



## **Safeguarding Policy and Procedure**

**MACS Dance recognise the safety of its students to be of vital importance and is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. MACS Dance acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice of the Royal Academy of Dance requirements. We will make every effort to protect children from harm, abuse, and exploitation, and will take all reasonable steps to do so. MACS Dance acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse. Paid staff and volunteers will endeavour to work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.**

The measures in this Safeguarding Policy should be adhered to by all adults involved with MACS Dance.

The Department for Education define the following in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing the impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

**MACS Dance employees, independent contractors, chaperones, and volunteers should:**

- Listen to and support all children and vulnerable people within the organisation’s framework.
- Respect the confidentiality of the children and vulnerable people within the organisation’s framework, only sharing private or confidential information about a child or vulnerable person if it’s in the best interests to do so.
- Not promise to keep secrets or ask anyone to do so.
- Be aware of their position of trust.
- Respect all children, young people, and vulnerable people.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and not display any behaviour that may be misinterpreted by others.
- Adhere to the MACS Dance policy/contract on social media and the use of communications technology, mobiles, cameras, or web cams, Ipad, Ipod etc.
- Prohibiting social contact with children, young people, or vulnerable people, including prohibiting any physical or sexual contact either inside or outside the organization.
- Avoiding or minimise the occasions where they are alone or in a secluded area, particularly where young children/young adults are concerned.
- Ensure all behaviour is always ‘beyond reproach.’
- Adhering to the organisations policy and procedure on transporting children or vulnerable adults.
- Reporting any disclosures or allegations against any member of staff or volunteer without delay.

- Read the Department for Education Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 or any updated policy:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1080047/KCSIE\\_2022\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1080047/KCSIE_2022_revised.pdf)

## Safeguarding Procedure

MACS Dance recognises that child protection and safeguarding can be very difficult to navigate, however if you have any concerns, you must report it as it cannot be thought of as someone else's responsibility.

The following procedure should be adhered to by all members, teachers, volunteers, and staff of MACS Dance to ensure that all concerns about the care and protection of children/young people are effectively managed:

### Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

Abuse has many different forms, and it is important to understand them all in order to recognise them. Please find definitions below from Surrey County Council:

#### Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, and burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

#### Emotional Abuse:

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or "making fun" of what they say or how they communicate. It may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying) 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 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, 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 penetrative (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images or watching sexual activities or 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:

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and 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, (including exclusion from home or abandonment) failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers) or the failure to ensure access to the appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsive to, a child's basic emotional needs.

#### Bullying:

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone.

It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

Bullying that happens online, using social networks and mobile phones, is often called cyber bullying. A child can feel like there's no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.

#### Child Sexual Exploitation:

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, drugs, alcohol, accommodation or gifts as a result of them performing, and/or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can also occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet or mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. Child sexual exploitation is a hidden crime. Young people often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. Children who work in entertainment may be sexually exploited in return for offers of TV, film or modelling/ photographic work and roles in professional stage productions.

#### Responsibilities of the Organisation

MACS Dance will ensure the following at the start of any class or production:

- Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the time children are on site.
- Identify the person with 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).
- All staff are to hold a valid DBS, Fill out annual suitability of staff forms and teacher to be members of accredited dance teaching organisations.
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times.
- Know how to get in touch with the local authority social care services.

#### Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead

Any cause for concerns should be reported to the Company Director and Principal immediately in the interests of our Safeguarding Policy [hannahmcmillan@macsdance.com](mailto:hannahmcmillan@macsdance.com)

In the unlikely event you cannot get in contact with Hannah McMillan, please contact Sarah Fowler [admin@macsdance.com](mailto:admin@macsdance.com)

MACS Dance safeguarding leads will ensure:

- All staff should know what to do if they are concerned about a child/young person.
- All concerns are clearly recorded and acted on. Where they are referred, they will also be followed up by the safeguarding lead.
- All concerns will be kept of file in the office.

### What to Do

If you have a concern for a child/young person, please follow the steps below:

Suspicion of Abuse:

1. If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of MACS Dance please make this known to your safeguarding lead.
2. If you suspect that the person with responsibility for child protection and safeguarding is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to the local authority designated officer (LADO) (Please see their information below).
3. Please keep written records of what you witnessed including your own response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved.
4. If a serious allegation is made against any member of MACS Dance, teacher, chaperone, staff etc., action will be taken to ensure the individual does not have further contact with the child until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the studio, sites where teaching takes place, and theatre. They will not have any unsupervised contact with any other children at MACS Dance until the investigation has concluded.

Disclosure of Abuse:

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

1. Remain calm and in control but do not delay in taking action.
2. 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.
3. Do not promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the person with responsibility for child protection. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share this information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
4. Reassure the child that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
5. Tell the child what you are going to do next.
6. Speak immediately to the person with responsibility for child protection. It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually Children's Social Care, or the Police.
7. Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a child makes a disclosure.
8. 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 the information to. Make sure you sign and date your record.

Contact:

1. If you have concerns about the wellbeing of a child in your care you have a duty to report it to the MACS Dance lead safeguarding officer, Hannah McMillan. If you are unable to contact them you should contact Wandsworth Borough Council Children's Services.
2. Where you make such a referral, please advise the child employment office at the earliest opportunity. We can offer you the appropriate support and advice where required. Response to your referral Child protection investigation.

Local Authority Designated Officer

Advice – [LADO@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@wandsworth.gov.uk)

LADO, Anita Gibbons - 07974 586 461

Interim LADO Alice Peatling, [alice.peatling@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:alice.peatling@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk)

Record Keeping:

1. In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, the details of an allegation or reported incident will be recorded, regardless of whether or not the concerns have been shared with a statutory child protection agency.
2. An accurate note shall be made of the following:
  - Date and time of the incident or disclosure.
  - Names of the parties involved.
  - What was said or done and by whom.
  - Any action taken to investigate the matter.
  - Any further action taken e.g. suspension of an individual.
  - Where relevant the reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency.
  - The name of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported.
3. The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

Creating a Safe Organisation

Photographs and images of children:

1. Only if accepted on the Student Registration Form will appropriate photography and videography of children be taken during their time with MACS Dance for publicity and marketing purposes. This could be during, but not limited to:
  - a) Classes, Private Coaching, Exam Coaching, Examinations, Rehearsals, Performances, Festivals and School Trips.

These photographs and videos are for use in advertising and marketing, social media to include *Facebook* and *Instagram*, websites, leaflets, magazines, posters and/or flyers to promote MACS Dance.

2. Photography and videography of children may also be taken during their time with MACS Dance to help students' safe technical development and progression. This could be during the times set out in clause 1.a)
  - a) These photographs and videos could be used on private *WhatsApp* groups for appropriately aged students or sent to all parents of the class to help children practice at home. This will only be done if permission from the parent is granted from all students who are in the photograph and/or video.
  - b) Photographs and/or videos may also be taken of your child in class to help your child progress. Any such photograph and/or video will be viewed and immediately deleted.
3. Strictly no photography or videography must be taken by a parent/guardian to include any child/children other than their own whilst on site with MACS Dance without the permission of the principal. The class teacher will inform you if photography and videography will be permitted at the beginning of any organised watching day or performance.
4. Any images or videos taken by teachers, volunteers or staff can only be taken with the permission of the school principal. These images or videos must be sent to the office and deleted as soon as possible, no later than 7 days from when the image/s were taken. All images held by MACS Dance will be stored on secure password protected laptops in the office.
5. The use of mobile phones and/or any such device with camera or filming capabilities is expressly forbidden in dressing/changing rooms. No images that compromise the dignity of any child will be taken. All staff should have phones away and switched off when helping children change in dressing/changing rooms.

#### E-Safety:

- Cyber-bullying by children, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying. All members of MACS Dance must adhere to the behaviour policy.

#### Parents:

- MACS Dance believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and the organisation. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the organisation and to share responsibility for the care of children.
- All parents will be given a copy the organisation's Child Protection Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and Behaviour Policy.
- All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after classes, exam coaching, rehearsals or performances. MACS Dance will always communicate effectively via email of drop off and pick up times and procedures.

#### Unsupervised Contact:

- The organisation will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children.
- If possible, there will always be two adults in the room when working with children.
- If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimise risk:
  - Work will be carried out in a public building, area or in a designated room with a door or window blinds open. The blinds of windows will not be covered if this compromises the safety or safeguarding of the children/young person. The door will not be open if this compromises the safety or safeguarding of the children/young person.
  - All teachers will hold up to date DBS checks and will be renewed no later than every 3 years.
- All children will be chaperoned at all times.

#### Gifts made to the children:

- Gifts of any sort, including sweets and chocolates given to the children must be made via the chaperone or teacher and with consent of the parents.
- Chaperones and teachers will be mindful of any allergies/food intolerances in the group before accepting gifts for the children.
- Favouritism of any child(ren) is not appropriate.
- All gifts should be made to all the children rather than any specific child(ren).

#### Physical Contact:

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children.
- Adults will only touch children when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.
- Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.
- Where appropriate teaching will sometimes involve physical contact from the instructor to ensure the students safe technical development and progression. This could also be used to ensure health and safe practice, particularly when learning and/or performing lifts in class. This will always be performed in a professional and appropriate manner and as above.

#### Managing sensitive information:

- MACS Dance is committed to safeguarding the privacy and security of your personal data in accordance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. The GDPR Policy sets out the personal data that we collect about the users of our products and services, including customers, students, and visitors. It also includes how and why we process your personal data, who we share it with, and the rights and choices you have over your personal data.

#### Equal opportunities and Special Educational Needs (SEN):

- Parents/guardians, children and staff must treat everyone with respect irrespective of their age, sex, marital status, sexuality, religion, religious belief, colour, race, ethnic or national origin or any disability which they may have. They must not bully, harass or otherwise unlawfully discriminate against any such persons.
- MACS Dance endeavours to offer an inclusive dance experience for all students. If your child suffers from any additional special educational needs that may require specific attention from a class teacher, please ensure that this is registered on your child's registration form.



- All SEN measures will be taken to encourage, nurture and facilitate an enjoyable dance experience for all. If your child's need is not acknowledged on the registration form, it prevents the company and class teacher supporting their requirements.

#### Rights & Confidentiality:

- If a complaint is made against a member of MACS Dance he or she will be made aware of his rights under the organisation's disciplinary procedures.
- No matter how you may feel about the accusation, both the alleged abuser and the child who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998. Any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.

#### Accidents:

- To avoid accidents, chaperones and children will be advised of "house rules" regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. Children will be advised of the clothing and footwear appropriate to the work that will be undertaken.
- If a child is injured while in the care of the organisation, a designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the organisation's accident book. This record will be counter-signed by the school principal, Hannah McMillan.
- If a child joins the production with an obvious physical injury a record of this will be made in the accident book. This record will be counter-signed by the person with responsibility for child protection. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later, and will also be a record that the child did not sustain the injury while participating in the production.

#### Chaperones:

- Chaperones registered with their local authority, will be appointed by MACS Dance for the care of children during the production process. The chaperone is acting in loco-parentis and should exercise the care which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give to a child. The maximum number of children in the chaperone's care shall not exceed 12.
- Potential chaperones will be required to obtain a chaperone registration from their local authority and to supply this registration to the organisation once the local authority has approved them as a chaperone.
- Chaperones will be made aware of MACS Dance Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Chaperones may have unsupervised access to children in their care consequently a criminal record disclosure will be sought as a requirement of the local authority, before the grant approval for the chaperone.
- Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the producer. If changes cannot be made satisfactorily the chaperone should consider not allowing the child to continue.
- If a chaperone considers that a child is unwell or too tired to continue, the chaperone must inform the producer and not allow the child to continue.
- Under the Dangerous Performances Act no child of compulsory school age is permitted to do anything which may endanger life or limb. This could include working on wires or heavy lifting. Chaperones should tell the producer to stop involving children in dangerous performances, and should contact the local authority.
- During performances, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the stage door and signing them into the building.
- Children will be kept together at all times except when using separate dressing rooms.
- Chaperones will be aware of where the children are at all times.
- Children are not to leave the place of performance unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parents.

- Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets.
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms.
- Chaperones should be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the venue and will ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger.
- Chaperones should ensure that any accidents are reported to and recorded by the organisation.
- Chaperones should examine accident books each day. If an accident has occurred, the producer is not allowed to use that child until a medically qualified opinion has been obtained (not just the word of the parent or child).
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances. If someone different is to collect the child, a telephone call should be made to the parent to confirm the arrangements.
- Children should be signed out when leaving and a record made of the person collecting. If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child until arrangements have been made to take the child home.

The policy and procedures will be mandatory for everyone involved in MACS Dance. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

The policy will be reviewed annually or when changes in legislation and/or new government guidance comes into effect.

Any cause for concerns should be reported to the Company Director and Principal immediately in the interests of our Safeguarding Policy [hannahmcmillan@macsdance.com](mailto:hannahmcmillan@macsdance.com)

In reference to the above strategy a cause for concern can be forwarded to  
The Royal Academy of Dance, 36, Battersea Square, London, SW11 3RA, 020 7326 8000.