferred to the new school immediately, if we know the school. The Child Protection Chair and Social Work Team will also be informed.

## **6. Record keeping**

The DSL will ensure that record keeping at Dance4all is in line with protocols advised by Bedford Borough Safeguarding Partnership Board. They will:

- 6.1. Keep clear, detailed, accurate, written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Care immediately,
- 6.2. Ensure all paper records are kept securely, separate from the main student file, and in a locked location, prior to scanning them into electronic format for secure digital storage, and
- 6.3. Ensure that all electronic/digital records are kept securely in a reserved area of the server with appropriate password protection.

## **7. Confidentiality and information sharing**

The Data Protection Act 2018 does not prevent Dance4all staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

Dance4all will ensure:

- 7.1. staff, teachers, and volunteers adhere to confidentiality protocols and that information is shared appropriately,
- 7.2. staff and teachers are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children, (as set out in 'Information sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers,' DfE, July 2018),
- 7.3. that if a member of staff receives a Subject Access Request (under the Data Protection Act 2018) from a student or parent, they will refer the request to the DSL and
- 7.4. staff and teachers are clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- 7.5. disclose information about a student to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis. Parental consent may be required,

- 7.6. aim to gain consent to share information and be mindful of situations where to do so would place a child at increased risk of harm. Information may be shared without consent if a person believes that there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner,
- 7.7. record when decisions are made to share or withhold information, who the information has been shared with and why. (See 'Working Together to Safeguard Children,' July 2018), and
- 7.8. seek advice about confidentiality from outside agencies if required. (See 'Information sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers,' DfE, July 2018).

## **8. Communication with parents/carers**

Dance4all will:

- 8.1. ensure that parents/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on Dance4all and staff in relation to child protection by setting out its duties on Dance4all's website,
- 8.2. undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of another agency, unless the circumstances preclude this action,
- 8.3. seek advice from Social Care if Dance4all believes that notifying parents could increase the risk of harm to the child. Circumstances where parents **may not** be informed include any disclosure of sexual abuse or physical abuse where the child has an injury, and
- 8.4. record what discussions have taken place with parents or if a decision has been made not to discuss it with parents, record the reasons why. Records may subsequently be disclosable to relevant partner agencies if child protection proceedings commence

## **9. Dealing with child-on-child abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment between children**

We recognise that peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This can include but is not limited to: bullying, control, cyberbullying, sexual violence, sexual harassment, being coerced to send sexual images (sexting), teenage relationship abuse and physical abuse. **All** forms of peer-on-peer abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Dance4all will therefore:

1. create a protective ethos in which peer on peer abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment cannot thrive and will not be tolerated,

2. provide access to training for staff and associate teachers about recognising and responding to child-on-child abuse, including raising awareness of the gendered nature of peer abuse,
3. ensure that staff do not dismiss instances of child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment as an inevitable part of growing up, and
4. ensure that staff members follow the procedures outlined in this policy when they become aware of peer-on-peer abuse.

Dance4all recognises that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. Sexual violence may include rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault. Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature', such as sexual comments, sexual taunting, or physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone. Online sexual harassment may include non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages, and sexual exploitation, coercion, and threats.

Dance4all will:

- 9.1. work to create a shared environment that supports positive relationships between peers, so that peer-to-peer abuse might be prevented,
- 9.2. be clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated,
- 9.3. provide training for staff on how to manage a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment,
- 9.4. make decisions on a case-by-case basis,
- 9.5. reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, offer appropriate support and take the wishes of the victim into account when decision making,
- 9.6. implement measures to keep the victim, alleged perpetrator and if necessary other children and staff members, safe. Record any risk assessments and keep them under review,
- 9.7. consider the welfare of both the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) in these situations, and
- 9.8. liaise closely with external agencies, including police and social care, when required.

Further guidance can be found in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education - Part Five' (September 2018), 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges,' (DfE, May 2018) and 'Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people' published by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)

### **1.3 Supporting children and adults at risk**

Dance4all recognises that **any** child or adult may be subject to abuse and neglect. As such will support all Dance4all students by:

1. creating an ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive, and safe environment and values the whole community, where students feel that they are listened to, heard and respected,
2. applying Dance4all's behaviour policy effectively. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the student's sense of self-worth. Dance4all will ensure that the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred,
3. developing productive and supportive relationships with parents/carers, and
4. liaising with other agencies which support the student such as Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, or Early Help teams.

Dance4all recognises that while **any** child may benefit from early help, staff are encouraged to consider the wider environmental factors present in a child's life which could pose a threat to their welfare or safety, (contextual safeguarding). Staff are required to be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for:

#### **A. Children with disabilities, additional needs, or special educational needs**

We recognise that, statistically, children with additional needs, special educational needs, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with complex and multiple disabilities and emotional and behavioural problems should be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

Dance4all may have students with emotional and behavioural difficulties or challenging behaviours, as well as physical disabilities/challenges. Dance4all will support staff to decide appropriate strategies that will reduce anxiety for the individual child and raise self-esteem as part of an overall behaviour support plan agreed with parents/carers.

Dance4all may have students who may have communication difficulties and we are aware that they are vulnerable to abuse because they are unable to express themselves to others. Instead, such students will often exhibit changes in behaviours or signs of abuse recognised by staff with a good knowledge of the child.

We promote high standards of practice, including ensuring that children with disabilities or additional needs know how to raise concerns, and have access to a range of adults with whom they can communicate. We will take the necessary time to build supportive networks with these students and their parents/carers and to get to know them well.

## **B. Young carers**

Dance4all recognises that children who are living in a home environment which requires them to act as a young carer for a family member or a friend, who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol can increase their vulnerability and that they may need additional support and protection.

Dance4all will:

- seek to identify young carers,
- offer additional support internally,
- signpost to external agencies, and
- be particularly vigilant to the welfare of young carers and follow the procedures outlined in this policy, referring to Early Help or Social Care as required if concerns arise.

## **C. Children at Risk of Criminal Exploitation**

Criminal exploitation of children is a form of harm that is a typical feature of 'County Lines' activity. Drug networks or gangs exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas. Exploitation can occur even if activity appears to be consensual.

Dance4all will address indicators of child criminal exploitation with staff through training. Staff will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of criminal exploitation arise.

## **D. Children frequently missing**

Dance4all recognises that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities

Dance4all monitors attendance of individual students to aid early identification of concerning patterns of absence. Staff are reminded regularly to check in with the office to follow up if a child is missing from a class for two weeks without notice.

## **E. Children or adults misusing drugs or alcohol**

The discovery that a young person is misusing legal or illegal substances, or reported evidence of their substance misuse, is not necessarily sufficient to initiate child protection proceedings but Dance4all will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause:

- to believe the young person's substance misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse,
- to believe the student's substance related behaviour is a result of abuse or because of pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults,
- where the misuse is suspected of being linked to parent/carer substance misuse,
- where the misuse indicates an urgent health or safeguarding concern, and
- where the child is perceived to be at risk of harm through any substance associated criminality.

#### **F. Children and adults at risk of sexual exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity **(a)** in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, or **(b)** for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using technology.

Sexual exploitation can take many different forms from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship to serious organised crime involving gangs and groups. Potential indicators of sexual exploitation will be addressed within staff training, including raising awareness with staff that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of abuse and may not recognise it as abuse. Staff will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of child sexual exploitation arise.

We also recognise that adults with disabilities, learning needs or other vulnerabilities are statistically more likely to be at risk of sexual (or other) exploitation. Potential indicators of sexual exploitation will be addressed within staff training, including raising awareness with staff that some adults at risk, who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of abuse and may not recognise it as abuse. Staff will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of sexual exploitation arise.

#### **G. Children living with substance misusing parents/carers**

Misuse of drugs or alcohol is strongly associated with significant harm to children, especially when combined with other features such as domestic violence.

When Dance4all receives information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers they will follow appropriate procedures.

This is particularly important if the following factors are present:

- Use of the family resources to finance the parent's dependency, characterised by inadequate food, heat and clothing for the children.
- Children exposed to unsuitable caregivers or visitors, e.g. customers or dealers.
- The effects of alcohol leading to an inappropriate display of sexual or aggressive behaviour.
- Chaotic drug and alcohol use leading to emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance.
- Disturbed moods because of withdrawal symptoms or dependency.
- Unsafe storage of drugs or alcohol or injecting equipment.
- Drugs or alcohol having an adverse impact on the growth and development of the unborn child.

#### **H. Children living with domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional.

Dance4all recognises that where there is domestic abuse in a family, the children/young people will always be affected; the longer the violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships. Domestic abuse can also affect children in their personal relationships as well as in the context of home life.

Staff will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of domestic abuse arise. Dance4all will vigilantly monitor the welfare of children living in domestic abuse households, offer support to them and contribute to any Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) safety plan as required.

Dance4all recognises that adult students may also be at risk from domestic abuse, which may affect their behaviour or personal relationships. Staff will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of domestic abuse arise.

#### **I. Children at risk of honour-based violence including Female Genital Mutilation**

So called honour-based violence (HBV) encompasses incidents which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community, including breast ironing, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. Dance4all takes these concerns seriously and

staff are made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of HBV through training. Staff are required to treat all forms of HBV as abuse and follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

FGM is a procedure involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs and is illegal in the UK. Any indication that a child is at risk of FGM, where it is suspected, or where the woman is under 18, will be dealt with under the child protection procedures outlined in this policy. Staff will report concerns to the DSL, who will make appropriate and timely referrals to social care. In these cases, parents will not be informed before seeking advice and the case will still be referred to social care even if it is against the student's wishes.

In accordance with the Female Genital Mutilation Act, it is a statutory duty for teachers in England and Wales to report known cases of FGM in under-18s, which they identify in the course of their professional work, to the police. Teachers should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve social care as appropriate, but the teacher will personally report to the police that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.

#### **J. Children who have returned home to their family from care**

Dance4all recognises that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable. Dance4all will vigilantly monitor the welfare of previously looked after children, keep records, and notify Social Care as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern in accordance with local procedures.

#### **K. Children showing signs of abuse or neglect**

Dance4all recognises that experiencing abuse or neglect may have an adverse impact on children which may last into adulthood without appropriate intervention and support. School may be the only stable, secure, and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Children who have experienced abuse or neglect may display this through their own behaviour, which may be challenging and defiant or passive and withdrawn. We recognise that children may develop abusive behaviours and that they may need to be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

Dance4all will provide access to training for teachers and staff to ensure that they have the skills to identify and report cases, or suspected cases, of abuse in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy. The definitions of the four categories of abuse are attached (see Appendix A).

#### **L. Children at risk of radicalisation**



Dance4all recognises that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and that protecting them from this risk forms part of Dance4all's safeguarding response.

The DSL has undertaken 'Prevent' awareness training and all staff receive training about the Prevent duty.

Staff are required to be alert to changes in children's behavior which could indicate they need help or protection. Concerns that a child is at risk of radicalisation are referred to the DSL in the usual way. If appropriate the DSL will make a channel referral.

See also 'The Prevent Duty, Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers', DfE (June 2015), and 'Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales,' HM Government, (July 2015).

#### **M. Privately fostered children**

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16, (under 18 if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, a person with parental responsibility for them, or relative in their own home for 28 days or more.

Dance4all will follow the mandatory duty to inform the local authority of any 'Private Fostering' arrangements.

#### **N. Children who have family members in prison**

When made aware, Dance4all is committed to supporting children and young people who have a parent or close relative in prison and will work with the family to find the best ways of supporting the child. Dance4all recognises that children with family members in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including: poverty, stigma, isolation, poor mental health, and poor attendance.

Dance4all will treat information shared by the family in confidence and it will be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Dance4all will work with the family and the child to minimise the risk of the child not achieving their full potential.

### **1.4 Preventing unsuitable people from working with children**

1. Dance4all will operate safer recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate ID, DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to Part Three of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2022).

2. Any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff should be reported straight away (also known as 'whistleblowing').
- 2.3 In cases where the owner of the Dance School is the subject of an allegation, it should be reported to the DDSL.
- 2.4 In all cases, Dance4all will follow the procedures set out in Part Four of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2022), which incorporates both allegations which meet the threshold for referral and raising low-level concerns.
3. The DSL will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) ensuring that all allegations are reported to the LADO within one working day. Following consultation with the LADO, the Named Senior Officer will advise on all further action to be taken. Please note that Dance4all should not seek to interview the children or members of staff involved until advice has been sought. Doing so may compromise any police interviews that may be necessary.
4. Dance4all will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at Dance4all and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.
5. It is the legal duty of an employer that when a member of staff has been dismissed due to safeguarding concerns or misconduct or would have been dismissed if they had not resigned, a referral will be made to the Data and Barring Service. Consideration will also be given to making a code of conduct complaint referral to the professional body of that teacher (e.g. RAD, ISTD, CDMT).
6. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected. Care will be taken in the process to ensure that malicious complaints against staff are identified and handled appropriately.
7. Consideration must be given to the needs of the child and a recognition that a child may make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.
8. Dance4all will ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with students

and parents/carers. As part of the Induction process, all staff will receive guidance about how to create appropriate professional boundaries with all children, especially those with a disability or who are vulnerable.

9. Dance4all will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with students aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Position of Trust).

10. Dance4all will ensure that communication between students and adults, by whatever method, are transparent and take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries and are open to scrutiny.

## **1.5 Roles and responsibilities of staff, and other related policies**

All staff and volunteers will be required to:

- take all reasonable steps to protect all Dance4all students & carers from hazards,
- observe and demonstrate in action the code of protective behaviour outlined throughout this document,
- take appropriate action if an accident occurs,
- take all reasonable steps to prevent abuse of children or adult at risks in contact with anyone within Dance4all, and
- report any incident or suspicion of abuse immediately to the DSL.

### **Roles and responsibilities for all staff – Code of Conduct**

- Safety of participants and staff is always of prime consideration. Individual risk assessments should not only be completed annually by all staff and teachers but should be applied in practice.
- All accidents involving anyone should be recorded in the accident book located in the office, immediately or as soon as practicably possible.
- Staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with building/facility safety issues, such as, fire procedures, location of emergency exits and first aid equipment.
- Staff are responsible for reporting suspected cases of child abuse to the named responsible person and/or agencies.
- In the event of any child experiencing distress, upset or accident during a class, staff will contact their parent, guardian or named emergency contact using the emergency contact details.
- Staff should ensure that their activities start and end on time.



- Staff are expected to articulate, promote, demonstrate, and incorporate the values of respect, trust and professional ethics throughout their activities.
- Staff should ensure that they are adequately insured, to protect against claims of negligence, through their organisation or their own personal insurance if acting as a self-employed agent.

### **Photographing students**

Photographs or video footage of any student should only be taken if consent has been obtained in advance from the student themselves. Consent should be given verbally after the teacher has explained in an age-appropriate manner the reason for the photography or video footage, and what will happen to the images once captured. A student may withdraw consent at any time. It should be made clear to students that there is never any pressure to participate in filmed footage for any reason, and no sense of shaming should be attached to this decision. Students should be encouraged to make the decision for themselves and be supported in that process.

Photos and videos will be taken as part of the annual performances and will be advised each year at the time of signing up to the event so that the parents of those involved will have given permission in advance or chosen not to take part.

For any performances, Dance4all will ensure that children are appropriately dressed and that any students wearing leotards will also be wearing tights or shorts.

All parents/carers and students are made aware and sign their agreement for Dance4all to use video equipment as a teaching and examination aid.

Occasionally, a photograph captured for teaching or performance reasons may be suitable to be used for contextual marketing purposes (around the studio and in print, or on the website) and in this case, those captured will be asked if they are willing to give their explicit permission to use that image in a different way than for the reason it was captured.

### **Social media**

All staff and volunteers should be aware of Dance4all's social media policy and procedures and the code of conduct.

### **Personal phones/iPads/tablets**

It is understood that many teachers carry music needed for teaching on their iPads/Tablets and phones, and that as such, these are used, visible and present in class.



It is understood that students may need to carry their phones with them when they come to classes for reasons of safety or personal choice. Phones should be switched off when students come to the studio, they should not be used to take pictures of themselves or anyone else on studio premises (particularly in the changing room) and if they are brought into class then they should be switched off. Teachers and group leaders are asked to remind the relevant-aged children from time to time about this.

### **Changing**

It is occasionally necessary to escort or assist young children in toileting when they need to go to the bathroom during a lesson. Whenever this occurs, the teacher or teaching assistant in that class should help the child leave the class and go to find the child's parent together if they need assistance or allow the student to go to the bathroom by themselves – monitoring the absence age-appropriately, to ensure all is well.

If, however, the parent is not available, or the situation is urgent for a very young child, then the teaching assistant or teacher should take the child to the bathroom. At all times, the adult should ask the child to determine the support they need and act accordingly. Most appropriate is that the child enters the bathroom by themselves, and the adult waits outside the door for them to finish.

Occasionally a child needs more assistance – for example if they wet themselves during a class. In this case, the adult needs to assist the child by finding another adult to seek alternative clothes for the child to put on, after having ensured that the child has been able to clean themselves appropriately. Where a child needs to change clothes to an intimate level, this should be done privately with a second adult close by as witness and a cause for concern form should be completed to log the incident. The parent should be advised of the incident immediately/on pickup and any concerns addressed. At all times, any anxiety or concern seen in or voiced by the child should be addressed kindly and considerately. Sensitivity to the child's age and gender should always be considered.

### **Dropping or collecting children**

Children are only allowed to be dropped off and left in the care of the teacher a parent/carer has provided Dance4all with emergency contact numbers and relevant medical information about the child.

Children are only allowed to be collected by and leave with their parent/carer. Exceptions are only made in the case where permission has been given by the parent/carer prior to collection either verbally to the teacher or in written correspondence. A password system will be used in this case.



Dance4all requires written consent from children's parent/guardian for any travel arrangements e.g. Dance4all transporting children or young people between locations for class or collection.

### **Safeguarding risk assessment**

From time to time, it may be considered necessary to complete a risk assessment for an individual – either teacher or student – to address specific concerns or risks that might be associated with them being in class or at the studios. For example, if a student or teacher is pregnant, then their continuing involvement in dance classes should be assessed, discussed, and limits and responsibilities agreed up front. Another such example might be in the case of a student suffering from epilepsy or other medical condition that is known, and where the symptoms or treatment would have a severe impact on the normal operating processes of Dance4all.

## **1.6 Four categories of abuse**

**Physical abuse** - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Physical abuse is any unwanted physical contact with another person – this includes the physical correction of a student without consent being sought and received in advance.

**Neglect** - persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. It may involve neglect or lack of responsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

It also includes parents or carers failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment,
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger,
- ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers, and
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

**Emotional abuse** - Is persistent emotional maltreatment causing severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to a child that they are:

- worthless
- unloved
- inadequate, and
- valued only insofar as they meet another person's needs.

It may include:

- not giving the child opportunities to express their views,
- deliberately silencing them, and
- making fun of what they say or how they communicate.

It may also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children including:

- interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability,
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, and
- preventing participation in normal social interaction.

It may involve:

- seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another,
- serious bullying (including cyberbullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, and
- the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment although it may occur in isolation.

**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, and whether the child is aware of what is happening or not.

This may involve:

- physical contact including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex),
- non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing, and
- non-contact activities involving:
  - children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images,
  - children in watching sexual activities,
  - or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, and

- 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.

## **1.7 Sources of further information**

The booklet 'Safe from Harm': Code of Practice for safeguarding the welfare of Children in Voluntary Organisations in England and Wales' is available from the Home Office web-site [www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

The following URLs provide links to local and national bodies offering advice and guidelines for identifying and reporting safeguarding or protection issues:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

<http://www.nwgnetwork.org/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/>

The NSPCC is a registered charity established to prevent cruelty to children. Help line for concerns about a child's welfare. 0808 800 5000 [24 hours], website [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk).

Links to specific information about Children and Adult at risk Policy can be found by visiting: [www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/questions/answers\\_wda48954.htm](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/questions/answers_wda48954.htm)

### **Useful contacts**

Adult Social Care Duty Desk  
Bedford Borough Council Adult Social Care: 01234 267 222  
Out of hours emergencies: 0300 300 8123

Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership  
[LSCB@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB@bedford.gov.uk)

Children's Social Care Bedford Borough  
Integrated Front Door (IFD)  
Tel: 01234 718 700  
Referral Portal: [lchildandfamilies.bedford.gov.uk](http://lchildandfamilies.bedford.gov.uk)





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[www.dance4all.co.uk](http://www.dance4all.co.uk)  
[office@dance4all.co.uk](mailto:office@dance4all.co.uk)

Designated Office for Safeguarding Children & Young People  
Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough

Dr Wendy Kuriyan – Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children and Young People –  
[w.kuriyan@nhs.net](mailto:w.kuriyan@nhs.net);

Helena Hughes – Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children and Young People (job share) –  
[Helena.hughes2@nhs.net](mailto:Helena.hughes2@nhs.net);

Deborah Spencer – Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children and Young People (job share) –  
[deborahspencer1@nhs.net](mailto:deborahspencer1@nhs.net);

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)

Bedford Borough:

Tel: 01234 276 693

Secure E-mail: [Lado@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:Lado@bedford.gov.uk)

### **Relevant documents**

“Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006: statutory guidance for local authorities, maintained schools, academies and free schools” (July 2018)

“Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings” (May 2019)

“Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers” (July 2018)

“Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges” (Sep 2022)

“The Prevent Duty, Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers” (June 2015)

“Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales” (July 2015)

“Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people” published by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) – (September 2016)

“Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges” (May 2018)

“What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners” (March, 2015)



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“Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children” (July 2018)

<b>Version Control</b>	
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