



AIMEES DANCE ACADEMY

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & ADULTS

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & ADULTS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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KEY CONTACTS

Aimee's Dance Academy

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Janet McKrill

Tel: 07872595645

Email: adasafeguarding@yahoo.com

Deputy Safeguarding Officers:

Aimee Irish

Caroline Gollop

Rachel Giles

If you suspect a child is in immediate danger you should call the Police on 999.

Introduction

Aimee's Dance Academy works with children, young people, vulnerable adults, and adults delivering dance, drama and singing education. Classes aim to be educational and fun. This can only be achieved in an atmosphere of

trust and respect. ADA recognises that all children, young people, vulnerable adults and adults involved in our education work have a right to protection.

ADA has adopted the following Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy to ensure that the School is doing everything in their power to ensure the safety and protection of all those participating in its classes. ADA also recognises its responsibilities to protect staff, students and volunteers against unfounded allegations of abuse.

For the purpose of this policy a child is defined as a person under 18 years, but the policy remains in place for all students including our adults.

The term 'vulnerable adult' refers to a person aged 18 years or over who is, or may be in need of, community care or health care services by reasons of mental or other disability or illness and who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited.

Policy Statement

Aimee's Dance Academy has a duty to safeguard from harm all children, young people, vulnerable adults and adults involved in its performing arts education. All students have the right to protection. The school understands that some children, vulnerable adults and adults, including those with specific learning differences and disabilities, may be particularly vulnerable to abuse. ADA accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure the safety and protection of these groups through adherence to these safeguarding guidelines.

ADA's Safeguarding Children and Adults policy also includes preventing students and staff from being drawn into radicalisation or extremism and that any concerns should be referred to the DSL in the same way as all other safeguarding concerns.

ADA believes that:

- The welfare of the child/student is paramount
- All participants in our training and education work, without exception, have the right to be safe and be protected from abuse
- All adults have a responsibility to safeguard and protect children

Policy Aims

The aim of Aimee's Dance Academy Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy is to promote good practice by:

- Establishing and maintaining an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensuring children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or have concerns.

- Employing safer recruitment procedures when checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers who work with children.
- Ensure all staff and visitors working unaccompanied around the building have read, understood the school's Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Procedures.
- Allowing all staff to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding issues.
- Ensure all suspicions and allegations of abuse are taken seriously and are responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Ensure all staff involved in the School's work and employed by ADA will report any concerns to the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Ensure that confidential and accurate recording of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.

Please note: ADA's staff are not specifically trained or qualified to deal with situations of abuse or have the power to decide if abuse has occurred. However, appropriate action will be taken to notify the relevant authorities to any suspected or actual cases of abuse.

The term 'staff' applies to full time staff, freelance tutors and artists, support staff, teaching assistants, guest choreographers, volunteers and all visitors working at ADA who are unaccompanied around the building.

ADA's Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy and Procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved at and for the School. Failure to comply will be addressed immediately and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

Guidance & Legal Framework

This policy has been written to comply with the following legislation, regulations and statutory guidance:

- DfE *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2024)
- DfE *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (December 2023)
- DfE *Guidance for Schools on Dealing with Allegations against Staff Members*
- DfE *What to Do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused* (March 2015)
- DfE *After-school clubs, community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers* (September 2023)

SAFEGUARDING ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of Staff

All permanent staff and regular freelance staff must undergo Child Protection and Safeguarding Training and ensure that they:

- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child, young person or adult
- Work safely and effectively with children
- All staff are to sign in and out of ADA using the board, and wear their name lanyard when on the front door
- Ensure that any visitors sign in and out at the front desk and wear a visitors badge at all times.

ADA will support staff with training regarding safeguarding and make sure each member of staff is aware of the issues surrounding Child Protection.

Refresher courses for Child Protection and Safeguarding will be arranged annually including training in Prevent and in Appropriate Contact in Dance.

Students Assisting in Classes

Occasionally Senior ADA students will assist in the delivery of classes. Students will never have unsupervised contact with children and will be given appropriate training including safeguarding in advance.

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at Aimee's Dance Academy is to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding children and Adults within the school. This involves providing advice and support to other staff and to be available for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the three Deputies will liaise with, and manage referrals to, relevant agencies such as MASH, LADO, Channel Panel (ref: Prevent Policy), Police and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Recruitment of Staff

Aimee's Dance Academy recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

ADA requires that:

- All staff (both permanent and those freelancers who regularly work at ADA on a weekly basis) will only be able to teach if they agree to and complete the disclosure procedure recommended by the Disclosure & Barring Service (according to the level appropriate for the candidate's role).
- All staff including visiting tutors and occasional guest staff including adults must have read, understood and agree to adhere to the school's Safeguarding Children & Adults Policy

SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

It is not the responsibility of anyone working at ADA, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place.

However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

ADA will assure all staff that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concerns that anyone is, or may be, abusing a child. Staff will receive training to be alert to potential signs and indicators and take appropriate action where necessary.

Action if a Child Discloses Information

When a child or young person makes a disclosure to a member of staff, this will be recorded and given to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead who will determine the appropriate course of action. The documentation will be stored securely and remain confidential. Any concerns about a child or young person will be recorded regardless of whether or not it will be ultimately passed on to the statutory authorities.

If a child or young person talks about possible abuse, the member of staff **should:**

- Respond in a calm manner.
- Remember that the child is likely to be frightened or anxious.
- Tell the child that he or she was right to tell someone and is not to blame.
- Listen carefully and take what the child says seriously. Allow the child to speak freely.

- Recognise the inherent difficulties interpreting what is said by young children.
- Ask no more questions than are necessary to ensure they are clear enough about what has happened to pass the child's concerns on. The child may also be asked to recount their story to social services or the police. However, the child must not be prevented from recalling events.
- Reassure the child but do not promise confidentiality. It should be explained that the child will have to speak to someone else who can help.
- Make a full written record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible.
- Remember that young or disabled children may not be able to express themselves verbally. Communication differences may mean that it is hard for them to complain or be understood. Sometimes abuse of disabled children has gone unrecognised because behavioural clues were interpreted as part of their disability.
- Explain what will happen next and who has to be told.

Do find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that anything the child tells you may need to be shared with others.

Remember that if a child makes a disclosure to you:

- Do not panic
- Never make promises or agree to keep secrets for any student who is disclosing information
- Do not allow your shock or distaste to show
- Never probe for more information than is offered
- Do not ask the child to write down his / her account
- Never take photographs of marks / bruises
- Do not attempt to examine the child or remove any of their clothing
- Do not speculate or make assumptions about what has happened
- Do not make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- Never approach the alleged abuser

If a child makes a disclosure please ensure a detailed record of what has been said is made. Please follow the guidelines below on what information you must try to collect.

Remember that all records need to be factual, objective, dated and timed.

- The young person's name, age and date of birth
- Please try to obtain the following from the young person: The parent / carer name, address, phone number and email address
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times and other relevant information
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay

- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes
- Details of witnesses to the incidents
- The young person's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred if applicable. Record the information using the child's own words.
- Have the parents been contacted? If so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details
- If the young person was not the person who reported the incident, has he / she been spoken to? If so what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details

This form should then be forwarded as soon as possible (**certainly within the next 24 hours**) to the Designated Safeguarding Lead however if there is a risk of immediate harm to a child the police should be informed.

Action If You Suspect Abuse Has Taken Place

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by a member of staff should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will inform the local authority.

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the Local Authority.

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by someone not working at Aimee's Dance Academy, for example, a parent, carer, another child, an external agency or service provider, then please report your concerns to the DSL.

Please note: If the allegation is about poor practice by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the Local Authority.

Appropriate Course of Action for Handling Safeguarding Concerns

Member of staff has concerns about a Child/Young Person or Vulnerable Adult's Welfare

If there is a risk of **immediate** serious harm to a child then you should call the police by phoning 999.

Talk to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL - Aimee Irish) about your concerns.

DOCUMENT ALL CONCERNS Inform one of the Safeguarding Officers within 24 hours of the incident or concern. DSL considers the appropriate next step.

DSL will refer matter to the local Safeguarding authorities

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS Whistleblowing in Order to Protect the Welfare of a Child

Aimee's Dance Academy is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability. It seeks to conduct its affairs in a responsible manner.

If you have concerns about the behaviour of a member of staff or other volunteer within ADA, then you must report your concerns to either the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Safeguarding Officers.

All staff and volunteers have a legal duty to raise concerns where they feel individuals, or the school itself, is failing to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Internal Enquiries and Suspension

In the event that an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer, ADA's Designated Safeguarding Lead will act as the school's representative for the purposes of the allegation procedures and will immediately contact Local Authority before any investigation takes place. The Local Authority will advise on the appropriate course of action to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consult with the Local Authority. Together they will make an immediate decision about whether any member of staff accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries following the advice of Local Authority.

This may be a difficult decision: particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, ADA's Director will 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 will remain of paramount importance throughout.

The individual who the allegation is against may be informed of the allegation, on the advice of the local safeguarding authority, and may be removed from contact with children and vulnerable adults in line with the appropriate disciplinary process (staff or student). Any internal disciplinary action arising from an investigation will be handled in accordance with the relevant disciplinary process (staff or student).

Independent of the findings of social services or police inquiries, the School will investigate all individual cases to determine the appropriate action to be taken.

Staff must understand their own vulnerability when working with children

Aimee's Dance Academy is responsible for reporting to the Disclosure and Barring Service within 4-6 weeks of leaving a school, a person who is no longer deemed suitable to work with children

Allegations of Previous Abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child, or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children).

Where such an allegation is made, ADA should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to social services or the police. This is because other children may be at risk from this person.

Indicators of Abuse

Please refer to the below for a list of definitions and indicators that abuse may be taking place.

We ask all staff to familiarise themselves with the indicators so that they may recognise the signs when abuse may be taking place.

REVIEW AND SUPPORT

Support to Deal with the Aftermath of Abuse

Consideration will be given to the support that children, parents and members of staff may require. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help deal with the process.

The British Association for Counselling Directory can be found at <http://www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk/> which has a search facility for counselling options.

Consideration will be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

Supporting the Child / Vulnerable Adult / Adult

In cases where the child, vulnerable adult or adult may have suffered significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution, advice will be sought from the local safeguarding board and the police, if appropriate, as to what support the child / vulnerable adult may need.

Supporting Staff

- Employers have a duty of care towards employees
- We will provide effective support to anyone facing an allegation
- All allegations will be dealt with quickly and fairly to ensure protection of child and support person at centre of allegation

Supporting Parents and Carers

Parents or carers of children involved in disclosing information will be told of any allegation if they are not already aware. However, parents and carers must understand that in certain circumstances of alleged abuse, there may be a need to contact other agencies without first notifying the parent / carer. This decision will be made in consultation with the Local Authority.

Parents / carers will be kept informed about progress of the allegation and told the outcome of an investigation and any disciplinary process.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only, this includes:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation
- Social Services/Police
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child)
- The person who the disclosure was made to

The School will seek local authority advice on who should approach the alleged abuser. The matter will not be dealt with by a lone staff member but in consultation with the appropriate people.

Information will be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws. All information recorded needs to be accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure.

Complaints Procedure

Any person wishing to complain about an issue dealt with by the ADA should follow the school's Complaints Procedure. This policy can be available on request from the school.

Aimee's Dance Academy

Safeguarding Children & Adults Policy Incident Recording Form

Please complete this form to ensure any disclosures, allegations of abuse or misconduct are correctly documented and pass to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know.

Your name:
Your position:
Child's name:
Child's date of birth (if known)
Gender of Child:
Parents/carers names and address (if known):
Parent / Carer Contact Number:
Parent / Carer Email Address:
Have parents been contacted? YES / NO (if yes, what has been said)
Date, time and place of alleged incident:
Are you reporting your own concerns or those of somebody else? If so, who?

Your observations: (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)
Record exactly what the child said in their own words and any questions you asked if the situation needed clarification: (Remember, do not lead the child – record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if necessary).
Were there any witnesses. If so, who?
Were there any people alleged to be involved. If so who?
Have any external agencies been contacted? YES / NO If Yes, who has been contacted? Include name; contact details, date and time and what advice was given.
Your Signature: Print Name: Date:
FOLLOW UP ACTION TO BE COMPLETED BY DSL: (include date and time of all correspondence / conversations)

Please forward this form to Central's Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately or within 24 hours.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding agenda that focuses on preventing maltreatment and protecting children at risk of neglect or abuse. Under the Children Act 1989, Children's Safeguarding and Social Work have a legal duty to investigate and take any action to protect children where there are concerns that they are at risk of suffering significant harm which is defined as:

Neglect: failure to provide basic care to meet the child's physical needs, such as not providing adequate food, clothing or shelter; failure to protect the child from harm or ensure access to medical care and treatment.

Physical Abuse: causing physical harm or injury to a child. This may involve hitting, shaking, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or otherwise.

Sexual Abuse: touching the child inappropriately; involving children in sexual activity, or forcing them to witness sexual activity which includes involving children in looking at or the production of pornography.

Emotional Abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child which affects the child's emotional development; psychological ill treatment of a child through bullying, intimidation or threats.

Possible Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inadequate or inappropriate clothing• Appears underweight and unwell and seems constantly hungry• Failure to thrive physically and appears tired• Dirty or unhygienic appearance• Frequent unexplained absences from school• Lack of parental supervision
Physical Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any injury such as bruising, bite marks, burns or fractures where the explanation given is inconsistent with the injury• Injuries in unexpected places or that are not typical of normal childhood injuries or accidents• High frequency of injuries• Parents seem unconcerned or fail to seek adequate medical treatment
Sexual Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sexual knowledge or behaviour that is unusually explicit or inappropriate for the child's age / stage of development• Sexual risk taking behaviour including involvement in sexual exploitation / older boyfriend or girlfriend

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical symptoms such as injuries to genital or anal area or bruising, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy Unwillingness to undress for sports
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Emotional Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developmental delay Attachment difficulties with parents and others Withdrawal and low self-esteem
Indirect Indicators of Abuse & Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sudden changes in behaviour Withdrawal and low self-esteem Eating disorders Aggressive behaviour towards others Sudden unexplained absences from school Drug / alcohol misuse Running away / going missing
Parental Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Misusing drugs and / or alcohol Physical / mental health or learning difficulties Domestic violence Avoiding contact with school and other professionals

Specific Safeguarding Issues Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

The statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' published in April 2014, asks schools to ensure that they raise awareness of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). All staff must be aware of FGM.

FGM occurs mainly in Africa and to a lesser extent, in the Middle East and Asia. Although it is believed by many to be a religious issue, it is a cultural practice. There are no health benefits.

Communities particularly affected by FGM in the UK include girls from: Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea, Yemen, Indonesia and Afghanistan. In the UK, FGM tends to occur in areas with larger populations of communities who practise FGM, such as first generation immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers. These areas include: London, Cardiff, Manchester, Sheffield, Northampton, Birmingham, Oxford, Crawley, Reading, Slough and Milton Keynes.

In England and Wales, 23,000 girls under 15 could be at risk of FGM. FGM has been a criminal offence since 1985 and since 2003, it has been an

offence to take girls abroad for mutilation. The penalty for such a crime can be up to 14 years in prison.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Peer on peer abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and/or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in peer on peer abuse is under the age of 18. 'Peer-on-peer' abuse can relate to various forms of abuse including bullying and cyberbullying; harmful sexual behaviour including sexting, sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation and gender based violence.

Radicalisation and Extremism

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse.

During the process of radicalisation, it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background

factors may contribute to vulnerability, which are often, combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

Updated October 2024