



## CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

## 1. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY & SAFEGUARDING

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for child protection at Active Dansa is Mrs Mariona Hawkins, School's Director.

At Active Dansa, we believe that no child or young person should be the subject of neglectful or abusive behaviour.

We will promote and maintain the welfare of every child in our care and seek to protect them from harm regardless of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief or any other form of identity or creed. We will create a safe and welcoming environment for all. This policy applies to all our staff/volunteers/trustees/chaperones/students and covers children under the age of 18 and/or vulnerable adults under the age of 24.

To protect children and young people in our care, we will:

- Value and respect children and listen to what they have to say
- Work with children, parents and relevant organisations
- Share our policy with all staff, parents and students
- Ensure all required checks are made when hiring staff and that those in regular contact with children hold a current Access NI check
- Provide appropriate training and support to all staff
- Take responsibility for children and young people's safety when in our care
- Seek permission from parents before taking images (photographs or film) of students and inform them how and where the images will be used
- Report suspected neglect or abuse to the nominated member of staff, local s council Safeguarding Team or Police
- Ensure that this policy is regularly updated
- Prevent and tackle all forms of bullying

### Safeguarding Adults at Risk

Active Dansa recognises its responsibility to safeguarding adults as well as children and young people. The child protection policy at Active Dansa also applies to safeguarding adults at risk. Concerns of or allegations of abuse towards an adult at risk should be reported to the DSP at Active Dansa. Abuse includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, financial, material, neglect, acts of omission, discriminatory and institutional abuse.

### Safeguarding Adults at Risk - Definition

An adult aged 18 years or over 'who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation' (Department of Health DH, 2000).

Other definitions also exist. An adult at risk may therefore a person who:

- is elderly and frail due to ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment
- has a learning disability
- has a physical disability and/or a sensory
- has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder
- has a long-term illness/condition
- misuses substances or alcohol
- is a carer such as a family member/friend who provides personal assistance and care

to adults and is subject to abuse

- is unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a decision and is in need of care and support.

## 1.1. Reporting Suspected Neglect or Abuse

Concerns regarding a child's welfare can be reported by:

- Parents
- Teachers
- Friends
- The child or young person

All allegations of neglect or abuse (physical, emotional or sexual) will be taken seriously. If a concern is reported directly by the child or young person we will not seek to disagree, ask probing or leading questions, or do anything else which may discourage them.

We will make clear that reported concerns cannot be kept confidential but will need to be shared with a nominated member of staff or external organisation. Parents or guardians will also be involved if appropriate. Disclosures will be written down on the Record of Concern Form, using the child's words and hand it to the DPS.

We recognise that early action is vital. Any concerns will be reported immediately. If the child or young person is in immediate danger of harm, we will contact the police on 101. In all other cases, we will report concerns to the local Protection Team on 028 9050 7000

## 1.2. Appropriate Physical Contact in Dance

Teaching dance is a physical activity and appropriate physical contact between students and teachers in class is essential to dance training. Teachers can make physical contact with a student to illustrate a concept, to adjust a student's alignment (especially with the younger students) or to supervise and teach acrobatic dance.

Dance posture (especially ballet, contemporary, acrobatic dance, jazz and lyrical) often requires adjusting the rib- cage and the buttock area simultaneously and it is sometimes necessary to touch the inner thigh, especially with younger students. In classes where duets are being practiced, teachers will be demonstrating with students in ways which will involve supporting and lifting.

In choreographic teaching, teachers demonstrate positions and movements to the students by moving parts of the students' bodies and by moving dancers in relation to each other: this often involves a considerable amount of contact with students. Active Dansa recognises that such physical contact is a potentially complex area; and the school also fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding students and teachers and for protecting their welfare.

The following principles and procedures are in place to fulfil the school's obligations:

- Contact by the teacher is made with particular awareness of the needs of each individual, to assist the dancer in correcting placement.
- All teachers will treat any physical contact with due sensitivity and care, and with due regard for the wishes of the student
- Contact will not involve force or the use of any instrument
- Students should be encouraged to discuss any worries with either their student mentor or any member of staff
- Both students and teachers should feel free to report any concerns to the DSO

We encourage students, parents/carers and teachers to feel free to report any concerns to the DSP.

### 1.3. Chaperoning Children to and from Dance Events

The safety of our students during showcases and school events/competitions are of utmost importance.

There will always be designated chaperones/NI checked volunteers in areas where parents are not allowed access to, such as backstage and changing rooms.

When chaperoning students to an event, we will:

- Ensure we have at least one First Aider on site
- Hold a Child Performance Licence for each event
- Comply with the minimum required numbers of chaperones per group of students
- Every child is aware of their designated chaperone
- Every chaperone/volunteer holds an Access NI check
- Every chaperone/volunteer receives a brief about tasks as well as the needs of the students in their care
- Make chaperones aware of the protocol in case an emergency/fire alarm
- Chaperones will always ensure students privacy is respected at all time when assisting them with costume changes backstage.
- Chaperones will not be allowed to take photographs of students backstage unless it's their own child.
- Have a record of students' emergency contact details on site

Event planning:

- Provide parents and students with information about what the event is for and any preparations required prior the event (such as costumes, make up, times etc)
- Provide parents and students with the full address of the event. In cases where the event is taking place in a large building, we will also give the room or studio number where possible

In case of a miss child and after all efforts to find them have failed, we will advice to call the Police. Immediate action can make all the difference.

### 1.4. Use of Photographs and Film of Children

We recognise that taking images of students in our care may not always be appropriate and that some children and parents may not want images taken at any time. Therefore, before taking images of a child or young person, we will:

- Seek written agreement from parents that images can be taken of their child (This is part of Active Dansa registration process)

Where we have publicly displayed images at our school or on social media, parents and students may withdraw their permission at any time. In such cases, the images will be removed as soon as is reasonable and without question.

We ask that any parent wanting to take photographs or film at our events only do so with our prior permission. Permission will only be granted on the agreement of all present.

## 2. ANTI-BULLYING

Active Dansa is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form. Active Dansa recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our school can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

### 2.1. Responding to bullying

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision making, as appropriate.
- The headteacher/DSP will interview all parties involved.
- The DSO will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- Sanctions, as identified within the school behaviour policy, and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children's social care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

### 2.2. Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, Active Dansa will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible.

Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation.

This may include:

- Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
- Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.

- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online.

## 2.3. Supporting students

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing continuous support.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning; this may include official warnings, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term or permanent exclusions.

## 2.4. Preventing bullying

Active Dansa will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Recognises the potential for children with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.
- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.

This Child Protection and Safeguarding policy was last reviewed on 27th June 2023

Previous reviews: 30/06/2021

Previous reviews: 16/04/2019

Name: Mrs Mariona Hawkins

Job Title: School Director & Principal

Signature:



Mariona A