



Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

This policy:

The Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy must be read and understood by all members of staff at Off Beat Dance Academy. We will ensure this policy is accessible to all staff, parents and students where appropriate. We will also ensure that all teachers and staff members understand this policy by discussing it's outlines during staff meetings. All staff and volunteers at Off Beat Dance Academy must adhere to this policy and understand their duties and responsibilities regarding safeguarding. A copy of this policy will be available at all times on our website www.offbeatdance.co.uk.

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

Last Updated June 2024.



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Glossary

Child - is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently, in further education, or working does not change their entitlement to services or protection as a child. Our guidelines apply to all children and young people until their 18th birthday.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people means -

Protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of a child's health or development, ensuring that children are growing up with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to ensure that children have the best life chances.

Important Contact Details:

Principal at Off Beat Dance Academy / Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Stephanie Goodall

Email: offbeatdance@outlook.com

Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support (SCAS)

Tel No. 0300 111 8007

8.30am – 5.00pm Monday to Thursday

8.30am- 4.30pm Friday

1 Staffordshire Place, Stafford, Staffordshire, ST16 2DH

Emergency Duty Team

To be contact when SCAS are out of office.

Tel No. 0345 604 2886

Or email: eds.team.manager@staffordshire.gov.uk

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

Any adult can call for advice/support about any child any time

Safeguarding Responsibilities:

Off Beat Dance Academy recognise we have a responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of all children and young people we work with and have an explicit duty to do so under the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and the Education Act 2002. At Off Beat Dance Academy, we believe that the welfare of the child is of paramount importance, that no child should be treated any less favourably than others in accessing services that meet their needs and that all children, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, or beliefs.

At Off Beat Dance Academy we do this by:

- Providing a safe and positive environment for dance, where students feel comfortable expressing themselves.
- Creating and maintaining space where children feel safe to talk, knowing they will be listened to.
- Having a health and safety policy and suitable risk assessments.
- Ensuring all students are treated fairly and with equality.
- Identifying and responding to concerns about a child or young person.
- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in our care.
- Supporting children to develop, building their confidence and independence.
- Using safer recruitment guidance to ensure all staff have suitable checks and references.

At Off Beat Dance Academy, all concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously. It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to take steps to protect children, keep them safe from hazards, and take appropriate action in the event of an accident. It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to take reasonable steps to protect children and young people from harm and abuse while in contact with our school and our staff, and to report any incident of or suspicion of abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Person or, in their absence, directly to the appropriate statutory authority.

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

At Off Beat Dance Academy, our Principal, Stephanie Goodall, is our Designated Safeguarding Lead. As the Designated Safeguarding Lead they have additional training, provided by Dance School Safeguarding Services. The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is to:

- Be responsible for overseeing the implementation of child safeguarding procedures.
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers are aware of and trained in safeguarding children and understand the policies and procedures.
- Maintaining accurate records of any reported concerns and their outcomes.

Managing Injury

If a child has a physical injury and there are concerns about abuse, attention should be sought for the injury first, then procedures for referring to children's social care should be followed. Contacting the emergency services for medical treatment must not be delayed for any reason.



Managing Recruitment

All individuals working at Off Beat Dance Academy who have contact with children and young people are required to hold a valid, clear DBS check. All staff and volunteers will be recruited in line with safer recruitment guidance. No staff will be employed or able to volunteer if they are barred from working with children, and in the event of an incident where a member of staff has to be dismissed (or chooses to leave) because they have harmed a child, the DBS will be notified.

Managing Allegation

If any staff member or volunteer has concerns about the behaviour or conduct of another individual within the organisation, the nature of the concern should be reported to Stephanie Goodall. The member of staff who has a concern or to whom the allegation or concern is reported should not question the child or investigate further. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

If an allegation or concern is raised about a member of staff, outside of work, this may still present a risk of harm to children for whom that member of staff is responsible, and as such, the general principles of this policy still apply.

We Will Ensure;

- An appropriate recruitment and selection procedures.
- The provision of safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers.
- All staff and volunteers hold clear, current DBS checks.
- We take all reasonable steps to ensure health, safety and welfare for all those who access our organisation including appropriate risk assessments as well as a Health and Safety policy, you can find the policy at www.offbeatdance.co.uk.
- We take all practicable steps to ensure that no one working with us or for us would put a child in a situation of unreasonable risk to their health and safety.
- We will not harm or abuse children within our care and will take all reasonable steps to ensure no one working with us or around us within the community could harm or abuse a child in our care.
- Reporting to our DSL and onward to children's social care whenever we suspect harm, and we will foster an environment of good communication, transparency, and trust.
- All staff and volunteers have a strict duty to never subject a child or young person to any form of harm or abuse.

Failure to adhere to these procedures will be treated as gross misconduct. During the admissions process, relevant contact and medical information shall be collected, and access to emergency information will be available to teaching staff and volunteers at every session, if it is deemed necessary.



Where We Suspect Harm and Abuse

Every member of staff has a duty to be alert to the signs of harm and abuse. Where they have concerns, these should be recorded carefully and accurately. All concerns should be discussed with Off Beat Dance Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead, Stephanie Goodall. A decision shall then be made with the DSL regarding sharing this concern onward with children's social care or the police as required. Where possible and only if it is safe to do so, the teacher who has the concern or the DSL should let the parent / carer of that child know if they intend to raise that concern with children's social care, and they should seek their permission to share information. **Please be aware, if the parent declines to consent and your concerns regard harm / significant harm, you are still duty-bound to share with children's social care.**

In the absence of the DSL, all concerns should be shared directly with children's social care.

Our local service is **Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support Service**. Their website is <https://staffsscb.org.uk/contact/>.

Their number is **0300 111 8007**. For emergency and out-of-hours concerns, contact their Emergency Duty team on **0345 604 2886**.

All information sharing must be Data Protection act and GDPR compliant. Sharing must be discreet, appropriate, honest, and accurate, but it is important for all staff and volunteers to be aware GDPR and Data Protection law does not create a barrier to sharing safeguarding information, and all concerns **MUST** be shared with the DSL and children's safeguarding as necessary.

Harm to Children

Everybody working with children at Off Beat Dance Academy must be alert to the needs of children and the risk of harm. All staff and volunteers should be able to recognise, and know how to act upon, evidence that a child's health or development is being impaired or that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. At Off Beat Dance Academy, we will make every effort to protect children from harm when they are attending our classes.



Recognising Harms and Abuse

Below are the definitions of harm to children and young people use these to help you recognise harm and ensure you cause no harm.

Physical abuse: A form of abuse that 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 causes, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person, 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 the over-protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (or cyberbullying), causing children to frequently 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, although it may occur alone.

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 noncontact 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: The persistent failure to meet a child's 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 and abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.



If A Child Tells Us They Have Experienced Harm and Abuse

- Always listen to what the child has to say with an open mind.
- Do not ask leading or probing questions.
- Never stop a child who is talking freely about significant events.
- Make a note of the discussion, taking care to record the timings, setting, and people present, as well as what was said.
- Do not ask children to make a written statement.
- Never promise a child that what they have told you will be kept secret. Explain that you have a responsibility to share information.
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead at Off Beat Dance Academy immediately.

Where We Believe Another Teacher Or Responsible Adult Has Harmed A Child

If any member of staff or volunteer has concerns about the behaviour or conduct of another individual within Off Beat Dance Academy, the nature of the concern should be reported to Stephanie Goodall, who will report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if deemed necessary.

The contact number for Staffordshire LADO is 0300 111 8007.

We are committed to reviewing this policy and good practice annually. This policy was published in June 2024, and should be reviewed in June 2025.



All staff members and volunteers at Off Beat Dance Academy, must read the Safeguarding policy. When you have read the policy, please sign and date below. By signing you acknowledge you have read the policy and you agree to abide by the guidelines and procedures stated.

Staff Member Name	Role	Signature	Date

