



# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY & PROCEDURES

**Policy Name:** Safeguarding Children & Young  
People Policy and Procedures

**Effective Date:** February 2025

**Next Review Date:** February 2025

**Drafted by:** Head of Safeguarding

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## 1

## Statement

**The Heights Ballet & Theatre School** (hereafter referred to as The Heights) is committed to creating opportunities for children and young people to participate in dance and performing arts at the school while at the same time as creating a safer culture for the participants. The Heights has a moral, legal, and social responsibility to provide a fun and safe environment for all those participating in these activities. Working in partnership with children and young people and their support network is essential in promoting and embedding this Policy. The purpose of the safeguarding policy is to ensure that every child/adult that attends our dance school is safe and protected from harm. All staff have a responsibility to ensure that children have a safe environment to dance in. All staff have a responsibility to ensure that any allegations of abuse are reported to the appropriate authorities. The Heights works with the SSCB when required to report safeguarding incidences. Where children are at a significant risk, staff have a duty of care to take immediate action.

The Heights possesses public liability insurance for the protection of staff and students, and all staff possess an Enhanced DBS and undertake annual Safeguarding training.

## 2

## Principles

The Heights, and its volunteers, are committed to ensuring safe environments for children and young people and believe that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to recommend best practice which protects them. It is through the application of this policy and procedures that The Heights will seek to develop a positive and proactive welfare system to enable all children and young people to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment. This equally applies to the safety and security of those working with and responsible for the activities involving children and young people.

If you work or intend to work with children or young people, you are automatically placed in a position of trust that carries authority, status, power, and responsibility. If the staff involved are positive role models, displaying high moral and ethical standards; the benefits to children and young people's development can be significant. Dance can and does have a positive effect on children and young people's development; and is potentially an inspiration for all sections of our community.

# 3

## Scope

This policy applies to our paid staff (freelance), volunteers, students, or anyone working on behalf of The Heights.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting young peoples' welfare
- Those who work with children and young/vulnerable people are placed in a position of trust that carries authority, status, power and responsibility. Staff/adults involved should act as positive and supportive role models in order to benefit the development of the pupils under the care.

The purpose of the policy:

- To provide protection for the children and young people who participate in our classes, show productions, exams, and other activities
- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of harm
- This policy is to be observed by all those working with children and young/vulnerable people at The Heights and promoting good safeguarding practice is mandatory.

The scope of the policy:

- All the requirements of this policy are obligatory and are to be enforced where there are any suspected instances of poor practice or abuse. All staff and volunteers must make themselves aware of The Heights Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures.
- Staff members, as appropriate to their role with children and young people, will undertake annual safeguarding training. Volunteers with The Heights are to provide evidence of safeguarding training on request of the safeguarding lead. Chaperones supporting pupils at events will have undertaken safeguarding training as part of their licence.
- The person with responsibility for safeguarding and child protection at The Heights is the Safeguarding Lead.
- The Heights fully acknowledges and accepts its responsibility for the safety and well-being of children and young people, who engage in any activity carried out with The Heights.
- The Heights has a child orientated approach and child welfare is of paramount importance.
- It is the duty of all staff working at The Heights to safeguard the welfare of children and young people by creating an environment that protects them from harm.

The Heights will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to them, and respecting them
- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and safe working practice for staff and volunteers
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents, and children appropriately
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, and training

The safeguarding lead will review this policy annually, or sooner in light of any changes in legislation or guidance. All changes will be communicated to our members with immediate effect.

All the teachers are DBS checked and fully insured. Teachers carry out First Aid Training and annual Safeguarding/Child Protection Training.

# 4

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## Safeguarding Leadership

The operational delivery of safeguarding at The Heights is coordinated by the Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Miss Caroline Ambery-Holloway.

All safeguarding concerns and issues relating to children, young people, and adults at risk should be reported to the DSL within 8 hours following the identification of a concern.

The DSL can refer concerns on to the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub (see Appendices for guidance).

# 5

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## Definition of a Young Person

A young person is anyone under 18 years.

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## Definition of a Child

A child is anyone who has not yet reached the official minimum school leaving age (MSLA). Pupils will reach the MSLA in the school year in which they turn 16 years of age.

# 6

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## Aims & Key Principles

- The aims of The Heights' Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures are to:
- Safeguard all children and young people who interact with The Heights and its' team and volunteers.
- Demonstrate best practice in safeguarding children and young people.
- Develop a positive and proactive welfare program to enable all children and young people to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment.
- Promote high ethical standards throughout.

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## The Key Principles Underpinning this Policy are:

- The child or young person's welfare is and must always be the paramount consideration.
- All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age.
- All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to efficiently and appropriately.
- Ensuring that staff, coaches, and other staff who meet children and young people are good role models.
- Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people, and their parents or person responsible is essential.

# 7

## The Heights – Positive Culture

All staff, volunteers, and guest teachers working with children or young people through The Heights should adhere to the following principles and action:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g., avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Make the experience of the provided activity fun and enjoyable.
- Promote fairness, confront, and deal with bullying.
- Treat all children and young people equally and with respect and dignity.
- Always put the welfare of the child or young person first.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with children and young people and avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Adopt all other good practice/common sense principles given the varying situations.
- Challenging poor practice such as racism, sexism, homophobia, bullying, foul, aggressive or provocative language or any controlling behaviour that upsets children or young people is vital.
- Never ignore bullying or verbal abuse by supporters, parents, coaches, children, or young people.
- Listen to and support the person being targeted. Explain to the bully that poor behaviour is unacceptable.

# 8

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## Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The role of The Heights DSL is to:

- Promote the moral and legal responsibilities in implementing procedures to provide a duty of care for children and young people, safeguard their well-being and protect them from abuse and poor practice
- Work closely with The Heights' team to provide clarity across the school to ensure full compliance with safeguarding procedures established by the UK government, the ISTD, and the Dance School Safeguarding Working Group (see Appendices)
- Maintain key points of contact with the NSPCC, Police, Local Safeguarding Children's Board, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (for the management of allegations against professionals).
- Represent The Heights as lead case manager when cooperating with and reporting directly to external statutory agencies such as the Police, Local Safeguarding and Children's Board. This includes the referral of cases of suspected radicalisation to the Police or Channel Scheme.
- To take responsibility for the day-to-day management of safeguarding issues and proactive promotion of safeguarding within the specified department.
- To be available at all reasonable times as a first contact for staff, parents, children; and if appropriate, external agencies regarding information or referral of safeguarding matters within the department.
- To record all incidents, concerns, allegations, evidence of poor practice and evidence of best practice, in confidence, and in line with Data Protection legislation using the school's incident report form.
- To handle sensitively, in confidence, any safeguarding concerns raised within the school.
- To ensure this policy is reviewed annually and updated when necessary

# 9

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## Teachers as Safeguarding Officers (SO)

The role of teachers is to act as Safeguarding Officers within the school, maintaining responsibilities such as:

- To assist and support the Head of Safeguarding on the delivery of best practice in safeguarding and child protection in the organisation and ensure the highest standards for safeguarding vulnerable groups.
- Play a lead role in the driving of safeguarding knowledge, understanding, roles and responsibilities through regular staff training ensuring standards are met as required.
- Continuously work alongside the Designated Safeguarding Lead to maintain, embed, and improve the organisation's safeguarding provision



# 10

## Safer Recruitment & Disclosure

As part of The Heights recruitment and selection process, offers of work for positions which involve 'regulated activity' when working with children and young people are subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check and appropriate references.

All offers of work are subject to a satisfactory outcome to the screening process and until a satisfactory disclosure has been confirmed, the individual concerned will not be permitted to commence work. Please refer to The Height's Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy (outlined by *Safer Dance*) and Appendix 4 within this document. All staff, volunteers, and guest teachers engaged in 'regulated activity' will be required to undergo regular DBS disclosure clearances, normally every three years or earlier if requested. All elements of the safer recruitment process and pre-appointment checks will be applied to applicants from overseas in the same way as applicants' residents to the UK. Overseas checks will be carried out on anyone that has lived or worked abroad in the last three years and spent more than three-months outside of the UK in addition to the standard DBS check process. We require all applicants to disclose any 'unspent' criminal convictions as part of their application. Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 as amended ex-offenders do not have to disclose 'spent' convictions. However certain types of posts, particularly those that involve working with children and/ or young people and/or adults at risk or other positions of trust or sensitive areas, are exempt from these provisions, and in these cases all convictions must be declared. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found on the Ministry of Justice website – Guidance on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Exceptions Order 1975 - [www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-guidance-on-the-rehabilitation-of-offenders-act-1974](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-guidance-on-the-rehabilitation-of-offenders-act-1974)

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 provides the legislative framework for the Vetting and Barring Scheme effective from October 2009. The criminal records checking regime, which in England and Wales is administered by the Disclosure and Barring Service, makes decisions about who will be barred from working with children and adults at risk. If a manager believes that the appointee to a vacancy will be working in a 'regulated' or 'controlled' position s/he will require an enhanced criminal records check to be undertaken before commencing employment.

Applicants must be made aware early in the recruitment process that a criminal records check will be required.

Should an individual's DBS check reveal any convictions The Heights will consider whether the nature of the offence or offences renders the person concerned unsuitable for working with children or young people. In such circumstances, when the nature of any disclosure has to be considered, a risk assessment will be carried out to assess the information contained within the disclosure certificate. The individual may also be asked to attend an interview prior to a recruitment decision being made. (See Appendix 4 – DBS Assessment Process).

# 11

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## Employee & Worker Training

All employees or workers working in direct contact with children and young people shall be required to complete online safeguarding training as recommended by The Heights unless they can provide proof of alternative completed training within the last year. They will receive regular training appropriate to their role during their time with the school.

Details of those having achieved required mandatory and role specific training will be retained by the School Principal. It is important that all members of staff are able to discuss the basics of standard good practice in safeguarding in regular team meetings.

# 12

## Responsibility of Safeguarding Children – Position of Trust & Duty of Care

The Heights acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care and is committed to working to provide a safe environment.

All staff, volunteers, and guest teachers are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources, and protect children from discrimination and avoidable harm.

To always ensure best practice staff, volunteers, and guest teachers must be fully aware of this Child and Young People Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and the responsibilities.

All staff, volunteers, and guest teachers have a duty of care to keep children and young people safe; this can be exercised through the development of respectful, caring, and professional relationships between adults and children and young people.

Staff, volunteers, and guest teachers must demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement whilst working with children and young people. Any person responsible for a child or young person, whether solely or jointly, is in a position of trust which requires behaviour to be in accordance with this policy. Examples of positions of trust include (but are not limited to):

- A school or subject lead
- Member of regular teaching/music staff working with children or young people.
- Guest teachers.
- Chaperones at school events.
- Senior student helpers.

## 13

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## Protecting Children & Young People with Disabilities

For many years children and young people with disabilities were not considered to be vulnerable to abuse. It is now known that this is not the case and that children and young people with disabilities are at an increased risk of abuse and that the greater the disability the greater the risk.

There are several factors that contribute to this, and these include:

- Lack of friends and peer group to support and protect.
- Intimate or physical and or invasive medical care required. This can make it difficult for the child or young person to know what an acceptable and unacceptable 'touch' is. Lack of speech or limited communication, this makes it harder to report abuse.
- Multiple parent or person responsible – making it harder to identify who may be abusing.
- History of being told what to do and not given choices.
- Being dependent on the abuser for a service or basic need.
- Having medical conditions that are used to explain injuries.

Children and young people with disabilities may also be less valued than their peers and poor care may be observed but tolerated by others. This might include such things as not speaking directly to the child or young person; not offering choices, not moving, and handling them safely, not respecting their privacy and dignity, not treating them according to their age; allowing physical restraint to occur or using derogatory language. There is no one way to ensure that children and young people with disabilities are fully protected but the safest environments are those that assist children and young people to protect themselves by helping them to speak out. Everyone must do their best to stop abuse from happening and take responsibility for observing, challenging, and reporting poor practice and suspected abuse.

Safe environments for children and young people with disabilities are also safer for all children and young people.

# 14

## Creating a Safe Environment

A safe environment is one where:

- Training in safeguarding and child protection awareness takes place.
- Policies and procedures are known by all and followed.
- There is support for those who report suspicions or concerns.

In addition, safe environments ensure that those working with children and young people have established effective methods of communication with them, and this may require additional training and workforce development.

- Ensure that the child and young person's health needs are known, recorded and that sufficient people know how to respond. This may mean knowing how to manage a seizure or an asthma attack. It may mean ensuring that medication is kept to hand, administered correctly, and recorded.
- Ensure a team mobile phone is available and switched on for emergency contact.
- Discuss with parents or person responsible any physical care that is required and how this can best be done with respect and dignity. This will usually mean same gender parent or person responsible, and consistent parents or supporters. Consideration needs to be given to the balance of the need for privacy with the need for accountability and protection against allegations for person responsible. This is best done by consulting with parents or and the child and young person concerned.
- Give the child or young person opportunity to make informed choices and respect their choice.
- Collect in pupil mobile phones during their time with us. This limits the risks of unconsented photographs being taken in inappropriate places (i.e changing rooms), reduces exposure to inappropriate online content, and limits opportunities for cyber bullying.
- Have clear strategies for dealing with difficult behaviour that excludes any kind of physical punishment or restraint.
- Listen to and support children and young people.
- Involve children or young people and their families wherever possible. This helps give all children and young people a voice and may act to deter abusers.

# 15

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## Late Collection of a Child or Young Person

- It is the parent/guardian/carer's responsibility to ensure that their child or young person is dropped off and collected by a responsible person if it is not safe for the child or young person to walk home unsupervised.
- Unless written permission has been given for the child or young person to walk home alone or to be picked up by another individual, staff should not discharge any child or young person (under the age of 16) from their responsibility.
- Whether a child or young person has participated in an activity or is arriving back from a trip or tour, when collected, parent/person responsible must use the agreed designated collection point.
- Staff have a responsibility to ensure that they have seen all children and young people collected appropriately.
- Only children or young people who have been given prior written permission to walk home alone may do so. These individuals must inform a member of The Heights staff before they leave.
- All parents or person responsible are made aware that their children should be met no later than 15 minutes after an activity has finished.
- Should a child or young person not be collected within 15 minutes, staff have emergency contact numbers and will get in touch with parents/guardians.

# 16

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## Appropriate Physical Contact in Dance Teaching

Physical contact in a dance class is sometimes required to correct the posture or position of a student. Teaching dance is a physical activity and a teacher will sometimes need to make physical contact with a student to show an idea or to correct the student's position. This can include:

- Lifting
- Adjusting arms, legs, rib cage, hips, feet, hands
- Moving one student in relation to another

Where contact is needed, we will remain sensitive to the student's wishes and put their welfare first. In all cases, we will say why and how we will be correcting the student's position before making any contact. We encourage students to report any concerns.

## 17

## Good Practice

All staff, volunteers, and guest teachers working with children or young people should adhere to the following principles and action (list is not exhaustive):

- Have access to and be familiar with The Heights safeguarding policies and procedures and relevant working documents
- Know who the DSL is and how to contact them
- Put welfare of children and young people first and act in their best interests
- Ensure the safety of the individuals/group in their care.
- Ensure any concerns or allegations relating to child or young person welfare is recorded on a Heights Incident Report Form
- Maintain confidentiality about sensitive information.
- Help maintain an ethos whereby colleagues, children, young people and parent/carers feel able to raise concerns comfortably and safely, safe in the knowledge that effective action will be taken as appropriate.
- Adhere to The Heights' codes of conduct and ethics.
- Encourage and demonstrate consistently high standards of behaviour
- Where any form of manual or physical support is required, it should be provided openly and with the consent of the child or young person.
- Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the child or young person's consent has been given.
- Request written parental consent if Heights team members are required to transport children or young people.
- Gain written parental or guardian consent for any significant travel arrangements e.g., overnight stays.
- Staff or volunteers are qualified and a qualified first aider is in attendance.
- Be a good role model, this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children and young people.
- Secure written parental consent for The Heights to act in loco parentis, to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if needed.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, and details of any treatment given using the Accident Report Forms
- Adhere to the school's Digital Communications policy

# 18

## Poor Practice & Abuse

This takes place whenever staff or volunteers fail to fulfil the highest standards of care and support in their working practice. Poor practice which can continue can cause harm and can become abuse. Poor practice is unacceptable and will be treated seriously with appropriate action.

Note that an individual may not be aware that poor practice or abuse is taking place, as they may deem the behaviour as 'acceptable'. The following are regarded as poor practice and may be considered as high-risk offending factors and therefore should be avoided:

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with children and/or young people away from others.
- Being alone in changing rooms, toilet facilities or showers used by children and/or young people.
- Taking children or young people alone in a car on journeys, however short.
- Taking children or young people to your home where they will be alone with you.
- Engaging in rough, physical, or sexually provocative games and/or choreography.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allowing children or young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- 
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a child or young person, even in fun.
- Reducing a child or young person to tears as a form of control.
- Allow allegations made by a child or young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature that the child or young person can do for themselves.
- Communicate with a child or young person via social media on a personal basis – please refer to the Height's Digital Communications Policy.
- Communicate with a child or young person using electronic communication unless this is on a business level.
- If in doubt... Do not do it!

Remember, always challenging poor practice such as racism, sexism, homophobia, bullying, foul, aggressive or provocative language or any controlling behaviour that upsets children or young people is vital. Never ignore bullying or verbal abuse by supporters, parents, person responsible, coaches, children, or young people. Listen to and support the person being targeted. Explain to the bully that poor behaviour is unacceptable. Refer to the Height's Bullying Policy where appropriate.



# 19

## Signs, Indicators & Forms of Poor Practice & Abuse

“Child abuse” is a term used to describe what happens when a person, or a group of people, harm a child or young person under the age of 18. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or young person; somebody may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Children and young people may be abused in a family, institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children or young person. There are different types of abuse.

- **Physical** – Physical abuse indicators can include an explanation which is inconsistent with an injury, several different explanations provided for an injury, unexplained delay in seeking treatment or reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries.
- **Neglect** – Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child or young person’s health or development.
- **Sexual** – (including internet grooming and sexual exploitation). Sexual abuse is when adults, of either sex, or other children, use children to meet their own sexual needs. It involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- **Emotional** – Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise. It is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.

Full details of signs and indicators of abuse can be found within the appendices to this policy. You may also become aware that a child or young person is potentially becoming radicalised. If you are concerned about the welfare of a child or young person or concerned about an adult’s behaviour towards a child or young person you must act.

Do not assume that someone else will help the child or young person, safeguarding children is everyone’s responsibility. It is important that you report your concerns to one of the following:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Teaching Staff / Safeguarding Officer

**TAKING NO ACTION IS NOT AN OPTION.**

# 20

## What to do if you Receive a Safeguarding Disclosure from a Child or Young Person

It is not the responsibility of anyone within the school to decide whether or not abuse has taken place.

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of children and young people, including taking appropriate steps (including those set out in this procedure) to ensure that suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice are taken seriously and reported immediately and appropriately. The Heights will assure all staff and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague or another is, or may be, abusing a child or young person. Children or young people who may be vulnerable are likely to disclose abuse, or radicalisation to those they trust and how one responds to a disclosure is crucial. Deal with the disclosure as it happens and ensure that the child or young person's immediate needs are met and that they feel supported. When a disclosure is made, it is most important to understand that you must not investigate the disclosure yourself. The disclosure must always be taken seriously and dealt with according to the guidance in this Policy, even if the truth of the disclosure is uncertain.

You are not expected to act as a social worker, counsellor, judge, jury, or avenge the abuser; you are expected to act in the best interest of the child and young person.

Please refer to Appendix 2. 'What to Do if You Receive a Safeguarding Disclosure from a Child or Young Person.'

## 21

## Safeguarding Allegations Against Staff

The Heights will always take concerns and allegations about employees and volunteers seriously and will respond in a way that places the protection and needs of children and young people first. The procedure will always be followed in respect of all cases where it is alleged that an employee or a volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child or young person.
  - Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or young person.
  - Behaved in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children or young people. This can include behaviour in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. The Heights will always inform the police when information is received that indicates that the criminal law has been, or may have been, broken.
  - Additionally, The Heights will inform other Statutory and Regulatory Authorities/Agencies when it is required to do so or when the circumstances regarding the allegations are such that the Authorities/Agencies should be so notified. The Heights will work with openness and transparency with all Authorities/Agencies.
  - The DSL/Principal will have full oversight of any allegations against employees or volunteers who work with children and young people.
- Head of
- The Heights recognises that children and young people, and some employees may have disabilities that require reasonable adjustments to be made to this procedure in accordance with The Equality Act 2010. In such cases, the DSL/Principal will make these adjustments in consultation and agreement with the affected individual or their parents if they are under 18.

## 22

## PREVENT – Radicalisation & Extremism

The following definitions are taken from the HM Government Prevent Strategy 2011.

Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate on terrorist activity. During the process of 'radicalisation' it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being drawn into terrorist-related activity.

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of the armed forces. Please note that being drawn into terrorism includes not only violent extremism but also non-violent extremism. Extremism can take several forms, including Islamist extremism, far right and animal rights extremism for example. The Prevent Duty is part of the UK Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST), based on the Counter Terrorism and Security Act of 2015. It requires public bodies, including local authorities, the police, prisons, providers of probation services, schools, colleges, and universities to act to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, ensuring awareness of risks of terrorism. The Prevent duty applies to those bodies, which include, for example, children's homes and independent fostering agencies and bodies exercising local authority functions whether under voluntary delegation arrangements or via the use of statutory intervention powers. These bodies should ensure they are part of their local authorities' safeguarding arrangements and that staff are aware of and know how to contribute to Prevent-related activity in their area where appropriate. The Heights recognises that some children and young people are more vulnerable to radicalisation, including those who may be isolated/marginalised in society (through mental health or disability) and may have no other support. Children who attend activities are not immune from this risk and therefore The Heights ensure that all staff who work with children and young people are equipped at identifying potential indicators of abuse regarding radicalisation and extremism. There are often no obvious signs of extremism. There are frequent requests for a list of signs, but although changes in behaviour and dress are often cited as signs of extremism these will often be signs of perfectly normal behaviour, particularly among young people in their late teens and early 20s. There are some physical signs that would indicate concerns relating to extremism such as the tattoos that far right organisation supporters will sometimes display.

You are not expected to be aware of the significance of tattoos but if you are worried about someone with what you think may be far right tattoos you should pass the details on to the DSL. They can contact local Prevent coordinators for help if needed. You should follow the Notice, Check, share approach used by provider organisations.

- **Notice:** you should be aware of any behaviour which leads to any safeguarding concerns including Prevent duty related ones.
- **Check:** you should check what their concerns.
- **Share:** you should refer any concerns to the DSL and inform any relevant members of the team

Any concerns you have will usually be similar to other safeguarding concerns. These may include changes in behaviour; you should use your judgement to decide when these are worrying and when they are within the normal range. There are concerns which should always be passed on such as:

- Evidence of sharing of extremist websites.
- Evidence of homophobia.
- Religion based or racist bullying.

It is your own judgement which will lead you to decide to refer a safeguarding concern whether that relates to extremist exploitation or any other kind of exploitation. It should be noted that individuals taking their religion more seriously, choosing to grow a beard or wearing a headscarf for religious reasons are NOT signs of extremism.

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## Historical/Non-Recent Concerns of Abuse

Referral of concern about historical and non-recent abuse should be continued to be made directly to the DSL/Principal.

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## Peer-on-Peer Abuse

Peer-on-peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse, and coercive control exercised between children, and within children and young people's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), friendships, and wider peer associations.

Peer-on-peer abuse can take various forms, including (but not limited to): serious bullying (including cyberbullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence and abuse, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour and/or prejudice-based violence including, but not limited to, gender-based violence. Online peer-on-peer abuse is any form of peer-on-peer abuse with a digital element, for example, sexting, online abuse, coercion and exploitation, peer-on-peer grooming, threatening language delivered via online means, the distribution of sexualised content, and harassment.

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## County Lines

It often involves the exploitation of children, as gangs use young people and those with mental health or addiction problems to transport drugs, money or weapons. These gangs establish a base in the location they are targeting, often taking over the homes of local vulnerable adults by force or coercion in a practice referred to as 'cuckooing'. Cuckooing is the term used when gangs establish a base in the location they are targeting, often taking over the homes of vulnerable adults by force or coercion. Possible signs and indicators may include:

- Lone child or young person from outside of the area.
- Individuals with multiple mobile phones or tablets or 'SIM' cards.
- Children or young people with more money, expensive clothing, or accessories than they can account for.
- An increase in anti-social behaviour around the property.
- Something a child or young person has told you.

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## Use of Photography & Film Images

All images are taken by The Heights or approved third parties who have been briefed on The School's safeguarding and Digital Communications policy for the activity being photographed or filmed.

It is common for teachers, parents and students to take images (in the form of photographs and film) at classes and events. However, there may be times when it is not appropriate for images to be taken. These can include:

- While students are getting changed or are in their designated changing rooms (these are phone-free zones)
- Where the image may be shared publicly on social media
- When students are in large groups and permission has not been sought from all those included in the image

We recognise that taking images of students in our care may not always be appropriate and that some children and parents may not want images taken at any time. Therefore, before taking images of a child or young person, we will:

- Make clear to the child and parent where and when the image will be taken
- Clearly identify the person who will be taking the image
- Explain how the image will be used, e.g. whether it will be posted on social media or printed to be displayed at the school
- Seek written/electronic agreement from parents that images can be taken of their child. (This is included in our Registration System, Class Manager)
- Parents/guardians are responsible for informing The Heights of any change of circumstances which may affect media consent

- Where we have publicly displayed images at our school or on social media, parents and students may withdraw their permission at any time. In such cases, the images will be removed as soon as is reasonable and without question. We ask that any parent wanting to take photographs or film at our events only do so with our prior permission. Permission will only be granted on the agreement of all present.
- Children or young people who are the subject of a court order will not have their images published in any Heights media
- No images of children or young people featured in Heights media will be accompanied with personal details such as their full name, DOB, or home address.
- Recordings of children or young people for the purposes of legitimate reasons i.e., recorded event, teaching aids and will only be filmed by Heights staff. Media will be stored safely and securely with password protection, or deleted immediately after use if no longer needed.
- Mobile phone cameras are not to be used in changing rooms.
- Any instances of inappropriate images in dance should be reported to the DSL/Principal.

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## Social Networking Guidance

The Heights recognises that social media and social networking services provide opportunities to effectively engage with a wide range of audiences in a positive manner. However, The Heights is also aware of the potential safeguarding risks especially to children and young people when using these forms of media. Further details can be found in our Digital Communications Policy but key points to note are:

- Staff/guest teachers should not add or invite children or young people you have responsibility for in dance to be 'friends' within social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok etc.
- Avoid 'one to one' electronic communication. Where you do communicate electronically ensure you send this communication to the parent or person responsible as well as the child or young person.



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## Lone Working & One-to-One Situations

A lone worker, for the purpose of this Policy, is defined as a member of staff or a partner who is engaged in activities which place them in a situation without direct contact with other staff or volunteers or without direct supervision. It is the staff/volunteer's responsibility to:

- Work in an open and transparent way and avoid conduct which could raise concerns. Under no circumstances should staff visit children and young people in their homes outside agreed work arrangements. Nor should they invite children and adults at risk to their own home or to that of a family member, colleague, or friend.
- Ensure that contact by whatever means and meetings with children and young people outside agreed working arrangements never take place without the knowledge and agreement of The Heights principal.

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## Supervision Ratios

Staff and volunteers are expected to provide appropriate supervision of the children and young people in their care at all times. The level of supervision required will vary between activities. Ratios for each activity should be determined by taking the following into consideration:

- The age, needs, abilities and behaviour of the children or young people participating.
- The competence and experience of staff and partners involved.
- The nature and duration of the activity.
- Risk assessments and/or intelligence identifying potential behavioural or other issues and risks.
- Staff must work with The Heights when planning activities to ensure that appropriate ratios and supervision arrangements are carefully considered.
- The Heights defers to the given guidance supplied by national agencies such as the NSPCC and Department of Education guidelines with regard to recommended supervision ratios.

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## Confidentiality

Staff, volunteers, and guest teachers may have access to confidential information about children and young people in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances, staff, volunteers, and guest teachers may be given highly sensitive or private information. They should never use confidential or personal information about a child or young person or his/her family for their own or others' advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass children or young people.

Confidential information about a child or young person should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the child and young person's identity does not need to be disclosed, the information should be used anonymously.

There are some circumstances in which a staff member, volunteer, or guest teacher may be expected to share information about a child, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated safeguarding responsibilities. If a staff member, volunteer, or guest teacher is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, they should seek guidance from The Heights safeguarding lead.

Any media or legal enquiries should in the first instance be referred to The Heights Principal. The storing and processing of personal information about children is governed by the Data Protection Act, 2018. For further information on The Heights (and your) obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018, please see The Heights Data Protection Policy.

This means that staff, volunteers, and guest teachers:

- Are expected to treat information they receive about children or young people in a discreet and confidential manner.
- Should seek advice from the DSL if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold, or which has been requested of them.

# 31 Appendices

## Appendix 1.

Signs & Indicators of Abuse

## Appendix 2.

What to Do if You Receive a Safeguarding Disclosure from a Child or Young Person

## Appendix 3.

Dealing With Concerns in a Dance Setting

## Appendix 4.

DBS Assessment Procedure

## Appendix 5.

Managing Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers, or Guest Teachers

## Appendix 6.

Internet Grooming

## Appendix 7.

Key Safeguarding Contacts

## Appendix 8.

Other Applicable Policies, Documents, and Legislation

## Appendix 9.

Safe Recruitment in Dance Procedure

## Appendix 1. Signs & Indicators of Abuse

One or more of the following might trigger concerns about a child:

- A sudden change in behaviour.
- Something a child says.
- Physical signs of abuse.

The signs may vary according to the age and understanding of the child.

Type of Abuse	Physical Signs	Behavioural Signs
Physical Abuse	Physical signs such as unexplained and unusual bruising, finger and strap marks, injuries, cigarette burns, bite marks, fractures, scalds, missing teeth.	Behavioural signs such as fear of contact, aggression, temper, running away, fear of going home, reluctance to change or uncover body, depression, withdrawal, bullying or abuse of others.
Neglect	Physical signs such as constant hunger, ill-fitting or inappropriate clothes, weight change, untreated conditions, continual minor infections, failure to supply hearing aids, glasses and or inhalers.	Behavioural signs such as always being tired, early or late, absent, few friends, regularly left alone, stealing, no money, parent or person responsible not attending or supportive.
Sexual Abuse	Physical signs such as genital pain, itching, bleeding, bruising, discharge, stomach pains, discomfort, pregnancy, incontinence, urinary infections or STDs, thrush, anal pain on passing motions.	Behavioural signs such as apparent fear of someone, nightmares, running away, sexually explicit knowledge or behaviour, masturbation, bed-wetting, eating problems, substance abuse, unexplained money or gifts, acting out with toys, self-harm.
Bullying	Physical signs such as weight change, unexplained injuries and bruising, stomach and headaches, bed-wetting, disturbed sleep, hair pulled out.	Behavioural signs such as difficulty making friends, anxiety over school, truancy, withdrawn, anger, moodiness, suicide attempts, reduced performance, money and possessions reported as lost, stealing from within the family, distress and anxiety on reading texts or e-mails.
Emotional Abuse	Physical signs such as weight change, lack of growth or development, unexplained speech disorders, self-harm, clothing inappropriate for child's age, gender or culture etc.	Behavioural signs such as unable to play, fear of mistakes, fear of telling parents, withdrawn, unexplained speech and language difficulties, few friends.
Radicalisation	Physical signs such as they are observed downloading, viewing or sharing extremist propaganda from the web. They may change their appearance, their health may suffer (including mental health) and they may become isolated from family, friends, peers or social groups.	They become withdrawn and focused on one ideology. They express a desire/intent to take part in or support extremist activity. Their views become increasingly extreme regarding another section of society or government policy. An individual becomes increasingly intolerant of more moderate views.

## Appendix 2. What to Do if You Receive a Safeguarding Disclosure From a Child or Young Person

### Stage 1

Deal with the disclosure as it happens and ensure that the child or young person's immediate needs are met and that they feel supported. When a disclosure is made, it is most important to understand that you must not investigate the disclosure yourself. The disclosure must always be taken seriously and dealt with according to the guidance in this Policy, even if the truth of the disclosure is uncertain. **You are not expected to act as a social worker, counsellor, judge, jury, or avenge the abuser; you are expected to act in the best interest of the child or young person who may be at risk.**

#### YOU MUST:

- Put your own feelings aside and listen as if the information is not sensational.
- Allow the child or young person to lead the discussion and to talk freely.
- Listen to what the child or young person is saying. Try not to interrupt them or ask lots of questions. Being asked a lot of questions can feel like being interrogated.
- Let them tell you at their own pace. Do not worry if the child or young person stops talking for a while – silences are OK. You do not have to rush to fill in the gaps.
- Accept what the child or young person says without challenge.
- Listen to the child or young person without investigating.
- Allow the child or young person to talk but protect them from sharing the information with too many other people.
- Provide reassurance that you are taking them seriously.
- Let the child or young person know that you understand how hard it is for them to tell.
- Let them know they are doing the right thing by speaking out.
- It is ok to let them know if you are unable to answer all their questions.
- Avoid using questions such as “Is there anything else you would like to tell me?”.
- Avoid asking leading questions like “Did the coach hit you?”.
- Never ask questions that may make the child or young person feel guilty or inadequate.
- If physical abuse has taken place, you may observe visible bruises and marks but do not ask a child or young person to remove or adjust their clothing to see them.
- Tell the child or young person who you will be contacting e.g., the Head of Safeguarding statutory agencies etc, and that you will support them throughout.
- Once you have established that they have been harmed or are at risk of being harmed, do not pursue the conversation any further. This is important to ensure that questions cannot be raised later about possible manipulation of the disclosure.
- Use the ‘TED’ method – Tell me. Explain to me. Describe to me.
- Respect the confidentiality of the disclosure and do not share the information with anyone other than those who need to know. Those who need to know are those who have a role to play in protecting children and young people.

## REMEMBER!

When a child or young person discloses, they may feel:

- **Guilt:** They may blame themselves for the abuse and often feel guilt for telling.
- **Ashamed:** They may feel mortified about the abuse itself.
- **Confused:** They may be muddled about their feelings for the alleged abuser.
- **Scared:** They may fear the repercussions. They may fear the alleged abuser.

Be careful about touching (e.g., hugging or cuddling) the child or young person if they have not initiated the contact. They may be upset by physical contact.

## Stage 2

As soon as possible, once the immediate comfort and safety of the child or young person is secured, you must inform the DSL of the disclosure. You may make a referral yourself directly to a statutory agency if you are concerned about the child or young person's immediate safety and/or are having difficulty contacting either the DSL or if the DSL is the alleged abuser. 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.

## Stage 3

You should note down details as soon as possible after the disclosure has been made. What is clearly etched at the time can become blurred after a few hours. It is vital that you make clear and concise notes soon after the disclosure to complete a more detailed record and safeguarding incident sheet later.

Immediate notes should include:

- Date and time.
- Place and context of disclosure or concern.
- Important facts provided, e.g., names mentioned.

Wherever possible, you must record information as it was relayed to you using the language of the child and young person rather than your own interpretation of it. It is important to report factual information rather than your assumption or interpretation. Please follow the guidance on the safeguarding incident report form.

## What Happens Next?

It is important that concerns are followed up and it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that they are. You should be informed by the DSL within eight hours what has happened following the report being made. If you do not receive this information, you should be proactive in seeking it out.

If you have concerns that the disclosure has not been acted upon appropriately, you should inform the Principal and ultimately contact the relevant statutory agency. A disclosure is not the only way that you may be made aware of a problem.

Sometimes another adult or even a child may say something about a possible abusive situation.

## Deal With It in the Same Way!

On occasions, you may witness an incident that may cause concern or indeed you may pick up on things that cause concern to you. Information may be passed to a coach or lead person anonymously by a person or persons who do not want to be directly involved for whatever reason. However, you come upon information that causes concern and may put others at risk, the action should always be the same.

## Taking No Action Is Not an Option

All matters will be fully investigated, and appropriate action will be taken. Action may include referral to the Police, Children's Services, and/or Sheffield Safeguarding Hub if deemed as appropriate by the DSL. Any referral to an external agency shall also be reported to the DSL. Full contact details can be found in Appendix 7 and 8.

## Remember the Child's Welfare Is of Paramount Importance

Full details of dealing with concerns in a dance setting can be found in Appendix 3 of this policy.

## Safeguarding Procedures

The Heights takes any form of safeguarding poor practice or abuse seriously to promote a culture of best practice and accountability. The Heights encourage all staff, volunteers, and guest teachers to raise concerns they may have about any safeguarding poor practice or abuse as early as possible to the relevant personnel. If you have any questions regarding this section of the Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, please contact the Principal.

### Remember the Five 'R's'

#### RECOGNISE

- Recognising abuse or harm is often not easy.
- You need to act when you suspect Harm or Abuse is or has taken place, not just when you are sure that harm has occurred.
- You may not have proof, but it does not mean you are jumping to conclusions, it simply means you do not have the proof that the abuse is taking place.
- As soon as you suspect any kind of Abuse or Harm you should raise the concern.

#### RESPOND

- Responding to abuse is vital, and you have a responsibility to report any concerns you have to the safeguarding team – first instance HoS or nominated DSO and your line manager.
- You may need to find out the basic facts, ensure you allow the individual to speak without interruption, do not make any judgement.
- Reassure them and let them know that you are going to have to speak to somebody to ensure that they are safe.

#### REFER/REPORT

- Contact your DSO or HoS, if you cannot reach them contact your line manager, you should also consider contacting local authorities. For example, the Police or social services.

#### RECORD

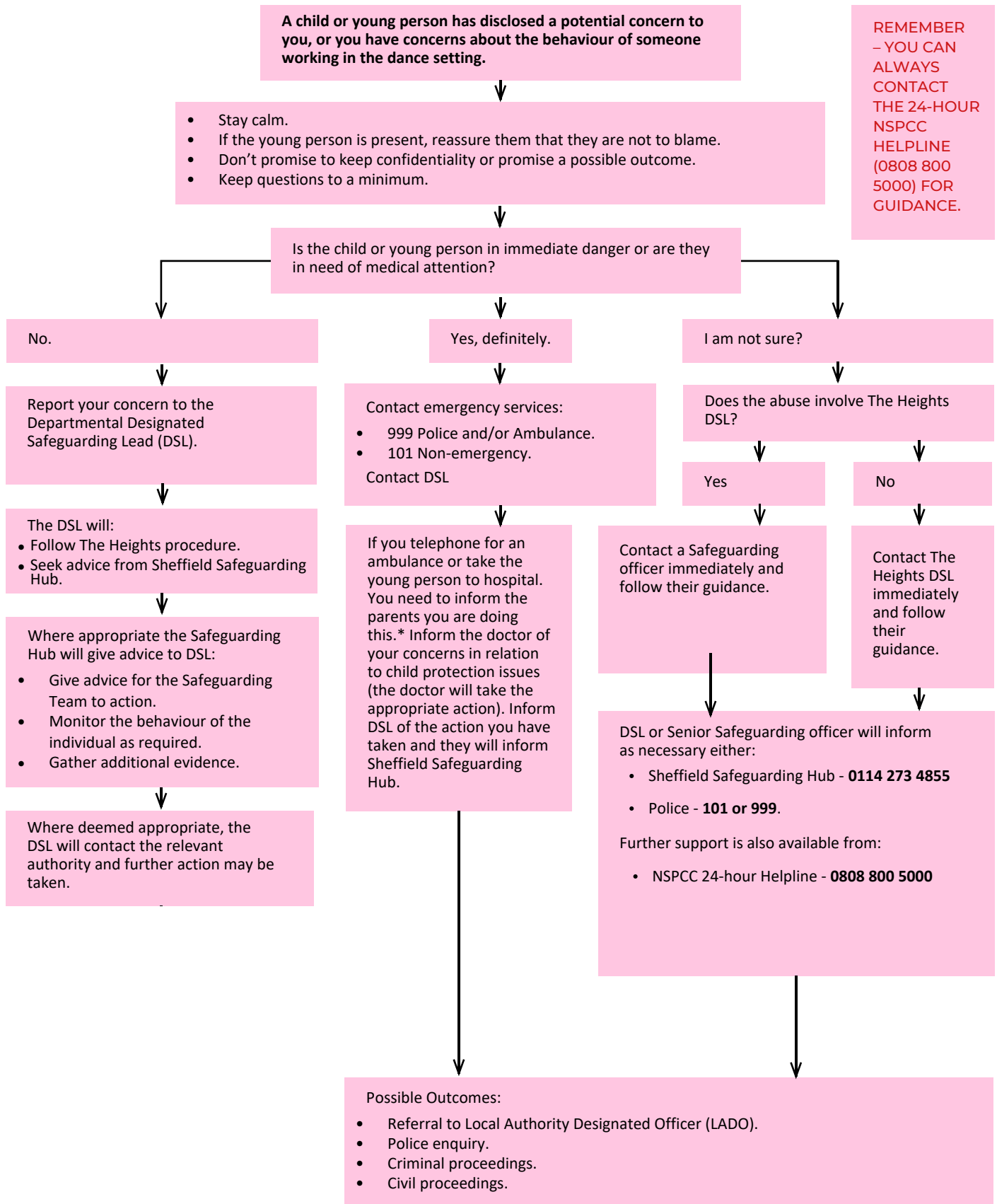
- You should also make sure you make a note of any disclosure so that this can be recorded via The Heights Incident Report form.

#### RESPECT

- Respect the confidentiality of the discloser and do not share information with anyone other than those who need to know.
- Those who need to know have a role to play in protecting children and young people.



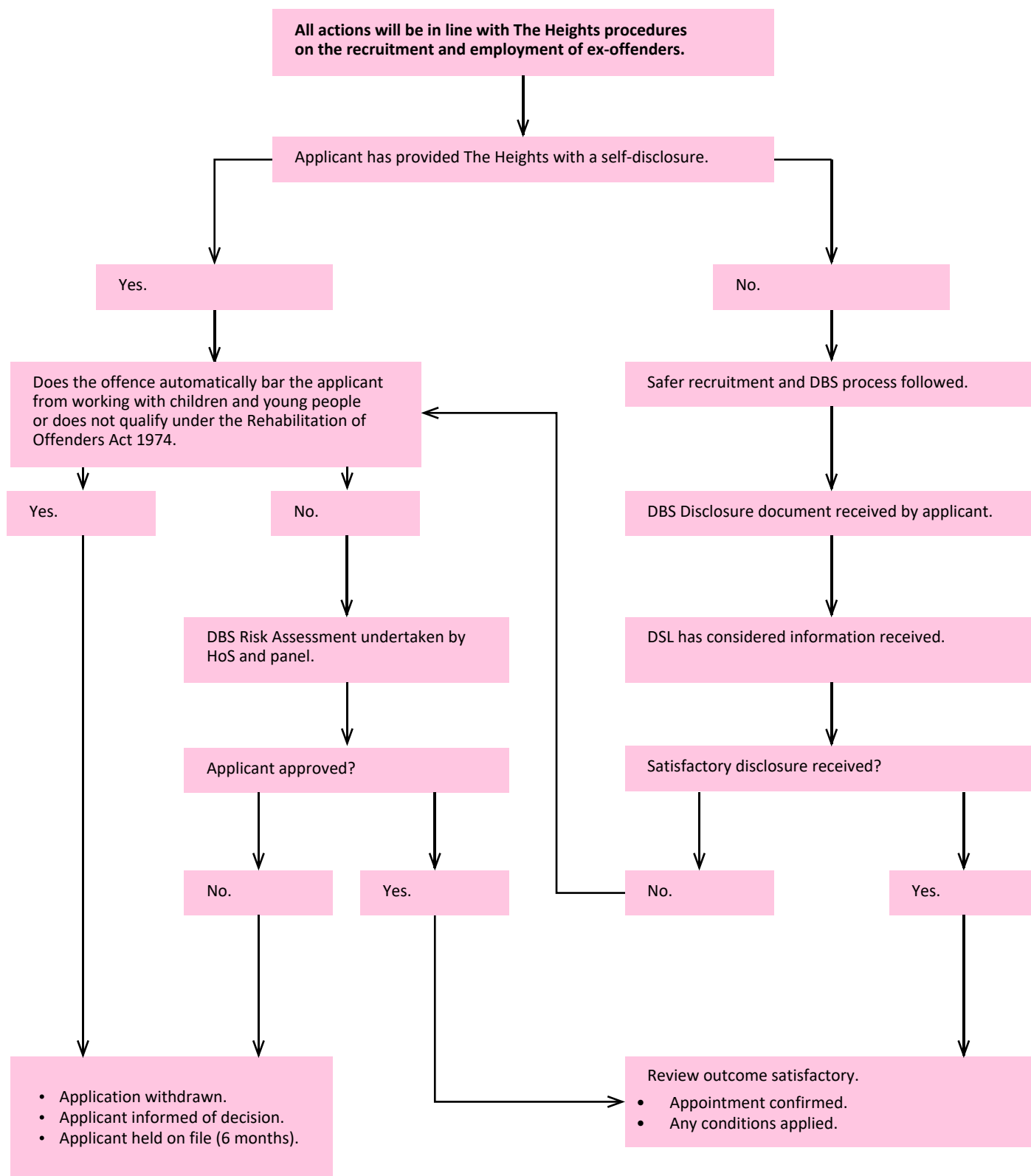
## Appendix 3. Dealing With Concerns in a Dance Setting



**If in doubt, contact DSL**

\*If the parents are allegedly involved in the abuse, only inform them that you are taking the individual at risk to hospital. Do not share any other information.

## Appendix 4. DBS Assessment Procedure



## Appendix 5. Managing Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers, or Guest Teachers

**Safeguarding allegation raised about the conduct or behaviour of an employee, worker, consultant, agency staff or volunteer.**

Is the concern about the Designated Safeguarding Lead?

Yes.

Inform a Senior Safeguarding Officer immediately, and the staff member, volunteer, or guest teacher raising the concern should complete the Incident Report form as soon as possible and within 8 hours and send it to the Senior Safeguarding Officer.

No.

Inform the DSL immediately and the staff member, volunteer, or guest teacher raising the concern should complete the Incident Report as soon as possible and within 24 hours and send to the Safeguarding Team.

Senior Safeguarding Officer (if the allegation is a member of the Safeguarding Team) decides whether the employee, worker, consultant, agency staff or volunteer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or young person.
- possibly committed a criminal offence towards a child or young person.
- behaved towards a child or young person in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children or young people.

DSL/Principal contact Sheffield Safeguarding Hub and/or Police for advice and support. The DSL will act on the advice of Sheffield Safeguarding Hub and the Police.

The Heights will decide whether to suspend the staff member, volunteer, or guest teacher pending the statutory investigations and inform the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub and Police of the decision/action taken.

Once any statutory investigations are concluded or where appropriate in parallel, The Heights will undertake its investigation and decide what sanction should be taken against the staff member, volunteer, or guest teacher. If the staff member, volunteer, or guest teacher is removed from their role a referral will be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

## Appendix 6. Internet Grooming

The message to all children and young people is that it is not okay for someone to expect them or their friends to do things that they do not want to. They should listen to their instinct; if it does not feel right then they should tell a trusted adult such as a parent, grandparent, carer, teacher, youth, health, or social worker.

It is important that we can identify the signs of internet grooming and sexual exploitation. This involves understanding the answers to the following questions:

- What does it feel like to be groomed?
- What might a friend see?
- What might sexual exploitation feel like?
- What is sexual exploitation?

### What does it feel like to be groomed?

- Special/loved
- What you want
- Understood
- You have control
- New friends
- Exciting
- You've changed
- Grown up
- Sexualised conversations

### What might sexual exploitation feel like?

- You owe something
- In love and no one else matters
- No going back
- Humiliated or threatened
- Scared or trapped
- You deserve it
- No-one will believe you
- Fooling yourself that it is okay
- Pressured to get friends involved
- Used

### What might a friend see?

- Gifts or money
- Increased Secrecy
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Criminal activity
- Changing appearance
- Going missing
- Self-harm
- STI's and pregnancies
- Online relationships with strangers
- Suicidal thoughts
- Injuries

### What is sexual exploitation?

- Doing sexual things you find horrible
- Sexual things with an older person
- Forced to have sex with strangers
- Made to send naked pictures
- Having sex in front of others
- Rape
- Drink or drugs addiction
- Being hurt or beaten up
- Forced not to leave when you want to

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## Appendix 7. Key Safeguarding Contacts

**Designated Safeguarding Lead / Principal**

(Miss Ambery)

heights4dance@yahoo.co.uk

**Safeguarding Officer (SO)**

(Miss Smith)

heights4danceteachers@yahoo.com

**Police**

101 or 999 in an emergency

**Sheffield Safeguarding Hub**

0114 273 4855

**NSPCC Helpline**

0808 800 5000 or [help@NSPCC.org.uk](mailto:help@NSPCC.org.uk)

**Child Line**

0800 1111

**[www.notinourcommunity.org](http://www.notinourcommunity.org)**

Protecting against grooming & sexual exploitation

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## Appendix 8. Other Applicable Policies, Documents and Legislation

### Policies / Documents

- Health & Safety Policy
- GDPR/Data Protection Policy
- Fire Evacuation Policy
- Digital Communications Policy
- Safe Recruitment in Dance (Appendix 9)
- Risk Assessment
- Staff Handbook
- Pupil Handbook

### Relevant Legislation/Regulations:

- Children Act 1989 Children Act 2004
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Police Act 1997
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Sex Offenders Act 1997
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Youth Evidence & Crime Evidence Act 1999
- Working Together 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020

**Please note that these lists are not exhaustive.**

## Appendix 9. Safer Recruitment in Dance

### Safer Recruitment Simple Guidance



Ensuring people who intend to abuse children do not work in or with your organisation should always be at the forefront of any dance school leader's mind. This short guide summarises current thinking and best practice in this area. By following these simple guidelines, you will more easily identify those who are a threat to children and put up barriers to deter others from approaching your school. As Sir Michael Bichard said at the Soham Inquiry in 2004, "There is a concern that many abusers do not have convictions and that no intelligence is held about them. Therefore, the selection and recruitment process, if properly conducted, is an important, indeed essential, safeguard."

The simple list below is a shortened version of the Safer Recruitment and Employment Checklist developed within the Better Hiring Toolkit available [here](#).

#### Before you advertise a role:

- Does the work involve regulated activity and need a particular type of DBS Check (see Safer Dance's Mini-Guide to DBS for Dance Teachers [here](#))?
- Has at least one person interviewing or making hiring decisions received Safer Recruitment Training (e.g. NSPCC training [here](#))?
- Ensure any advert shows your commitment to safeguarding. For example, "XXX Dance School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure & Barring Service (England \* Wales) / AccessNI (Northern Ireland) / Disclosure Scotland"

#### The application form:

This should include:

- Requesting a full history in chronological order since leaving secondary education, including periods of any post-secondary education/training, and part-time and voluntary work as well as full time employment, with start and end dates, reasons for leaving employment and explanations for periods not in employment or education/training. These gaps are important to explore at interview.
- Disciplinary offences relating to adults at risk and/children (including any conduct related to safeguarding concerns which the penalty is 'time expired'), and whether the candidate has been the subject of any safeguarding related investigations or concerns, and if so, the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure including referrals to DBS, other professional bodies or the police?
- Details of at least two referees – at least one referee should be a professional, the candidate's current or most recent employer. The form should make it clear that professional references will not be accepted from relatives, work colleagues who are not authorised to provide professional references in an official capacity on behalf of the organisation, or from people writing solely in the capacity of friends.

#### Interviews

##### The interview should:

- Be conducted by at least two persons at least one of whom has received specific training in safer recruitment and has an understanding of safeguarding?
- Explore:
  - The candidate's attitude toward adults at risk and/children?
  - Their ability to support the organisation's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children and young people with whom they have contact or provide tuition for
  - Gaps in the candidate's employment history
  - Concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate in their application
  - Any declarations that the candidate may wish to make in light of the requirement for a criminal records check

## Safer Recruitment Simple Guidance



### References

- Before confirming a contract or allowing a visitor or volunteer to start, ensure references are contacted and that a satisfactory reply regarding the applicant's suitability to work with children has been received.
- Create a standard reference request form which asks for the following information:
  - The referee's relationship with the candidate.
  - Specific comments about the candidate's suitability for the post.
  - Whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children and young people and, if not, specific details of the referee's concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the person may be unsuitable.
- Telephone the referee in order to confirm the applicant's identity.
- Where references are provided over the phone, always get confirmation in writing to keep on file.
- Do not rely on references or testimonials provided by the candidate, or on open references and testimonials, i.e. "To Whom It May Concern"

### Other pre-employment checks

- Make an offer of appointment to the successful candidate conditional upon:
  - Verification of the candidate's identity
  - A check of the adults and/children's barred lists for those working in Regulated Activity and, where appropriate, a satisfactory DBS enhanced disclosure
  - Verification of qualifications and professional status where required for the role

Your organisation will need a process in place to risk assess any information that arises out of the criminal records check

### Induction

- Ensure that new staff or volunteers are not able to work unsupervised until all relevant checks are received
- Consider a 3 to 6 month period of probation
- Create an induction programme for all newly appointed staff and volunteers to
  - Provide training on safeguarding and safer working practices and appropriate conduct
  - Confirm the conduct expected of staff and volunteers in relation to safe working practices with children and young people or vulnerable adults
  - Provide opportunities for a new member of staff or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role and responsibilities
- Ensure managers identify and share any concerns about the conduct of the individual during their induction and probationary period with them in a timely manner, giving them an opportunity to address concerns and improve their performance

### Use of Volunteers

- Maintain an up to date list of all volunteer helpers used by the organisation
- If you are actively seeking volunteers, adopt equivalent recruitment measures as you would for paid staff
- Even if you know the individuals consider seeking references, conducting an informal interview to gauge the person's aptitude and suitability
- Undertake an Enhanced DBS with barred list check for any volunteers who are in Regulated Activity

*The Safer Recruitment and Employment Checklist developed within the Better Hiring Toolkit was compiled as a collaboration between the Better Hiring Institute, Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS), Skills for Care, Reed Screening, Dominic Headley & Associates (DHA), and VBA Consulting. It can be found [here](#).*