



Project Dance Child Safeguarding Policy May 2024

1. Introduction

Project Dance is committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people involved in our dance organisation. We believe that every child has the right to participate in dance activities without fear of harm or abuse. This Child Safeguarding Policy outlines our commitment to promoting the welfare and safety of children and provides a framework for preventing, identifying, and responding to any concerns or allegations of child abuse or harm.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, and individuals associated with Project Dance, including dance instructors, administrators, performers, technicians, and other staff members. It covers all dance classes, performances, rehearsals, workshops, events, and any other activities involving children and young people. This policy also extends to any accommodation provided by Project Dance during the course of projects or performances.

3. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- a) Child: Any person under the age of 18 years.

- b) Child Abuse: Any form of physical, emotional, sexual, or psychological abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child.

c) Child Safeguarding: Actions taken to promote and protect the welfare and safety of children and young people.

d) Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): The individual appointed by Project Dance to oversee and coordinate child safeguarding activities and act as the main point of contact for child protection concerns.

e) Vulnerable Child: A child who may be at greater risk of harm or abuse due to factors such as disability, special needs, social circumstances, or other vulnerabilities.

f) Safeguarding Incident: Any actual or suspected breach of this policy or concern that a child may have been harmed or is at risk of harm.

4. Responsibilities

a) Board of Directors: The Board of Directors of Project Dance has overall responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and monitoring of this policy. They will provide appropriate resources, training, and support to maintain a safe environment for children.

b) Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): Project Dance will appoint a DSO, who will act as the main point of contact for child safeguarding issues. The DSO's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that this policy is regularly reviewed and updated in line with legislation and best practices.
- Overseeing the implementation of safeguarding measures and providing guidance and support to staff members.
- Receiving and responding to any concerns, allegations, or reports of child abuse or harm.
- Ensuring that staff members receive appropriate training on child safeguarding.
- Liaising with external agencies, such as local child protection services, as required.
- Maintaining accurate records of safeguarding incidents, concerns, and actions taken.

c) Staff Members: All staff members, including dance instructors, administrators, and volunteers, have a responsibility to:

- Be familiar with and adhere to this policy and any associated procedures.

- Promote the welfare and safety of children, treating them with respect and dignity.
- Report any safeguarding concerns or incidents to the DSO promptly.
- Attend child safeguarding training as required.
- Follow appropriate codes of conduct and maintain appropriate boundaries with children.

5. Prevention Measures

a) Recruitment and Screening: Project Dance will implement robust recruitment procedures to ensure that individuals working with children are suitable for their roles. This may include conducting background checks, obtaining references, and requiring relevant qualifications and certifications.

b) Code of Conduct: A clear code of conduct will be established, outlining acceptable behavior when working with children. Staff members will be expected to adhere to the code of conduct, which will include guidelines on appropriate physical contact, language, and communication.

c) Training and Awareness: Project Dance will provide regular training and awareness programs for staff members to ensure they have the knowledge and skills necessary to recognize and respond to child safeguarding concerns. This training will cover topics such as identifying signs of abuse, reporting procedures, maintaining boundaries, and understanding the legal and ethical responsibilities related to child protection.

d) Risk Assessments: Project Dance will conduct regular risk assessments of its premises, activities, and accommodation to identify and mitigate any potential risks to the safety and welfare of children. Measures will be implemented to address identified risks promptly.

e) Accommodation Safety: When providing accommodation for dancers during projects or performances, Project Dance will ensure that appropriate safety measures are in place. This includes conducting safety checks of the accommodation, ensuring adequate supervision and support for minors, and promoting an environment free from harm or abuse.

f) Communication and Consent: Project Dance will establish clear and effective lines of communication with children, parents/guardians, and staff members regarding child safeguarding. Consent forms will be obtained from parents/guardians for their child's

participation in dance activities and any necessary medical information or emergency contacts.

6. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

a) Reporting Procedures: Any staff member who has concerns, suspicions, or knowledge of actual or potential child abuse or harm must report them immediately to the DSO. Reports can be made verbally or in writing and will be treated with confidentiality and sensitivity. Anonymous reporting may also be permitted.

b) Confidentiality: Project Dance acknowledges the importance of confidentiality in safeguarding matters. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis with relevant personnel and external agencies involved in the investigation or protection of the child.

c) Support and Referral: Project Dance will ensure that appropriate support is provided to the child involved and, if necessary, their family. Referrals will be made to relevant agencies, such as child protection services or law enforcement, as required by law or professional obligations.

d) Record-Keeping: Accurate and secure records will be maintained for all safeguarding incidents, concerns, and actions taken. These records will be stored in compliance with data protection laws and regulations and will be retained for the required statutory period.

e) Allegations against Staff Members: In the event of an allegation made against a staff member, Project Dance will follow a robust and impartial investigation process, ensuring the welfare of the child and the rights of the accused. This may involve suspending the staff member pending the investigation and, if necessary, notifying relevant authorities and regulatory bodies.

7. Policy Review

This Child Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed and updated at least annually or as required by changes in legislation or best practices. Staff members will be informed of any updates or revisions to ensure ongoing compliance.

By implementing this comprehensive Child Safeguarding Policy, Project Dance aims to create a safe and secure environment where children can pursue their passion for dance without compromise to their well-being.

8. Whistleblowing

Project Dance encourages a culture of openness and transparency when it comes to safeguarding concerns. Any staff member who believes that safeguarding policies or procedures are not being followed or suspects misconduct or malpractice has the right to raise these concerns without fear of reprisal. Project Dance will ensure that a clear and confidential whistleblowing procedure is in place, allowing individuals to report such concerns to a designated person or external organization, if necessary.

9. Partnership and Collaboration

Project Dance recognizes the importance of working in partnership and collaboration with external agencies, including local child protection services, law enforcement, and relevant organizations specializing in child safeguarding. Collaboration may include sharing information, seeking advice, and participating in joint initiatives to enhance child protection efforts.

10. Training and Awareness

To ensure that staff members are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively implement this policy, Project Dance will provide regular training and development opportunities on child safeguarding. This training will cover topics such as recognizing signs of abuse, responding to disclosures, maintaining professional boundaries, and understanding legal obligations. Refresher training will be provided at regular intervals to ensure ongoing awareness and compliance.

11. Review and Monitoring

Project Dance is committed to regularly reviewing and monitoring the effectiveness of this Child Safeguarding Policy. This will involve evaluating the implementation of safeguarding measures, analyzing incident reports, conducting feedback surveys, and seeking input from staff members, parents/guardians, and children themselves. Any identified areas for improvement or emerging best practices will be incorporated into future revisions of the policy.

12. Public Declaration and Communication

Project Dance will make its Child Safeguarding Policy readily accessible to all stakeholders, including staff members, parents/guardians, and the general public. This policy will be published on the organization's website and distributed through other relevant channels. Additionally, Project Dance will communicate its commitment to child safeguarding through various means, such as newsletters, social media platforms, and public statements, to ensure transparency and accountability.

By adhering to this comprehensive Child Safeguarding Policy, Project Dance aims to create a culture of safety, trust, and respect for all children and young people involved in its activities. This policy serves as a foundation for promoting their well-being and protecting them from harm, enabling them to fully explore and express their artistic potential in a secure environment.

Signed: James Bamford

Signed: Tracey Bamford

Position: Director

Position: Designated Safeguarding Officer

Date: 30/5/24

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