
Footsteps Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Our Safeguarding Commitment

Footsteps Dance School is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people in our care. We recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Footsteps Dance School acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse. All staff and volunteers will work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

Footsteps Dance School recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014, the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

Footsteps Dance School will ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious 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.
- Everyone will be treated with respect and dignity
- Enthusiastic and constructive criticism will be given to pupils rather than negative criticism
- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned
- All adult members will provide a positive role model
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate behaviour
- It will comply with health & safety legislation
- It will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children
- It will undertake relevant professional development and training
- It will ensure all contact and medical details for every child is up to date and available at the place of teaching or performance.
- All staff will receive dedicated safeguarding and First aid training.
- All dancers will be taught in a safe space ensuring that the dancers physical and mental wellbeing is always at the forefront.

Our Safeguarding Leads

Footsteps Dance School has a designated Safeguarding lead who is in charge of ensuring that the child protection policy is adhered to.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Lauren Jones and she can be contacted on 07837995343

There is also a Safeguarding Events Officer who is Kerry Cleary she can be contacted on: 07793 956613

Our Safeguarding Processes

In implementing this policy **Footsteps Dance School** will:

- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or any adult's conduct towards a child or young person to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. Police and/or Children's Social Care).
- Children, young people and parents will be informed of who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is, and will be able to raise any safeguarding concerns & know that these will be taken seriously and acted upon accordingly.

This policy will be regularly monitored by Lauren Jones and will be subject to an annual review.

Signed: Lauren Jones

Date policy agreed: 01/09/2026

Date policy to be reviewed: 31/08/2027

Footsteps Dance School Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures and guidelines

Disclosure of abuse

If a child confides in you that abuse has taken place:

- Remain calm and in control, but do not delay in taking action
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Don't ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Don't promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share the information with others and that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help
- Reassure the child that they 'did the right thing' in telling someone.
- Tell the child what you will do next
- Speak immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Lauren O'Brien). It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually Children's Social Care or the Police
- Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a child makes a disclosure
- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the child's own words. Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned, and who you gave information to. Make sure you sign and date your record.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead would discuss concerns with a parent/carer if this was thought not to place the child at further risk. When the disclosure is about something a parent/carer has done, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should always seek advice from Children's Social Care First.

Other safeguarding issues can include:

- Forced marriage/honour-based violence/ female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender based violence/violence against women and girls
- Mental health
- Radicalisation/extremism
- Peer on peer abuse
- Sexting/grooming and other E safety issues
- Teenage relationship abuse ☐ Trafficking

If you have any concerns that a child may be experiencing or at risk of harm or neglect, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will contact the relevant Children's services.

Photographs and images of children

There are risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs on web sites and in other publications such as theatre programmes. Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information, for example 'this is X who goes to such and-such a school who likes playing football'. This information can make a child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to start to 'groom' that child for abuse. Secondly the content of the photo can be used or adapted for inappropriate use.

Footsteps Dance School will always seek parental consent before using of images of children and young people on their websites, programmes and other material. We will assess potential risks to the child when making decisions about the type of images to use and the way they are used. Use of names of individuals in a photograph should be limited and consent prior to using is in written form.

Footsteps will seek to ensure that parents support the policy. If parents or other members of the audience are intending to photograph or video an event they should be made aware of the organisation's policy informing them that the use of personal photograph taking, parents/carers is for personal use only and photos of other children and must not be put on social media without the permission of the child's parent(s).

The use of cameras or mobile phones and camera or filming capability in dressing rooms and other inappropriate environments is expressly forbidden.

E-Safety

Most of our children will use mobile phones and computers. They are a source of fun, entertainment and education. However, we know that some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and e-mails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face to face meetings.

- Staff should not be 'friends' on social media with any pupil.
- Cyber bullying by children via texts and e-mail will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying.
- Mobile phones with cameras should have limited use in the changing rooms except for emergency communication with the designated members of staff.

Safer Recruitment

All staff must go through a recruitment process which takes into account safeguarding issues as follows:

- A DBS check for the Child Workforce that is enhanced with barring.
- Two references, at least one of which must be a professional reference. If the second reference is personal it must not be from a family member
- The interview process must include questions about safeguarding and sharing the questions the organisations safeguarding policy and expectations
- Relevant qualifications and experience in order to practice safely
- For volunteer chaperones, the local authority chaperone application process including vetting checks will be followed.
- A current and up to date First aid certificate at Level 3 or above
- A current and up to date safeguarding course Level 2 or above

Parents as volunteers

Footsteps Dance School believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and the Dance School. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities and to share responsibility for the care and safeguarding of the children. All parents will be made aware of the organisation's Child Protection/safeguarding policy and procedures, which are accessible to see on our website. All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after classes, rehearsals, or performances. The organisation has a responsibility to ensure suitable arrangements

are in place to take children home. Children of primary school age or younger must be collected at the studio doors.

Unsupervised Contact

Footsteps Dance School will ensure that no unauthorised adult has contact with the children. If possible, there should always be two adults in the room when working with children under 8 years. If unsupervised contact is unavoidable (i.e. only one member of staff present), steps will be taken to minimise risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area or in a designated room with the door open. All children will be chaperoned at all times by their own parent or a local authority licenced chaperone whilst taking part in performances.

Behaviour

It is expected that all staff and pupils respect each other.

- If there are incidents of unacceptable verbal or physical behaviour relating to pupils these will be challenged by staff and where appropriate brought to the attention of the parent.
- All prejudice incidents will be challenged.
- Sanctions should be applied in agreement with parents where necessary
- Any incidents of unacceptable verbal or physical behaviour from staff must be brought to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The relevant disciplinary process will be followed. If this has put a child at risk of significant harm the incident must be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- All staff will adhere to the behaviour policy we have in place. Emergency contact numbers will be contacted if children do need collecting from class at the discretion of the Footsteps teaching team.

Staff Behaviour

All staff will abide by the Staff Code of Conduct. Adults will only touch children when it is necessary in relation to the activity. Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear. All acrobatic students must have had a parent or guardian sign a waiver prior to joining in any of our Acrobatic classes.

Safe Spaces

All lessons at Footsteps dance school are carried out in hired spaces. All staff will make sure that the buildings, dance spaces and venues are suitable to hold classes. A member of the footsteps team or (lettings team) will be monitoring the entrance and exit doors. All dancers up to the age of 18 are requested to be picked up at the studio door upon their class starting and finishing.

Allegations against staff

Any report of concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or allegation of abuse against a member of staff must immediately be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or who will refer to the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if this is an allegation that a member of staff may have caused harm to a child. Any concern or allegation against the Proprietor(s) will be reported to the Events Safeguarding Officer.

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of a child is paramount and report any concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Responsibilities of the organisation when putting on a production:

At the outset of the production name of organisation will:

- Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process
- Identify at the outset the person who will have designated responsibility for child protection
- Engage in effective recruitment of chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children, including appropriate vetting (if necessary, in consultation with the Local Authority)
- Ensure that the children are supervised by a responsible adult at all times
- Ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead knows how to contact Children's Social Care if they need to report any concerns.

Appendix 1 – Definitions of child abuse

A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm or fails to prevent harm. A child or young person up to the age of 18 can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection.

Type of abuse	Definition
Physical Abuse	May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after
Sexual Abuse	Forcing or enticing a child/ young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. May involve physical contact including penetrative acts or non-penetrative acts. 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 sexual ways.
Neglect	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 failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate care or treatment. It may also include neglect or, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
Emotional Abuse	The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age and developmentally inappropriate expectations imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, for example witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Appendix 2 – Key Safeguarding Contacts

- Trafford Children's First Response 0161 912 5125 marat@trafford.gov.uk
- Anita Hopkins Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 0161 912 5125
anita.hopkins@trafford.gov.uk
- Police Non-emergency – 101 Emergency - 999
- Social Care Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team 0161 912 2020