



NORTH HAMPSHIRE
ACADEMY OF DANCE

Safeguarding Policy 2020-21



Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect children and young people who receive North Hampshire Academy of Dance's services from harm.
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of North Hampshire Academy of Dance, including employees, freelance workers, volunteers, guest teachers, and students.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England.

Procedures

This policy includes our specific policies, procedures, and guidance on the following:

- Role description for the designated safeguarding officer
- Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- Recording concerns and information sharing
- Child protection records retention and storage
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Behaviour codes for students and their parents/guardians
- Photography and sharing images guidance
- Anti-bullying
- Eating disorders

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

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

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer for children and young people and a Deputy Safeguarding Officer
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately

- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Contact details

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Name: Kelly Hopkins

Phone: 07795 822254

Deputy Safeguarding Officer

Name: Katy Richards

Phone: 07872 167329

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

Role description for the Designated Safeguarding Officer

1. The Designated Safeguarding Officer is the first point of contact for all staff and volunteers to go to for advice if they are concerned about a child.
2. They are responsible for ensuring that North Hampshire Academy of Dance's safeguarding policy is kept up to date.
3. They ensure that they comply with safe recruitment procedures for new staff members and their induction.
4. They support staff to assist in information regarding concerns and support decision making about whether staff concerns are sufficient enough to notify Children's Social Work Services or whether other courses of action are more appropriate.
5. They ensure that concerns are logged and stored securely
6. They have joint responsibility with the Deputy Safeguarding Officer to ensure that the North Hampshire Academy of Dance's safeguarding policy and related policies and procedures are followed and regularly updated;
7. They are responsible for promoting a safe environment for children and young people;
8. They know the contact details of relevant statutory agencies

It is not the responsibility of the designated safeguarding officer to decide whether a child has been abused or not- that is the responsibility of investigative statutory agencies such as Children's Social Work Services or the police. However keeping children safe is everybody's business and all staff should know who to go to and how to report any concerns they may have about a child being harmed or at risk of being harmed.

Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person

If a disclosure is reported by or from a young person or adult (e.g. concern about a physical injury or neglect at home) or there are concerns about the behaviour of an employee or volunteer (e.g. if they hurt a child, breach the code of conduct or do something considered to be poor practice) it is vitally important to record all relevant details, regardless of whether or not the concerns are shared with either the police or another authority. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will keep an accurate record of:

- date and time of incident/disclosure
- parties who were involved, including any witnesses to an event
- what was said or done and by whom
- any action taken by the organisation to look into the matter
- any further action taken
- where relevant, the reasons why a decision was taken not to refer those concerns to a statutory agency
- any interpretation/inference drawn from what was observed, said or alleged should be clearly recorded as such
- name of person reporting on the concern, name and designation of the person to whom the concern was reported, date and time and their contact details.

Managing allegations against staff and volunteers

Allegations involving a staff member or volunteer should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer instantly. All information will be collected and the relevant procedures will be followed.

If allegations involve the Designated Safeguarding Officer, they should instead be reported to the Deputy Safeguarding Officer.

Whilst a complaint is being investigated the member of staff will be suspended, and if the complaint is upheld the staff member will be dismissed and any relevant authorities informed immediately.

Recording concerns and information sharing

Records will be kept in a password protected drop box accessible by the Designated Safeguarding Officer and the Deputy Safeguarding Officer.

The sharing of information with relevant authorities may however be necessary.

Child protection records retention and storage

Records of this nature will not be held for longer than 6 years after the subject's last contact with the school. Exceptions to the 6 year period will occur when records:

- Need to be retained because the information in them is relevant to legal action that has been started.
- Are required to be kept longer by law.
- Are archived for historical purposes (e.g. where the organisation was party to legal proceedings or involved in proceedings brought by a local authority). Where there are legal proceedings it is best to seek legal advice about the retention period of your records.
- Consist of a sample of records maintained for the purposes of research.
- Relate to individuals and providers of services who have, or whose staff, have been judged unsatisfactory.
- Are held in order to provide, for the subject, aspects of his/her personal history (e.g. where the child might seek access to the file at a later date and the information would not be available elsewhere).

When records are being kept for more than the 6-year period, files will be clearly marked and the reasons for the extension period clearly identified.

Code of conduct for teachers and volunteers

Teachers are expected to:

- contribute to a well-ordered learning environment by
 - teaching all students regardless of their race, culture, gender, faith, or sexual orientation to the best of their ability
 - being properly equipped for classes

Teachers and volunteers are expected to:

- show respect for others by
 - being polite and courteous to each other and refraining from bullying, fighting and name-calling
 - being polite, courteous and honest with students and their parents/guardians
- act in a responsible manner by
 - doing nothing to endanger a healthy, safe and secure environment
- keeping the studios and communal areas clean and tidy, moving about in a quiet and orderly manner, avoiding areas which are deemed out of bounds
- ensure the best possible attendance and punctuality
- promote a positive image of the school by
 - being smartly and correctly dressed for all classes and out of studio events
 - behaving in a sensible and courteous manner when travelling to and from classes and events
 - being polite and courteous to visitors

Behaviour codes for students and their parents/ guardians

Students are expected to:

- contribute to a well-ordered learning environment by
 - working to the best of their ability in lessons
 - being properly equipped for classes

Students and their parents/guardians are expected to:

- show respect for others by
 - being polite and courteous to each other and refraining from bullying, fighting and name-calling
 - being polite, courteous and honest with staff and listening to and carrying out instructions
- act in a responsible manner by
 - doing nothing to endanger a healthy, safe and secure environment
- keeping the studios and communal areas clean and tidy, moving about in a quiet and orderly manner, avoiding areas which are deemed out of bounds
- ensure the best possible attendance and punctuality
- promote a positive image of the school by
 - being smartly and correctly dressed for all classes and out of studio events
 - behaving in a sensible and courteous manner when travelling to and from classes and events
 - being polite and courteous to visitors

Photography and sharing images guidance

No photography or video is to be taken by students, parents or guardians during normal classes. Students who wish to video for learning purposes must ask permission from the teacher.

During watching week parents are permitted to photograph and video in class. Any parent/guardian not happy for their child to be photographed must forfeit that class. They will be refunded the cost of this class and will be invited to watch another class at a mutually convenient time.

Photographs or videos that include other children should not be posted to social media unless you have received permission from their parent/guardian.

Anti-bullying

North Hampshire Academy of Dance believes that all students, regardless of their race, culture, gender, faith, sexual orientation, have the right to:

- a safe and secure environment at school and on the way to and from school
- concentrate on their learning progress without fear of others

We promote an environment which teaches students respect for others and where all members of the school are encouraged to contribute to a caring and effective atmosphere.

All students are encouraged to speak to a teacher if they are being made to feel uncomfortable at the school or if they witness this happening to others. Please make sure that you or your child lets us know if there is a problem that is making them unhappy. Bullying cannot be dealt with if the school is unaware of the problem.

We recognise that bullying can take many different forms, but the three main types are:

- Physical: hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal: name calling, insulting, offensive language, racist, homophobic or sexual remarks
- Psychological: spreading nasty rumours, inciting others to be cruel or encouraging others to overtly isolate and ignore the individual, sending malicious messages through the use of modern technology

Racial harassment, homophobia or other contraventions of the Equality Act are treated as very serious incidents of bullying.

All reported incidents are treated very seriously and are fully investigated by the Principal. Any incident of bullying is placed on file and any action would take one or more of the following forms depending on the severity of the incident:

- sincere apology
- a warning as to the consequences of a repeated offence
- parents/carers informed of the behaviour and of the school's concern
- exclusion

Eating Disorders

Dance activity can, and should be, a positive and healthy experience for young people. It is therefore our goal to work toward the promotion of healthy eating and positive body image.

North Hampshire Academy of Dance is not responsible for diagnosing or treating individuals with eating disorders. North Hampshire Academy of Dance's role is to create a supportive environment where disclosure is encouraged, and where staff can take positive action, communicate with parent/carers and/or signpost as appropriate to relevant sources of information and advice. If necessary staff will work in partnership with external specialists to plan a suitable course of action to aid recovery.

North Hampshire Academy of Dance recognises that not all cases of low body weight are a consequence of an eating disorder, and that a person may simply be struggling to find an energy balance. Therefore, each case will be carefully considered. A diagnosis of an eating disorder is a clinical illness and should be managed and monitored by a team of trained professionals,

Policy for the prevention, identification and action on eating and low body weight

The aim of this policy is to:

- make clear the stance that North Hampshire Academy of Dance takes on eating disorders and low body weight
- aid prevention, so that eating disorders and low body weight can be avoided wherever possible
- facilitate identification, so that dancers with eating disorders and low body weight can be identified early and as accurately as possible
- support positive action when an eating disorder does occur, or low body weight is identified

As part of our commitment to this policy, North Hampshire Academy of Dance works to ensure that:

- If a member of staff, student, or parent/guardian is concerned about the weight of a student this must be communicated to the Designated Safeguarding Officer

- Dancers will not be commented on as being over or underweight or be recommended or told to adjust their weight or diet unless it appears that their health is at risk. Only Designated Safeguarding Officers for North Hampshire Academy of Dance will discuss concerns about under or overeating directly with a dancer. Advice will be within the framework of this policy and take place in an appropriate setting
- Any dancer seeking to adjust their weight will be signposted to a health professional so they can be given knowledgeable, evidence-based advice regarding healthy eating and weight change where. Changes should be closely monitored and recorded
- Dancers with a suspected eating disorder or identified as having a low body weight will not be blamed or punished. Instead, they will be supported both within North Hampshire Academy of Dance and in the seeking of outside help (e.g. general practitioner)

North Hampshire Academy of Dance agrees to:

- Encourage an atmosphere of supportive openness where it is recognised that dancers sometimes struggle with food and eating and body image, but dancers can feel sure that they will get support if problems do occur, and where people know they can speak to the Designated Safeguarding Officer to seek help if they have any concerns
- Provide participants who want to eat more healthily with evidence-based information.
- Provide adequate breaks for re-fuelling and hydration; encouraging students to take on-board enough fluids before, during and after dancing; and, where possible, try to ensure that healthy foods are available to buy. Where this is not possible, participants will be encouraged to bring their own healthy lunches, or similar
- Ensure that all staff provide consistent messages about healthy eating, disordered eating, and related issues. This goes for both verbal and non-verbal messages, such as the selection of participants of a particular body type

Confidentiality

North Hampshire Academy of Dance respects confidentiality, however if there appears to be a risk to health, the matter will need to be shared between the student, their parents (if under 16), the Designated Safeguarding Officer and the relevant members of staff on a need-to-know basis to ensure the well-being of the student. The student will always be told if, when, and why staff feel that they

need to inform others, before actually doing so. It may be appropriate to also involve a health professional.

Action

Importantly, North Hampshire Academy of Dance is not responsible for diagnosing or treating disordered eating. Instead, positive action comprises of the following:

In the case of a refusal of a recommendation-

North Hampshire Academy of Dance cannot force anyone to visit their GP or other professional, nor to undertake treatment where this is necessary. If a student refuses a recommendation, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will inform the student that they need to send a letter to their general practitioner. This letter will outline the demands of North Hampshire Academy of Dance's training as well as the concern at hand. The student may then be required to obtain a letter from their general practitioner, confirming whether they are fit to continue taking part in dance and other physical activity.

In case of rapid weight changes-

If a student is demonstrating rapid weight loss or gain, they may be asked to obtain a letter from their general practitioner or other suitable health professional that can verify whether physical activity should stop.

When to stop a dancer from engaging in physical activity-

It is difficult to establish at what point a dancer with low body weight is putting themselves at risk by doing physical activity (including dance). This is made more difficult by the fact that such cut-offs are typically established on the basis of weight or BMI. But although this is a difficult task, it is important to have an open discussion about when dancing should cease or reduce, because there are many very serious and long-term health consequences associated with having a sustained low body weight. Teachers who feel that a dancer is too weak (physically or mentally) to partake in classes have a right to limit participation but will clearly explain this in a meeting with the student and the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Because it is not our role as non-professionals to diagnose or treat, the best way to monitor participation may be to establish good lines of communication with a health professional (e.g. the general practitioner involved in the student's referral or staff from the clinic at which a student is undergoing treatment). This way appropriate, on-going advice may be obtained as to whether the student should be allowed to dance. A health professional could, for

instance, be able to advise as to whether the dancer's weight or weight change is so rapid as to put the person at risk.

Following a modified programme of dancing and other physical activity, similar to the management of an injury, is often best. Students should in most cases be encouraged to still attend class, although not necessarily be physically involved.

This is potentially helpful for everyone involved:

For the student

- to understand that North Hampshire Academy of Dance takes the issue seriously, while valuing them as people
- to still gain some benefits from the classes, for instance, students will still be able to observe, practice via imagery based on the current exercises taught, and perhaps be involved in peer feedback
- allows inclusion, such as seeing friends and emotional support

For the teaching staff

- to support their learning in whatever way is possible

Therefore, the student will be told about the reasons as to why they are encouraged to attend but will ultimately be given the choice (perhaps in consultation with their parents).