

Diamond Dancentre Safeguarding Overview

All groups that come into contact or work with children, young people and vulnerable adults should have safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that every child has a right to protection from harm.

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

**WE ALL HAVE A DUTY, AS PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN, TO SAFEGUARD THEM.
WE ALL HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO FOLLOW THE BEST PRACTISE, AND THE LAW.**

Definitions:

- Child: A child is any person under the age of 18 years.
- Young person: A person generally from 14 to 17 years of age.
- Vulnerable adult: This definition is wide, however this may be regarded as anyone over the age of 18 years who may be unable to protect themselves from abuse, harm or exploitation, which may be by reason of illness, age, mental illness, disability or other types of physical or mental impairment.

Safeguarding Policy Abbreviations:

DSO - Designated Safeguarding Officer

Diamond Dancentre Safeguarding Team:

Diamond Dancentre Safeguarding Officer: Cara Donaldson - cara@diamonds.dance

Diamond Dancentre Deputy Safeguarding Officer - Kyle Young - kyle@diamonds.dance

For the purpose of this Safeguarding pack:

The terms children, young person and vulnerable adults are often used, and are inclusive whenever one of these is mentioned.

Policy:

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Date obtained:
1st January 2024

Date of last review:
1st January 2023

To be reviewed:
1st January 2025

Overview:

Diamond Dancentre acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring that all reasonable precautions are in place. Children have the right to be safe and happy whilst participating in activities organised by Diamond Dancentre.

This Safeguarding and Child Protection pack has been drawn up for the benefit of children, under 18 or adults who are considered vulnerable. This also applies to all paid and unpaid staff.

In accordance with the provision of "The Children Act 1989" the welfare of children is paramount. This means that some of the usual considerations of confidentiality may be superseded by the need to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults. The terms children, young person and vulnerable adults are often used, and are inclusive whenever one of these is mentioned within our Safeguarding policies.

Diamond Dancentre has allocated the overall responsibility for child protection to Cara Donaldson, Director. 01252 548748.

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer:

- To research and generate the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and revisions to it.
- To keep up to date with employer responsibilities on child protection.
- The production and distribution of the policy to all staff members.
- To answer questions from the staff about the policy and related matters.
- To ensure the day to day compliance with the relevant child protection legislation.
- To be the person whom any concerns regarding any child abuse should be addressed.

It is not the role of the staff to decide whether a young person has been abused or not; this is the job of the statutory authorities to whom they have a duty to report possible child abuse.

The following policy is based on the below principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religion beliefs and or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All staff (paid/unpaid) have a responsibility to report concerns to the designated person with responsibility for child protection.
- Staff/volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse, or to decide if abuse has occurred.

We will aim to safeguard young people by:

- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practise with young people, parents and carers, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and young people appropriately.
- Carefully following the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through support, supervision and training.
- We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practise regularly.

Child Protection:

When recruiting, the company requires a minimum of an enhanced disclosure certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service for those who work with young people. (This is a check that reveals whether the prospective member of staff is known to the police in relation to committing offences against young people and any other convictions and/or cautions).

All teaching staff are required to hold a Safeguarding certificate to enable them to carry out their work with young people.

Every Diamond Dancentre class has a teacher, or other responsible adult who is in charge and has overall responsibility for the welfare of the participants.

Diamond Dancentre aims to have at least two members of staff present during each class, workshop, rehearsal etc. This will usually be the class teacher and an assistant. However, until references and police checks have been completed, new staff will not be left in sole charge of young people.

Participants will be supervised by adults throughout the session, including during breaks. However, this only applies from the advertised start of the session and if they should arrive early, parents and carers should take steps to ensure they are properly looked after until the session starts. Parents and carers also need to ensure that children are collected promptly at the end of sessions.

All activities organised by Diamond Dancentre are subject to Risk Assessments both during the planning stage and by monitoring the activity. Appropriate steps are taken to minimise any risks identified.

Dance often involves physical contact between participants and between staff and participants but contact will only be made when it is necessary.

We will not use photographic images of young people, for example for publicity purposes, without acknowledgment/permission from the legal guardian. Even when such permission is given, the young person's full name and address will not be revealed.

We keep records about participants so that we know whom to contact in case of an emergency, whether they suffer from any allergies, have a medical condition or a disability/special need and for monitoring purposes. These records are treated as confidential except where relevant information is given to class teachers/persons in charge.

**Definitions of abuse:**

These definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department of Health, Home office, Department for Education and Employment, 1999)

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing harm to a young person.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a young person whom they are looking after.

Physical abuse, as well as being the result of a deliberate act, can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is also classed as physical abuse. FGM has been a criminal offence in the UK since 1985. In 2003 it also became a criminal offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to take their child abroad to have female genital mutilation.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making a child feel or believe they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of the other person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may also involve causing children to feel frequently frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex, or non-penetrative acts such as fondling.

Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

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. It may involve a parent or a carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, leaving a young child home alone or the failure to ensure that a child gets appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some children are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any time. These four definitions do not minimise other forms of maltreatment.

Note

Recent guidance notes other sources of stress for children and families, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, the mental illness of a parent or carer, or drug and alcohol misuse. These may have a negative impact on a child's health and development and may be noticed by an organisation caring for a child. If it is felt that a child's well-being is adversely affected by any of these areas, the same procedures should be followed.

Recognising and Responding to Abuse:

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

Physical signs of abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or games
- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- Cigarette burns
- Bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Neglect-under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains
- Female Genital Mutilation

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Reluctance to get changed, for example, wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Depression
- Withdrawn behaviour
- Running away from home

Emotional signs of abuse

- A failure to thrive or grow particularly if a child puts on weight in other circumstances e.g. in hospital or away from their parents' care
- Sudden speech disorders
- Persistent tiredness
- Development delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Being unable to play
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self-harm
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour

Sexual Abuse

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal area
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- Having nightmares
- Running away from home
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- Bedwetting
- Eating problems such as over-eating or anorexia
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- Substance or drug abuse
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- Acting in a sexually explicit way with adults

Neglect

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- Constantly dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- Having few friends
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

What to do if suspected abuse has occurred. (parent, carer or another adult):

1. The concerns must be reported immediately to the designated person: **Cara Donaldson**

The role of the designated person is to:

- Obtain information from staff, volunteers, children or parents and carers who have child protection concerns and to record this information.
- Assess the information quickly and carefully and ask for further information as appropriate.
- They should also consult with a statutory child protection agency such as the local social services department or the NSPCC to clarify any doubts or worries. In this case, or if she feels it to be appropriate anyway, the designated person would either contact Rushmoor Borough Council Social Services Duty Childcare Co-ordinator 0300 555 1373 or the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000.
- The designated person should make a referral to a statutory child protection agency or the police without delay.

The designated person has been nominated by Diamond Dancentre to refer allegations or suspicions of abuse to the statutory authorities. In the absence of **Cara Donaldson**, the matter should be brought to the attention of **Kyle Young**. (Qualified DSO)

2. Suspicions will not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

3. The FGM Mandatory reporting duty. When a girl under 18 discloses she has suffered FGM, or when the professional sees this: report is to be made to the police via the 101 non-emergency number.

Please Note:

It is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies. If for any reason you believe that the designated persons have not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is up to you to contact the child protection agencies directly.

Anyone in the Diamond Dancentre (either an employee or volunteer) who becomes aware of or is concerned about actual or suspected occurrence of abuse of a child or vulnerable adult or about the behaviour of someone in the Diamond Dancentre must report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Office identified in our organisation to be responsible for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse. Everyone in the Diamond Dancentre should ensure that they know who this is and how to contact them.

Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse:

- Stay calm, listen carefully to what is being said.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others - do not promise to keep secrets.
- Allow the child to continue at his/her own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- Record in writing what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible, note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.

Never make false promises!

What to do after a child has talked to you about abuse:

1. Make notes as soon as possible. Ideally within 1 hour of being told, you should write down exactly what the child has said and what you said in reply and what was happening immediately before being told. You should record the dates and times of when you made the record. All hand-written notes should be kept securely.
You should use the form "Reporting allegations or suspicions of abuse". This form is attached at the back of this policy.
2. You should report your discussion with the designated person as soon as possible. If this person is implicated, you need to report to the second designated person. If both are implicated report to Social Services.
3. You should under no circumstances discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those nominated above.
4. After a child has disclosed abuse the designated persons should carefully consider whether it is safe for a child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On these rare occasions, it may be necessary to take immediate action to contact Social Services to discuss putting safety measures into effect.

Note:

Confidentiality is very important to the young person and, while you should respect their wishes around confidentiality where possible, their health, safety and welfare are paramount. If you become aware that a student is self-harming, you are obliged to share this with your school's designated safeguarding lead. This information would usually be shared with the parents or carers too, but you should discuss the need to do this with the young person and listen carefully to any fears they may have.

Recruitment and appointment of workers and volunteers:

In recruiting and appointing workers we, Diamond Dancecentre, will be responsible for the following:

- Identifying the tasks and responsibilities involved and the type of person most suitable for the job.
- We direct all new staff to our policies via our HR company portal. All new staff are requested to sign to say they have read and understood all policies.
- We will request to see documentation of any qualifications detailed by the applicant.
- We will always interview our candidates face-to-face.
- We will have at least two people from our organisation on the interview panel, one of which will have been trained in Safer Recruitment.
- We will ensure that our successful applicant obtains or shows an enhanced check from the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- Checks will be renewed and checked every 3 years after initial appointment unless the update service is used.
- The same principles above apply to volunteers and young people who have been involved with the organisation and have become volunteers

Allegations against a member of staff/volunteer:

Diamond Dancentre will assure all staff/volunteers that we will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child. Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation
- A child protection investigation
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

You should report your concerns with the designated person as soon as possible. If this person is implicated, you need to report to the second designated person. If both are implicated report to Social Services. The below refers only to the designated person as an example.

Action if there are concerns:

Concerns about poor practice:

- If the allegation is clearly about poor practice; this will be dealt with as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the designated person or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the Jacqui Donaldson who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not the organisation should initiate disciplinary proceedings.

Concerns about suspected abuse:

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the designated person who will take such steps as are considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk
- The designated person will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.

Internal Enquiries and Suspension:

- The designated person will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.
- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries, Diamond Dancentre will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, Diamond Dancentre must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that, on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

Appropriate Physical Touch:

As a dance school, there may be occasions when physical touch between students and staff, and students and other students is appropriate.

Touch Between Students and Staff:

There are three reasons why contact between student/staff could be deemed appropriate.

A) A distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comfort such as a caring parent would give. Staff should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is, and what is seen to be by others present, normal and natural, does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same pupil over a period of time. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance, he/she should seek the advice of the appropriate staff member.

(B) Some staff are likely to come into physical contact with pupils from time to time in the course of their duties. An example is demonstrating a movement or position during class. Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted.

(C) There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain a pupil physically to prevent him/her from inflicting injury to others or self-injury, damaging property, or causing disruption. In such cases only the minimum force necessary may be used and any action taken must be to restrain the pupil. Where an employee has taken action to physically restrain a pupil, he/she should make a written report of the incident & submit it to the DSO Cara Donaldson immediately.

Touch Between Student and Student:

During the course of Diamond Dancentre activities, students may find physical touch an important part of their learning and development.

Physical contact should be limited to what the facilitator deems necessary and should never be sexual/violent in content.

If touch between students becomes violent, the DSO must be informed immediately, and a full incident report written.

Supervisory arrangements for the management of Diamond Dancentre activities and services.



We will aim to protect children from abuse and our team members from false allegations by adopting the following guidelines:

- We will keep a register of all children attending our activities.
- We will keep a register of all staff members (both paid staff members and volunteers).
- Where possible our team members should not be alone with a child.
- Team members should escort children to the toilet but are not expected to be involved with toileting, unless the child has a special need that has been brought to our attention by the parent/guardian.
- We recognise that physical touch between adults and children can be healthy and acceptable in public places. However, our team members will be discouraged from this in circumstances where an adult or child are left alone.
- All team members should treat all children with dignity and respect in both attitude language and actions.

Peer on Peer Abuse:

Diamond Dancentre continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with full consideration to impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being. Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways which would be classified as peer on peer abuse.

At Diamond Dancentre we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this section:

- Code of Conduct (Student)

Examples of peer on peer abuse may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical abuse e.g. (biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling etc.)
- Sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse e.g. (inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault etc.)
- Bullying (physical, name calling, homophobic etc.)
- Cyber bullying
- Sexting
- Initiation/Hazing
- Prejudiced Behaviour
- Teenage relationship abuse

Diamond Dancentre will deal with any situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is incredibly important that staff do not dismiss issues as 'banter' or 'growing up' or compare them to their own experiences of childhood. It is necessary that staff consider each issue and individual before taking action. If staff minimise the concerns raised it may result in a young person seeking no further help or advice.

Information will be gathered as soon as possible to get the true facts as soon as any resemblance to peer on peer abuse is discovered. Staff will not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible and will adhere to Diamond Dancentre's 'Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse' guidelines as outlined in this policy above.

In the instance of a UK law being broken or a safeguarding concern, a report will be made by the designated person to both the police (via the 101 number) and the local safeguarding authority. Diamond Dancentre will also, as part of investigation, try to discover intent. Without repetition or malicious intent some of the above could be handled internally. This decision will only be taken by one (or more) of Diamond Dancentre's designated person.

Parents and Guardians will be informed if the designated person has no concerns that this could make any situation worse.

If a case of Peer on Peer abuse is handled internally or an ongoing case of Peer on Peer abuse has been reported and is being handled externally:

The young person who has been harmed will be continued to be monitored and offered various after support including (but not limited to): Mentoring, Risk Assessments and improving peer relationships.

The young person who has displayed harmful behaviour will be punished as appropriate to the Student Code of Conduct including (but not limited to): Exclusion/Suspension and additional supervision.

ONLINE CLASSES

As a company, Diamond Dancentre offer lessons via an online video conferencing software called Zoom.

Our safeguarding policies will be followed as normal, with some additional precautions. Risk assessments have been updated to reflect new conditions.

Zoom is an unaffiliated company, and attendees must agree to their terms and conditions. Online security and GDPR have been assessed and deemed acceptable.

Attendees join through private links sent only to people who are on the competitive pages of Diamond Dancentre's social media. Session leaders add attendees through waiting room feature to ensure only Diamond Dancentre students have access.

All attendees must use their webcam at all times.

All staff to be briefed on additional safeguarding procedure as noted in risk assessment.

At Diamond Dancentre we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this section:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding (Online) 2022

Support and Training:

The Designated Person(s) will update their/his/her Child Safeguarding Officer training every three years or after legislative change, whichever occurs first.

External classes:

As a company, Diamond Dancentre will often offer classes in external halls.

Our safeguarding policies will be followed as normal, with some additional precautions. Risk assessments have been updated to reflect new conditions.

Incident reporting form:

(Taken from the CPSU website)

Your information			
Name			
Address			
Contact number(s)			
Email			
Business name:		Your role:	

Personal information – child / young person					
Name				Date of birth	
Gender [1]	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Non-binary <input type="checkbox"/>	Another description (please state) <input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there any information about the child that would be useful to consider?					

Contact information – parent / carer				
Name(s)				
Address				
Contact number(s)				
Email				
Have they been notified of this incident?	No <input type="checkbox"/>		Please explain why this decision has been taken	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		Please give details of what was said / actions agreed	

Child's account of the incident				
Please provide any witness accounts of the incident				
Name of witness (and date of birth, if a child)		Role within the sport or relationship to the child		
Address				
Contact number(s)				
Email				
Details of any person involved in this incident or alleged to have caused the incident / injury				
Name (and date of birth, if a child)		Role within the sport or relationship to the child		
Address				
Contact number(s)				
Email				
Please provide details of action taken to date				
Has the incident been reported to any external agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further details:
Name of organisation / agency				
Contact person				
Contact number(s)				
Email				
Agreed action or advice given				

Declaration

Your signature	x
Print name	
Today's date	

Contact your organisation's Designated Safeguarding Officer in line with Diamond Dancentre's reporting procedures

Safeguarding Officer's name	
Date reported	