



British DanceSport Association

Safeguarding Children and Young Persons Policy

INTRODUCTION

British DanceSport Association (hereinafter referred to as BDSA) acknowledges and accepts it has a responsibility for the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people who are under the Organisation's care or utilising the Organisation's facilities. It is the duty of all adults working at the Organisation to safeguard the welfare of children and young people by creating an environment that protects them from harm.

The wellbeing of children and young people is paramount for all staff and volunteers and accordingly, they must make themselves aware of the Organisation's Safeguarding Children and Young Persons Policy. Where appropriate, the following guidelines will be supplemented by in-service training and additional guidance.

RULES & REGULATIONS

BDSA is governed by the rules and regulations set out in the 1989 and 2004 Children Act, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and the United Kingdom Child Protection Procedures (5th edition).

The Organisation is fully committed to ensuring that the best practice recommended by these bodies is employed throughout the Organisation.

The Organisation also has a responsibility to maintain regular dialogue with the Local Safeguarding Children Board(s) in each area of activity.

DEFINITIONS

A "Child" (collectively referred to as "Children") is defined as anyone under the age of 14.

A "Young Person" (collectively referred to as "Young People") is defined as anyone between the ages of 14 and 18.

AIMS & KEY PRINCIPLES

The aims of BDSA's Children Policy are:

- To safeguard all children and young people who interact with the Organisation.
- To demonstrate best practice in the area of safeguarding children.
- To develop a positive and pro-active welfare programme to enable all children and young people to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment.
- To promote high ethical standards throughout the Organisation.

The key principles underpinning this policy are:

BDSA/POL/SAF/v4/03062025



The child's and young person's welfare are, and must always be, the paramount consideration.

All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual identity. All allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to efficiently and appropriately.

To encourage parents and other members of the child or young person's family to be involved in a relationship with the Organisation.

To ensure that coaches, parents and other adults who come in contact with children and young people provide good role models of behaviour.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Safeguarding Children Programme

The Organisation has an ongoing commitment to employing a programme of activities which cover all areas of the business. The programme will regularly be reviewed and updated according to any needs that may be identified.

Children's Services Officer / Safeguarding Officers

The Organisation has a designated Children's Services Officer ("CSO") who has overall responsibility for the safeguarding of children and young persons at the Organisation and a number of Safeguarding Officers who work within various areas of the business. These Officers have special responsibilities and are the focal point for safeguarding children and young persons in their nominated area.

Anybody with concern about a child or young person's welfare should contact a Safeguarding Officer for advice in the first instance – details can be found at the end of this policy.

HUMAN RESOURCES & DISCLOSURE

Recruitment

As part of BDSA's recruitment and selection process, offers of work to positions which involve working with children and young persons are subject to a satisfactory Enhanced DBS disclosure and appropriate references. See below and attached for details of the Organisation's DBS procedures.

Staff Training

All staff and volunteers working in direct contact with children and young persons shall be required to complete a workshop on Safeguarding Children and Young Persons. Details of those satisfactorily completing this course are retained by the Organisation.

Work Experience

BDSA often offers work experience placements to young people. The Organisation has a central work experience scheme which provides forwardly planned and structured work experience placements. Whilst undertaking work for the Organisation, those on work experience will be given no unsupervised access to children and young persons.

Health and Safety



BDSA's Health and Safety Policy gives guidance to those whose roles involve working with children and young persons. Where a child or young person is involved, a risk assessment must take account of their particular vulnerabilities. The risk assessment should set out what arrangements are in place for their care and supervision,

Staff Briefing

A Briefing Note giving guidance to all Organisation employees and volunteers is provided at induction. Whenever possible staff/volunteers should avoid situations where they are in one to one contact with children or young people alone. When physical intervention is necessary to restore safety, restraint should not continue any longer than is absolutely necessary.

DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE

BDSA uses the Disclosure and Barring Service (Formally the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)) ("DBS"). The DBS provides a disclosure service for organisations. DBS disclosures enable employers to undertake more thorough recruitment and selection procedures for positions which involve working with Children.

PROCESS FOR CRIMINAL RECORDS BUREAU CHECKING

New Appointments

All staff and volunteers who are offered a position which involves working, or coming into contact, with children and young persons will be required to complete a Self-Declaration Form and also undertake a DBS Disclosure. All offers of work are subject to the outcome of the screening process and where applicable, this is set out in the initial job advertisement and the applicant's offer of work. Until such time as a satisfactory Disclosure certificate has been received, the member of staff or volunteer will not be left unsupervised with children and young persons.

BDSA is committed to the equal opportunities of its staff and volunteers and therefore a positive Disclosure will not necessarily result in a bar from employment or volunteering.

Should a positive Disclosure be received, a risk assessment will be carried out by the CSO or a Safeguarding Officer or management committee member, to assess the information contained within the Disclosure certificate. The member of staff or volunteer may also be asked to attend an interview prior to a recruitment decision being made.

New Appointments who already have a Disclosure Certificate

If a new member of staff or volunteer has been DBS checked by their previous employer, the Organisation may not ask that person to undertake another check. However, the original Disclosure certificate must be provided, it must be dated within six months of the person's start date at the Organisation and it must be for a similar role to that which the person has been appointed.

Existing Staff/Volunteers

Priority is being given to those who come into regular contact with Children. All staff and volunteers who have one to one contact with children and young persons will be DBS checked.

Temporary Staff and External Consultants



The Organisation will ensure that all temporary staff and external consultants sign a self-declaration form and will not have unsupervised access to children and young persons during their time with the Organisation.

Equal Opportunities

BDSA is committed to providing equal opportunities for all staff, volunteers and supporters.

A copy of the Organisation's policy on equal opportunities can be obtained from the Management Team.

GIFTS & FAVOURITISM

Staff and volunteers should take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment (refer to the Organisation's 'Anti-Corruption and Bribery' policy for further details).

The Organisation recognises that there are occasions when children, young persons or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff or volunteers, for example at Christmas or as a "thank you", and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value as this may be misinterpreted by others. Staff and volunteers should report any gifts received and token gestures to their line manager.

Similarly, it is not permitted for staff or volunteers to give personal gifts to children and young persons. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or to single out the child or young person. It might also be perceived that a "favour" of some kind is expected in return.

Any reward given to a child or young person must first be agreed with the staff member's or volunteer's line manager as part of a structured reward system and not based on favoritism.

USE OF IMAGES

The Organisation takes its guidance on the use of images from guidelines issued by the Local Safeguarding Children Board:

Before taking images of children and young persons, parental consent is sought in writing at the start of the financial year or prior to the event or session. Parents/Carers/Guardians are responsible for informing the Organisation of any change of circumstances which may affect consent.

Parents/Carers/Guardians will be informed of how the image will be used. The Organisation will not allow an image to be used for something other than that for which it was initially agreed.

All children and young persons featured in the Organisation publications will be appropriately dressed.

Where possible, the image will focus on the activity taking place and not a specific child or young person.

Where appropriate, images represent the broad range of people participating safely in the event.

Designated Organisation photographers will, where applicable, undertake a DBS check and attend a Safeguarding Children and Young Persons workshop and in any case will be personally responsible for keeping up to date with the latest guidelines on the Use of Images policies from the Local Safeguarding Children Board.



Organisation Identification will be worn at all times.

Children and young persons who are under a court order will not have their images published in any Organisation document.

No images of children or young persons featured in Organisation publications will be accompanied by personal details such as their school or home address or other protected information.

Recordings of children and young persons for the purposes of legitimate coaching aids are only filmed by Organisation officials and are stored safely and securely at the Organisation's premises.

Any instances of inappropriate images should be reported to a Safeguarding Officer.

The Organisation does not put young peoples' profiles with images and personal information on its website.

GUIDELINES IN THE EVENT OF CONCERN

Highlighting Concern

Although the Organisation is committed to doing the utmost to safeguard children and young persons from harm there may be occasions when concern is raised over the treatment of a child or young person.

"Child abuse" and "neglect" are generic terms encompassing all ill treatment of children and young persons as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child's health or development. Children and young persons may be abused or suffer neglect through the infliction of harm, or through the failure to act to prevent harm. Abuse can occur in a family or an institutional or community setting. The perpetrator may or may not be known to the child or young person and may be of the same or opposite sex. There is often a common misconception that only a certain type of person can abuse children and young persons, but this is simply not the case – abuse can take place in any setting, by someone of either sex, of any sexual orientation and of any age.

Recognition – Signs of Abuse

There are five main forms of abuse identified as follows, should you have any concern that abuse is occurring you should contact a Safeguarding Officer immediately.

Physical Abuse: '*Physical abuse*' may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a Child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child or young person. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick Child. Physical abuse can be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect. In a sporting setting physical abuse can also include the use of controlled diets or supplements which impact on the young person or child's development or extreme training regimes.

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



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

Neglect: *Neglect* is the persistent failure to meet a Child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the Child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a Child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a Child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a Child's basic emotional need. In a sporting setting, neglect may include over-rigorous training regimes, exposure to harsh temperatures or failing to have regard for a young person or child's injury and mental welfare.

Emotional Abuse: *Emotional abuse* is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a Child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the Child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to Children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the Child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on Children. These may include interactions that are beyond the Child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the Child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing Children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of Children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a Child, though it may occur alone. In a sporting setting, emotional abuse includes placing a young person or child under an unrealistic level of demand for performance, belittling them due to performance and a failure to make reasonable adjustments for the young person's needs.

Bullying: *Bullying* is not always easy to define and can take many forms. Bullying is the repeated behavior intended to intimidate or upset a child. The three main types are: physical, verbal and emotional. Bullying includes Cyberbullying; the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, humiliate and target children and young people. Bullying takes many forms, but ultimately it is the perception of the victim that determines whether or not they are being bullied rather than the intention of the bully.

The Organisation has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and any reported incidents of bullying by a staff member/volunteer to a Child, Child to staff member/volunteer or Child to Child will be taken seriously and investigated by a Safeguarding Officer and, where necessary, the Children's Services' Officer.

Though not included in the five main categories of abuse, other forms of abuse to consider are:

- Domestic Violence – Children are considered victims of domestic violence, even if not physically harmed. There can be significant long-term effects of parental domestic abuse on children.
- Criminal or sexual exploitation – Young people tricked or coerced into selling drugs or other commodities or being sexually exploited for money or being manipulated or deceived into sexual activity in exchange for something the child wants/needs.
- Forced marriage – children or young people being married, sometimes before the legal age within the UK against their will.
- Female Genital mutilation – a rare form of abuse which affects some communities more than other. Usually, involving young girls being taken to their home country to have their genitals damaged in a number of ways. Often this results in urinary, ante-natal or other issues in later life. It has no basis in religion.
- Radicalisation – the process where someone influences a Child or Young Person into an extremist ideology with terrorist or violent intent.

INDICATORS OF ABUSE

There are many signs and indicators that suggest a child is being abused and/or neglected. Examples of signs and symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained changes in behaviour
- Unexplained bruises or injuries
- Missing belongings or money
- Child is not attending/no longer enjoying their sessions
- Changes in weight
- Truancy
- Sexually explicit knowledge or behaviour
- Being withdrawn
- Genital pain, stomach pains, discomfort, pregnancy
- Dirty, ill-fitting clothes or lack of appropriate clothing for the weather
- Self-harm
- A fear of a particular group of people or individual
- Lack of friends
- Lack of growth or development
- Low self-esteem.

INCREASED VULNERABILITY TO ABUSE

A child's vulnerability to abuse is changeable and contextual, but some children may have an increased vulnerability to abuse, such as children with a physical disability, a diagnosed condition like learning difficulties or mental health conditions, children in these groups may:

- Have a smaller network of friends and peer group.
- May require physical and/or invasive medical care, which can allow abuse to be hidden.
- Have communication difficulties.
- Be less able to resist inappropriate or abusive behavior, either verbal or physical.
- Be dependent on an abuser for services or basic needs.
- Have medical conditions that are used to explain injuries.

Personal circumstances away from dance, such as domestic violence, poverty, substance abuse, and social exclusion may also have an impact on a child's vulnerability to abuse.



Additionally, children from LGBTQ+ and/or Minority Ethnic Groups can also be more vulnerable to abuse, such as:

- Bullying, emotional abuse and physical abuse due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Racism and racist attitudes.
- Cultural practices, which are classed as abuse within the UK e.g., honour-based violence.
- Being ignored by people in authority due to experience of institutionalised racism.
- Being afraid of further abuse if they challenged other
- Being subject to racial stereotypes.
- They may be using English as their second language and therefore find it more difficult to communicate.

Elite child athletes may also be more vulnerable to abuse, as they may:

- Have increased dependency on coaching and support staff for funding, selection, and sporting progression.
- Be segregated from protective factors such as their family and peer group.
- Feel less able to report concerning behavior due to fear of it impacting their sporting development.
- Be exposed to unhealthy cultures and competitive performance ideologies, where inappropriate practices may be accepted or even encouraged under the belief, they deliver success.
- Be subjected to intense training and pressure to play/succeed even when injured and achieve unrealistic image, body and weight expectations.

RESPONDING TO A REPORT OR SUSPICION

Where possible a Safeguarding Officer or the Children's Services Officer should be contacted as early as possible, however it is recognized that an individual may need to respond to a situation immediately. With this in mind the following guidelines offer help and support in responding to abuse or a suspicion of abuse:

Do:

Treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the child or young person as if you believe what they are saying, although do not directly say the words "I believe you".

Tell the child or young person they are right to tell you.

Reassure the child or young person that they are not to blame.

Be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why.

Tell the child or young person what you are doing and when and keep them up to date with what is happening.

Take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse.

Write down everything said and what was done (handwritten is preferable) and sign and date the notes. An Incident Report Form should be used where possible and, in any case, a referral must be made to the Organisation within 24 hours of the incident taking place. Notes must be made available to the designated person with parental responsibility and/or designated outside organisation supporting the incident as indicated by the designated organisation only.

Seek medical advice if necessary.

**Do Not:**

Make promises you cannot keep.

Interrogate the child or young person – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the Police and Children's Social Care, who have experience in this.

Cast doubt on what the child or young person has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.

Say anything that makes the child or young person feel responsible for the abuse.

Inform parents / carers – the SO/CSO will make this decision based on whether there is suspicion of their involvement.

Repeat information to any member of staff/volunteer or another, other than as directed by the Organisation's Safeguarding Officer and direct management of the Organisation.

Low Level Concerns

A low level concern is behavior that falls short of abuse towards children and young people and does not meet the allegation threshold, but which nevertheless harms a child or young person or places them at risk, or has a negative effect on their safety and/or well-being. A low level concern is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than a 'nagging doubt'.

A low level concern may include, but is not limited to:

- an adult acting in a way that is inconsistent with the BDSA code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult's suitability to work with children.
- Showing inadvertent or thoughtless behavior.
- Behavior that may be considered inappropriate.
- Behavior which is intended to enable abuse.

Examples of such behaviour could include:

- Being over friendly with a child or young person.
- Displaying obvious favourites.
- Taking photos of children on a mobile device.
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door.
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Low level concerns are not acceptable and should be reported to the BDSA Safeguarding Officer. It is critical that all low level concern are referred to the BDSA. Reporting these concerns to the BDSA allows the BDSA to monitor possible patterns of inappropriate or concerning behavior.

If further information comes to light which raises the level of the concern from a low level concern, the matter must be referred to the BDSA as soon as possible.

DOING NOTHING IS NOT AN OPTION; IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ACT.

Make sure you tell the Organisation's Safeguarding Officer immediately; they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.



Confidentiality

There is always tension and caution around issues of confidentiality. The advice for all staff and volunteers at BDSA is that no guarantee of confidentiality can be given to a Child (although this does not necessarily mean that the parents / carers have to be told).

A child or young person should never be pressured to give information or show physical marks unless they do so willingly. If they chose to show markings, two members of staff/volunteers should be present.

There are actions which staff and volunteers have to and are obliged to take once we are aware of a problem. Undertakings of confidentiality should not be given either to the person making the allegations or to the person being interviewed. A matter is confidential on a need to know basis and nobody should have any reservations about referring any issue to a Organisation Safeguarding Officer. The key issue is that the welfare of the child or young person is protected.

Annex 1

Procedures for Responding to a Report or Suspicion Incident Report Form

RECORDING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS

The Safeguarding Officer will immediately report any allegation to the CSO, who will ask for a written factual statement from the person making the report. If an Incident Report Form has been completed a copy should be provided to the CSO.

Any statement made by the child or young person should be reported in their own words. These reports should be confined to facts. Any opinion, interpretation or judgment should be clearly stated as this.

The Organisation will ensure that any child or young person concerned is immediately removed from any possible risk of harm.

Investigations into possible abuse will require careful management. In these cases, the CSO will first seek the advice of the Safeguarding Children Team, Children's Social Care, a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the Police before setting up an internal inquiry and take their advice on informing the Child's parents. In any case of suspected abuse, as soon as the Local Authority or the Police have been informed, the Organisation must provide a report to the Organisation's Trustees

Providing it is appropriate to do so the CSO will maintain constant dialogue with all parties involved with the allegation until such time as the matter has reached a reasonable outcome.

Specific information regarding allegations against members of Staff/Volunteers

If the report involves an allegation about any member of the Organisation staff (whether full time, part time, paid, contracted, engaged, voluntary etc.) and the Organisation believes that the report could demonstrate that the member of staff or volunteer in question has:



behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she is unsuitable to
work with children,

The CSO or Trustees shall immediately inform the LADO of the Borough where the alleged incident took place so that he or she can consult with the Police and local authority children's social care colleagues as appropriate. Where the CSO or Trustees are unsure as to whether the report meets the criteria stated above, the advice of the LADO shall still be sought.

The member of staff or volunteer in question may be asked to write a brief report, as may any other person that is deemed to have an involvement in the allegation. This process would only be carried out once the advice of the above mentioned external bodies had been sought and only then in consultation with the CSO or Board of Trustees. Providing it does not contradict with any advice received from the LADO, any internal investigation will be carried out in line with the Organisation's Disciplinary Policy and either general or Grievance Procedures, as applicable.



Annex 2

Contact Details

BDSA CHILDREN'S SERVICES' OFFICER & SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS

BDSA - Children's Services' Officer / BDSA – Safeguarding Officer

BDSA Safeguarding Mobile:

CHILD PROTECTION IN SPORT (CPSU)

England and Wales Helpline: 0116 366 5626

NSPCC HELPLINE: 0808 800 5000 / Textphone: 0800 056 0566

NSPCC SMS: 88858

Annex 3

Resources

Information Sharing Guidance for Managers and Practitioners:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DCSF-00807-2008>

Working Together to Safeguard Children:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DCSF-00305-2010>



Appendix: Additional Information and Support

Ann Craft Trust (ACT)

Provides advice to anyone who has a query about the protection of vulnerable children and adults. Tel: 0115 951 5400 www.anncrafttrust.org

Mind

0300 123 3393 – www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/ Mind can offer support with different mental health problems.

Shout

UK's 24/7 Crisis Text Service for Mental Health support adults and children

Karma Nirvana

Supports victims and survivors of forced marriage and honour-based abuse; support includes an advice line. Tel: 0800 5999 247 www.karmanirvana.org.uk

Samaritans

Samaritan volunteers listen in confidence to anyone in any type of emotional distress, without judging or telling people what to do. Tel: 08457 90 90 90

The Forced Marriage Unit

Part of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, provides information, multi agency guidelines and an advice line for victims, friends, relatives and professionals. Tel: 0207 008 0151 www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage

Galop

Emotional and practical support for LGBT people experiencing domestic violence. Tel: 0800 999 5428 help@galop.org.uk

NAPCA

The National Association for People Abused in Childhood offers support to adult survivors of all types of childhood abuse. Tel: 08088010331 napac.org.uk/

The Survivors Trust

The largest umbrella agency for rape and sexual abuse support in the UK. Tel: 01788550554 www.thesurvivorstrust.org

Childline

ChildLine help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issues they are going through Tel: 08001111 www.childline.org.uk/about/about-childline

NSPCC

The NSPCC can support with any concern about a child's safety or well-being. Tel 08088005000 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

Sane

Deal with all aspects of mental illness. Tel 08457678000 www.sane.org.uk

Talk to Frank

National organisation providing advice regarding drugs and substance abuse. Tel 03001236600 www.talktofrank.com