

THE MUSIC DANCING FEET PARTNERSHIP

Children and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy Guidelines

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POLICY STATEMENT

I / We recognise that we have an explicit duty to safeguard and protect children from abuse as defined in the Children Act 2004 and the Education Act 2002.

Everyone at our organisation shares an objective to help keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Providing a safe environment to learn in
- Identifying and responding to children, young people and vulnerable adults in need or support and / or protection
- Supporting children's development in ways which will foster a sense of self esteem and independence
- Fostering a learning environment in which every pupil feels valued and able to articulate their wishes and feelings in their preferred method of communication in an atmosphere of acceptance and trust.

I / We will endeavour to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected from harm while they visit or are attending classes on our property. We will do this by:

1. Making sure our staff are carefully selected
2. Providing appropriate training for staff in issues of child protection
3. Ensure all staff (including teaching staff, administrators and ancillary staff) undergo an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure
4. To establish and maintain an ethos where children and young people feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
5. Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any child or vulnerable adult in contact with us
6. Not physically, emotionally or sexually abusing any child or vulnerable adult in contact with us
7. Taking all reasonable steps to prevent any staff member, persons working for us or member of the public from putting any child or vulnerable adult in a situation in which there is an unreasonable risk to their health and safety
8. 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 vulnerable adult
9. Reporting to the Principal, Manager or other designated officer any evidence or reasonable suspicion that a child or vulnerable adult has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused in contact with us or anyone in our organisation
10. Referring to statutory authorities all incidents reported to the Principal, Manager or Designated Safety Officers
11. Implementing this policy in conjunction with our Health and Safety guidelines already in place

Everyone working or applying to work for this organisation is to be made aware of our policy for children's welfare. Furthermore, this document should be issued to all staff and other people who are likely to have contact with children as part of their work with us. Copies of the policy will be held by the Principal or Manager of the organisation.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL STAFF

These guidelines apply to:

- A situation involving children and young people up to age 18, whether or not accompanied by adults. We also recognise that vulnerable people of any age will benefit from similar safeguards. Wherever guidelines refer to children, this broader meaning applies
- All staff, contractors, freelance staff, volunteers and consultants working within our organisation or on our premises. In the case of contractors and consultants it is incumbent upon the Principal, Manager or other Designated Safety Officers to ensure that they are made aware of these guidelines

GENERAL DUTIES FOR ALL STAFF

In regard to the safety and welfare of children and similarly vulnerable people all staff are required to:

- Undergo an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau/ Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from hazards
- Strictly observe the code of behaviour in this document
- Take appropriate action if an accident occurs
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent abuse of children in contact with anyone within the organisation
- Report any incident or suspicion of abuse

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL STAFF

- Safety of participants and staff is of prime consideration at all times
- All accidents involving anyone should be recorded in the organisation's accident book 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, location of emergency telephones and first aid equipment
- Staff are responsible for reporting suspected cases of child abuse to the named responsible person and/or agencies
- Appropriate staff should have access to any parent consent/emergency consent forms for all children taking part in any activities [this information should be confidential]
- Staff should ensure that their activities start and end on time
- Staff are expected to promote, demonstrate and incorporate the values of fair play, trust and 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

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

A register of names, addresses, next of kin and contact addresses and telephone numbers for emergencies will be kept.

Parents or carers, and where appropriate older children, will be given a copy of a written statement which specifies the action which will be taken in the event of a child becoming ill or being injured and which indicates that any information which suggests that a child has been abused will be passed on to the Social Services Department and/or the police.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR ALL STAFF

People working at our organisation must always observe the following requirements where children, young people or similarly vulnerable people are concerned.

Do's and Don'ts for Working with Children

DO:

- Behave professionally
- Listen to children
- Treat everyone with respect
- Communicate at an appropriate level
- Be aware of policy and procedures
- Report any suspicions within our guidelines
- Be aware, approachable and understanding

DO NOT:

- Harm a child or frighten a child
- Touch inappropriately
- Use inappropriate language
- Threaten, shout or be aggressive
- Force a child to do something they do not want to do
- Mistreat, demean, ignore, or make fun of
- Show favoritism to any one individual or groups of individuals
- Let a child expose him/herself to danger
- Make racist, sexist or any other remark which upset or humiliate
- Take photos of children without permission

Do's and Don'ts for Working with Vulnerable Adults

DO:

- Be respectful, responsible and professional
- Act in an appropriate manner
- Listen and communicate
- Use common sense; be caring, attentive and aware
- Be sympathetic to their needs
- Be aware of your responsibility
- Be aware of policy and procedures as outlined in this document

DO NOT:

- Treat vulnerable adults as children
- Engage in inappropriate behaviour
- Be aggressive or physically restrain
- Do anything of a personal nature they can do for themselves
- Place yourself in a vulnerable position

You have a strict duty never to subject any child to any form of harm or abuse. Failure to adhere to these procedures will be treated as gross misconduct.

PHOTOGRAPHING CHILDREN

Photographs of children should only be used if written consent has been obtained from a parent, guardian or, if referring to school groups, relevant school authority. General group photographs may be used if no individual can be identified by reason of any attached data. Permission should be obtained firstly to take the photograph and secondly for permission from the parent if the photograph is to be reproduced.

WHAT TO DO IF AN ACCIDENT HAPPENS

Depending on your judgment of the situation, go to the scene immediately if possible and/or summon First Aid assistance and/or contact the emergency services. With children it can be hard to assess whether they have been injured or the extent of the seriousness of an injury. If you have any doubt about this, you should err on the side of caution and contact the emergency services. Even if a child is accompanied and you think an accident is not being treated seriously enough, get medical assistance on your own initiative if necessary. All accidents should be reported in the Health and Safety manual.

FIRST AID

Unless there is good reason, First Aid should not be administered without the permission of the child's parent or accompanying adult. A child cannot give consent. If the parent is not at the premises, obtain their phone number and try and make contact. However, if a child is alone and seriously injured or unconscious, the situation will need to be dealt with immediately. If at all possible, treatment should only be given by a trained First Aider.

Provided this does not in itself put the child at risk, always try to administer First Aid with another adult present. Always tell the child exactly what you are doing and why.

Unless it is irrelevant, ask the child if they use medication (e.g. for asthma, diabetes, and epilepsy) or have any allergies. Some children have allergic reactions to stings.

For minor injuries, you may not offer any medication, including antiseptics or pills of any kind. If you have any doubts about helping someone to use their own medication, phone **National Health Service Direct on 0845 4647** or the emergency services.

Any treatment should be as little as necessary without threatening the child's wellbeing.

If a child comes to you for comfort because of a minor accident or fright, it is acceptable with the Code of Behaviour to hold their hand or put your arm around them. Just ensure:

- you know about any injury and do nothing to make it worse
- physical contact is what the child wants, and the kind of contact between you is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- you do your best to stay in sight of other adults

If a child needs a doctor or hospital, call the emergency services.

It is nearly always best to stay with them and wait for the ambulance. You should only take the risk of bringing in the child yourself if the emergency services ask you to do so because of exceptional circumstances.

CHILD ABUSE GUIDELINES

The NSPCC has a written document which outlines the requirements for professionals reporting child abuse in the United Kingdom.

To read this information, please follow the link below:

www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/questions/reporting_child_abuse_wda74908.html

The Department of Health web-site www.doh.gov.uk contains a practical guide to the law relating to child protection, particularly The Protection of Children Act 1999. The site also provides a publication entitled: "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused". This publication has been developed to assist practitioners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It sets out the process for safeguarding children. It is aimed at those who come into contact with children and families in their everyday work

SAFE RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE *(if applicable)*

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils and ensure that risk of harm is minimised, our organisation employs a safe recruitment and selection policy which complies with national and local guidance. All recruitment procedures involve the following processes.

All successful applicants including teachers, freelance teachers, contractors, volunteers, administrative and ancillary staff, will undertake an Enhanced CRB/ DBS check. Employment records, references and qualifications will be verified for staff positions and references will be taken up for volunteers. All appointments are subject to these checks being satisfactory.

The Person Specification will state the competencies and qualities required by the successful candidate and will state that the interview will explore issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Additionally, for short-listed candidates, any relevant issues relating to the employment breaks or reference queries will be taken up at interview.

The information pack for candidates will include; the application form, job description, the Person Specification and the Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy.

References will be sought before interviews take place. Open references and testimonials provided by applicants will not be accepted. No candidate will be appointed until a verified reference is received and scrutinized. For successful candidates, written references will be sought and verbally verified.

All applicants will undergo a face to face interview where questions pertaining to child protection will be asked.

All candidates will be asked to bring identity proof with them (e.g., a current driving licence or passport, a full birth certificate, plus a document such as a utility bill showing the candidate's current name and address).

All candidates will be asked to bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications relevant to the post.

All appointed staff will undergo an induction process which includes information and written statements of; policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare e.g. child protection, anti-bullying, anti racism, physical intervention / restraint, internet safety and professional conduct.

For volunteers, close attention will be taken to why the applicant would like to work with children and young people and follow up questions will be necessary prior to the appointment being made.

All new employees/volunteers will go through a probation and induction process, including relevant training. Ongoing training and supervision will ensure all employees/volunteers are adequately supported.

The Role of the Principal or Designated Officer

The Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy must include the name(s) of the Principal or Designated Officer(s), her/his role and responsibilities and how s/he can be contacted.

Our organisation will promote awareness of the policy through the Induction Process.

The Principal or Designated Officer(s) should ensure that they are knowledgeable about child protection and that they undertake any training considered necessary to keep updated on new developments.

The Principal or Designated Officer(s) is the link between the members of the public, and staff.

The Principal Designated Officer(s) will have the following functions. Namely to:

- Be an advisor to all organisation and freelance staff on best practice in regard to the child protection policy
- Agree incident reporting procedures
- Keep records of incidents and reports, together with any other relevant information
- Report incidents to the Statutory Authorities and ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover;
- Ensure that individual case records are maintained of any compliant, injury or action taken by the organisation

ENHANCED CRB/DBS DISCLOSURE

All staff including teachers, freelance teachers, contractors, volunteers, administrative and ancillary staff will undertake an Enhanced CR/DBSB disclosure which will be kept up-to-date. It is the Principal's responsibility to view the contents of the Enhanced CRB/DBS disclosure and make a decision about whether that staff member should be excluded from working with young people within their organisation.

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

All Social Services Departments have an Area Child Protection Committee, (ACPC). This is the key inter-agency forum for child protection, comprising representatives from all the relevant statutory organisations and representing the voluntary sector.

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.

Links to specific information about Children and Vulnerable Adult Policy can be found by visiting: www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/questions/answers_wda48954.htm