



CHILD AND ADULTS AT RISK PROTECTION POLICY

INTEGR8 DANCE

September 2025

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1. Introduction

Integr8 Dance recognises the importance of its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to its care.

As an organisation working with children and young people, Integr8 Dance has a responsibility to act if abuse comes to light and, as far as possible, to protect children from the possibility of being abused within Integr8 Dance. It is the responsibility of the Director to appoint a designated Safeguarding Lead to oversee the implementation of this policy. This position will be held for a one-year term and then be reviewed by the Director when appropriate. As and when required, the named nominated person will work with the statutory agencies and other organisations.

Position of Trust

A position of trust exists where an adult, by virtue of their role, is in a position of power or influence over another person. Although an adult engaging in any sexual activity with a young person under the age of sixteen would be committing a criminal offence, in some circumstances, engaging in sexual activity within a relationship of trust with a young person between the age of 16-18 years is also a criminal offence. As of 28th June 2022, the law states that those in a position of trust in sports organisations, such as a coach, cannot legally have a sexual relationship with young people under the age of 18 who they have power or influence over e.g. athlete/dancer/Helper/Volunteer.

1.1 Monitoring and review of the policy and procedures

The implementation of procedures should be regularly monitored and reviewed. The Safeguarding Lead should regularly report progress, challenges, difficulties, achievements gaps and areas where changes are required to the management committee. The policy should be reviewed every year, or whenever there is a major change in the organisation, in relevant legislation or relevant legislation or any changes in the cheerleading or dance industry.

1.2 Contact details

Nominated Safeguarding Lead: Zoe Price-Hester

Contact no: 07528 381024

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Natalie Foster

Contact no: 07770 689898

Hampshire County Council Social Services

Contact no: 0300 555 1384 (Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm)

Email: childrens.services@hants.gov.uk

Out of hours contact no: 0300 555 1373

Hampshire County Council LADO

Contact no: 01962 876 364

Email: child.protection@hants.gov.uk

LADO notification form: https://forms.hants.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-c8d4175e-e440-4cdd-9968-349c655374b9/AF-

<Stage-64282b4d-4083-4e7c-9c4e-1a25a6a74599/definition.json&redirectlink=/en&cancelRedirectLink=/en>

The role of the Designated Officer, or DO, (formerly known as the Local Authority Designated Officer, or LADO) is set out in the Government's Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and is governed by the Authorities' duties under section 11 of the Children Act 2004

1.3 Mission Statement

As part of its mission Integr8 Dance is committed to the following:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in cheerleading, dance and/or other activities held by Integr8 Dance & Cheer in a safe environment
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment, and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All Integr8 Dance employees or volunteers who work with children will be recruited with regards to their suitability for that responsibility, and will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and Child Protection procedures
- Working in partnership with parents and children is essential for the protection of children
- Supporting those affected by abuse
- Make links with statutory childcare authorities and other organisations if / when required.

1.4 Policy

A child/young person is defined as a person under the age of 18 (Children's Act 1989) Where this policy refers to children, it equally applies to Adults at Risk, such as, but not limited to, persons with additional needs, regardless of age.

The policy sets out what action will be taken in various circumstances to reassure parents, carers and funders that all possible steps will be taken to protect children involved in any aspect of Integr8 Dance's activities. The procedures within this policy take the following into consideration:

- The Children's Act 1989 as amended by the Adoption and Children's Act 2004
- Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR)
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Government guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

2. Promoting Good Practice

2.1 Introduction

To provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities in cheerleading, everyone must operate within the accepted ethical framework laid out in Integr8 Dance's handbook.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is therefore NOT the responsibility of employees or participants to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is however their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and act if they have concerns about the welfare of the child, as explained in section 4.

This section will help you identify what is meant by good practice and poor practice.

2.2 Good Practice

All personnel including volunteers 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 dance fun and enjoyable: promote fairness, confront and deal with bullying, help build positive relationships and life skills
- Treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity

- Always put the welfare of the young person first, before winning
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with athletes/dancers (e.g. it is never appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child, or to share a room with them)
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of manual/physical support is required for spotting or safety purposes in cheer or dance, it should be provided openly and with the consent of the young person. Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the young person's consent has been given, and it is for the benefit of performing or acquiring skills for the sport
- Involve parents/cares wherever possible, e.g. where young people need to be supervised in changing rooms, encourage parents to take responsibility for their own child.
- When supervising children in changing rooms, staff should ensure arrangements are inclusive and safe for mixed-age, mixed-gender and non-binary pupils. Children should not be left unsupervised, and supervision should always be undertaken by at least two responsible adults where possible.
- Written parental consent will be obtained for any transport organised by Integr8 Dance & Cheer. Where parents arrange private car-sharing between themselves, this is outside the responsibility of Integr8 Dance & Cheer. Staff should not organise or facilitate informal lifts.
- At performance events and competitions, Integr8 Dance & Cheer staff will ensure that children are properly supervised backstage and in dressing rooms. Children will not be left alone with external theatre staff, volunteers, or chaperones who are not part of the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements e.g. overnight stays
- Ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff
- Ensure that at away events adults should not enter a young person's room or invite young people to their rooms
- Be an excellent role model, this includes not smoking, drinking alcohol or junk food and drink in the company of young people

- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of the young person is important. Do not risk sacrificing welfare in a desire for team, programme, or personal achievements.
- Secure written parental consent for Integr8 Dance to act in loco parentis, to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given

In addition to these key principles of Good Practice, Integr8 Dance hold 3rd party bookings (schools and community groups) to additional standards of requirement:

- For sessions that take are arranged for a third party (e.g. schools, community groups) it is the responsibility of the third party to register participants.
- All Integr8 Dance staff are given clear established roles for their education work
- When working in schools' workshops are conducted in the presence of a teacher
- Integr8 Dance where possible has two dance teachers per session when taking place in a hired building.
- Children are supervised at all times, including breaks.
- Children are registered for sessions that are run solely by Integr8 Dance.
- Dance teachers are required to ensure that Health and Safety and Duty of Care requirements are met in the working environment during sessions.
- Integr8 Dance aims to ensure that the special needs of children participating in workshops are noted and accommodated prior to the commencement of a workshop/s.

2.3 Poor Practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all personnel:

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others

- Taking young people alone in a car on journeys, however short
- Taking young people to your home where they will be alone with you
- Sharing a room with a young person
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun
- Reducing a young person to tears as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature that the young person can do for themselves

When a case arises where it is impractical/impossible to avoid certain situation e.g. transporting a young person in your car, the tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parent/care and the young person involved.

If during your care you accidentally hurt a young person, the young person seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions and/or if the young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

3. High Risk and Emerging safeguarding issues

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside our dance school and/or can occur between children outside of Integr8. All staff, but especially the designated and deputy safeguarding leads should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families.

Risk and harm outside of the family can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence in addition to other risks.

At Integr8, we will consider the various factors that can impact the life of any pupil about whom we have concerns. We will consider the level of influence that these factors have on their ability to be protected and remain free from harm, particularly around child exploitation or criminal activity.

What life is like for a child within the home, within the family and within the community are key considerations when the DSL is looking at any concerns.

3.1 Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism

Staff should be aware that children can be vulnerable to radicalisation through online content, peer groups, or community influences. There is no single indicator, but any concern that a pupil may be at risk must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Where appropriate, referrals will be made to Hampshire children's social care and the police Prevent team.

3.2 Gender based violence/ violence against women and girls

Issues such as female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, honour-based abuse, and breast ironing are serious safeguarding concerns. While unlikely to present within a dance and cheer context, all staff must be aware that these are forms of abuse and are illegal in the UK. If there is any concern that a child may be at risk, the DSL must be informed immediately. The DSL will contact children's social care or the police as required. Staff should not attempt to investigate themselves.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/violence-against-women-and-girls>

3.3 Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children

Peer-on-peer abuse, including sexual harassment, bullying or physical violence, will not be tolerated. All allegations must be taken seriously, recorded, and reported to the DSL immediately.

4. Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Children (MET)

Within Hampshire, the acronym MET is used to identify all children who are missing; believed to be at risk of or are being exploited; or who are at risk of or are being trafficked. Given the close links between all these issues, there has been a considered response to view them as potentially linked, so that cross over of risk is not missed.

It is known that children who go missing are at risk of suffering significant harm, and there are specific risks around children running away and the risk of sexual exploitation.

The Hampshire Police Force, as the lead agency for investigating and finding missing children, will respond to children going missing based on on-going risk assessments in line with current guidance.

The police definition of 'missing' is: "Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located, and their well-being or otherwise confirmed."

Various categories of risk should be considered and Hampshire Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership provides further guidance:

Local authorities have safeguarding duties in relation to children missing from home and should work with the police to risk assess and analyse data for patterns that indicate particular concerns and risks.

The police will prioritise all incidents of missing children as medium or high risk. Where a child is recorded as being absent, the details will be recorded by the police, who will also agree review times and any on-going actions with person reporting.

A missing child incident would be prioritised as 'high risk' where:

- the risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child is in danger through their own vulnerability; or
- the child may have been the victim of a serious crime; or
- the risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger.

The high-risk category requires the immediate deployment of police resources. Authorities need to be alert to the risk of sexual exploitation or involvement in drugs, gangs or criminal activity, trafficking and to be aware of local "hot

spots”, as well as concerns about any individuals with whom children might runaway.

Child protection procedures must be initiated in collaboration with children's social care services whenever there are concerns that a child who is missing may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Within any case of children who are missing both push and pull factors will need to be considered.

Push factors include:

- Conflict with parents/carers
- Feeling powerless
- Being bullied/abused
- Being unhappy/not being listened to
- The Trigger Trio (domestic abuse, parental mental ill health and parental substance misuse)

Pull factors include:

- Wanting to be with family/friends
- Drugs, money and any exchangeable item
- Peer pressure
- For those who have been trafficked into the United Kingdom as unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, there will be pressure to make contact with their trafficker.

Please refer to our 'Missing Child Policy' for the procedure we follow for when a child goes missing from one of our classes.

5. Defining Child Abuse

5.1 Introduction

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm, it commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability. Additionally, it is acknowledged that children may be at risk of abuse by another young person, as well as adults.

It is **NOT** the responsibility of those working with or volunteering for Integr8 Dance to decide that child abuse is occurring. It **IS** their responsibility to act on any concerns.

There are four main types of abuse: **physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse** and **neglect**. The abuser may be a family member, someone the young person encounters in residential care or in the community, including sports and leisure activities. Any individual may abuse or neglect a young person directly or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the young person. Abuse in all of its forms can affect a young person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated may follow the individual into adulthood

Young people with disabilities (also known here as Adults at Risk of any age) may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse had occurred.

In addition, Integr8 Dance & Cheer recognises that adult students with learning disabilities or additional needs also require safeguarding. They are protected under this policy in the same way as children, and staff must remain vigilant to safeguarding concerns regardless of age.

It is recognised that there are additional categories of abuse that relate to adults (over 18) and that both participants over 18yrs, parents or Integr8 Dance staff/volunteers may be at risk. Details of additional categories of abuse in over 18's are also listed below in this policy

5.2 Types of Abuse

- **Physical Abuse:** where adults physically hurt or injure a young person e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning. Giving young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute physical child abuse.

- **Emotional Abuse:** the persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve telling a young person they are useless, worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued in terms of only meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of young people that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may cause a young person to be frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the young person frightened or withdrawn.

Ill treatment of children, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse in Cheerleading or Dance may occur when the young person is constantly given negative feedback, expected to perform at levels that are clearly unrealistic for their age/skill level. Other forms of emotional abuse could include - but are not limited to - name calling and bullying.

- **Bullying** may come from another young person or an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves.

There are three main types of bullying. It may be physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, slapping), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, name calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages or social media posts), emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

- **Neglect** occurs when an adult fails to meet the young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. Refusal to give love, affection and attention can also be a form of neglect.

Neglect in Cheerleading or Dance could occur when a coach does not keep the young person safe, or exposing them to undue cold/heat or unnecessary risk of injury.

- **Sexual Abuse** occurs when adults (male and female) use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing young people pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner are also forms of sexual abuse.

In Cheerleading or Dance, activities which might involve physical contact with young people could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Also, the power of the coach/dance teacher has over young athletes/dancers, if misused, may lead to abusive situations developing.

Additional categories of abuse in adults

It is recognised that there are additional categories of abuse that relate to adults (over 18) and that both participants over 18yrs, parents or Integr8 Dance staff/volunteers may be at risk of the following:

- **Domestic violence or abuse**

This includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse perpetrated by anyone within a person's family. It also includes so-called "honour" based violence.

- **Psychological or emotional abuse**

This includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, or withdrawal from services or supportive networks

- **Financial or material abuse**

This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, and coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions. It can also include the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

- **Modern slavery**

This encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, and domestic servitude.

- **Discriminatory abuse**

Discrimination is abuse that centres on a difference or perceived difference, particularly with respect to race, gender, disability, or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act.

- **Organisational or institutional abuse**

This includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting, such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. Organisational abuse can range from one off incidents to ongoing ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

- **Neglect or acts of omission**

This includes ignoring medical or physical care needs and failing to provide access to appropriate health social care or educational services. It also includes the withdrawing of the necessities of life, including medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.

- **Self-neglect**

This covers a wide range of behaviour, but it can be broadly defined as neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health, or surroundings. An example of self-neglect is behaviour such as hoarding.

5.3 Indicators of Abuse

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Most people are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- An injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- The young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them
- Another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person
- Unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper • inappropriate sexual awareness
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- Distrust of adults, particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- Difficulty in making friends
- Being prevented from socialising with others
- Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
- Losing weight for no apparent reason
- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt
- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go training or competitions
- An unexplained drop off in performance
- Physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g. on food, alcohol or cigarettes
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions

It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place. Again, it is **NOT** the responsibility of those working with or for Integr8 Dance to decide that child abuse is occurring. It **IS** their responsibility to act on any concerns.

For additional indicators of abuse which may occur in adults (over 18yrs) please refer to the Ann Craft Trust website: <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/types-of-harm/>

6. Responding to Suspicions and Allegations

6.1 Introduction

It is not the responsibility of anyone working with or volunteering for Integr8 Dance, 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 so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the young person. This section explains how to respond to allegations/suspicions.

6.2 Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse

We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. We may see it happening, we may suspect it happening because of signs such as those listed in section 3 of this document, it may be reported to us by someone else or directly by the young person affected.

In the last of these cases, it is particularly important to respond appropriately. If a young person says or indicates that they are being abused, you should:

- **Stay calm** so as not to frighten the young person
- **Reassure** the child that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell
- **Listen** to the child, showing that you are taking them seriously
- **Keep questions to a minimum** so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning. Only ask questions to clarify
- **Inform** the child that you have to inform other people about what they have told you. Tell the child this is to help stop the abuse continuing.
- **Safety of the child** is paramount. If the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue
- **Record** all information verbatim and pass this to the Safeguarding Lead
- **Report** the incident to Safeguarding Lead

Safeguarding Lead: Zoe Price-Hester

Contact no: 07528 381024

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Natalie Foster

Contact no: 07770 689898

If your concern is regarding the Safeguarding Lead, a report must be made to Natalie Foster, who will make the report and take the relevant action.

In all cases if you are not sure what to do you can gain help from NSPCC help line Tel No: 08088005000 Monday to Friday 8am – 10pm or 9am – 6pm at the weekends

In the case that a child is in serious or immediate danger, please call the police on 999

6.3 Recording Information

To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed written record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. In recording you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish what is your personal knowledge and what others have told you. Do not include your own opinions. Information should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth
- The child's home address and telephone number
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their concern or someone else's
- The nature of the allegation, including dates, times and any other relevant information
- A description of any visible bruising or injury, location, size etc. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes
- Details of witnesses to the incidents
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising/injuries occurred
- Have the parents been contacted? If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details

- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record detail

6.4 Reporting the Concern

All suspicions and allegations MUST be reported appropriately. It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

Integr8 Dance expects its members and staff to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the Safeguarding Lead and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken.

If the Safeguarding Lead or deputy are not available for immediate help/action, you should take responsibility and seek advice from the NSPCC helpline, the duty officer at your local social services department or the police.

Where there is a complaint against an employee or volunteer, there may be three types of investigation.

- **Criminal** in which case the police are immediately involved
- **Child Protection** in which case the social services (and possibly) the police will be involved
- **Disciplinary or misconduct** in which case Integr8 Dance will be involved

As mentioned previously in this document, Integr8 Dance personnel and volunteers are not child protection experts, and it is not their responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. All suspicions and allegations must be shared with professional agencies that are responsible for child protection.

Social services have a legal responsibility under The Children Act 1989 (as amended by the Adoption and Children's Act 2004) to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the child and making inquiries jointly with the police.

If there is any doubt, you must report the incident: it may be just one of a series of other incidences which together cause concern.

6.5 Reporting a concern against a member of staff or volunteer

An allegation may relate to a member of staff or volunteer (including guest coaches and choreographers) who works with children who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may harm a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024, section 195)

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by an employee or a volunteer should be reported to The Group, who will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk. This will include the following:

- The matter will be in the first instance referred to the relevant LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)
- Integr8 Dance will refer the matter to social services department
- The parent/carer of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department
- Integr8 Dance Director should be notified to decide who will deal with any media inquiries and implement any immediate disciplinary proceedings
- If the Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion/allegation the report must be made to Charlie Mackay who will refer the matter to social services/LADO

6.6 Reporting a historic allegation of abuse

Allegations of abuse are sometimes made sometime after the event. Where such allegation is made, you should follow the same procedures and have the matter reported to social services/LADO. This is because other children in the sport or outside it may be at risk from the alleged abuser. Anyone who has a previous conviction for offences related to abuse against children is

automatically excluded from working with children. Reporting of historic abuse must follow the same reporting procedure as a current allegation.

6.7 Reporting a child in need of support services (Not at risk of harm)

Where a child is deemed to be in need of additional support services, but they are not at risk of harm, the same procedure of reporting is to be followed, and the Safeguarding Lead will make an assessment as to the most appropriate and effective course of action to provide the appropriate support.

6.8 Concerns outside the immediate Cheerleading / Dance studio environment (e.g. a parent or carer)

- Report your concerns to Integr8 Dance Safeguarding Lead
- If the Safeguarding Lead is not available, the person being told or discovering the abuse should contact their local social services department or the police immediately
- Social Services and Integr8 Dance Safeguarding Lead will decide how to inform the parents/carers
- Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis

6.9 Confidentiality and Record Keeping

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 following people:

- Integr8 Dance Safeguarding Lead
- The parents of the child (if appropriate)
- The person/child making the allegation
- Social Services/LADO/police
- The alleged abuser (If appropriate and necessary for the purposes of suspension. If the alleged abuser is a child, the parents of the abuser may be informed by the appropriate authorities) Seek social services/LADO advice on who should approach the alleged abuser, if deemed necessary for the purposes of suspension.

All information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with the Data Protection Act 2018(GDPR)

Record keeping

Employers should keep a clear and comprehensive summary of the case record on a person's confidential personnel file and give a copy to the individual. The record should include details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, the decisions reached, and the action taken. It should be kept at least until the person reaches normal retirement age or for ten years if longer.

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference if the person has moved on. It will provide clarification where a future DBS request reveals non convicted information and will help to prevent unnecessary reinvestigation if an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time. In this sense it may serve as a protector to the individual themselves, as well as in cases where substantiated allegations need to be known about to safeguard future children.

A copy of the Integr8 Dance company Privacy Policy can be found at:
<https://integr8dance-winchester.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Privacy-Policy-September-2024.pdf>

6.10 Whistleblowing

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice. Integr8 Dance supports a culture of openness and will protect whistleblowers from reprisals or victimisation. If staff have safeguarding concerns that are not being acted on appropriately, they should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285.

7 Internal Inquiries and Suspension

- Integr8 Dance Safeguarding Lead will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries
- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries, Integr8 Dance's director and safeguarding lead will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; especially

where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases Integr8 Dance's director and safeguarding lead must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on the balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

- Should an individual accused of abuse be found guilty, the staff member will be unable to return, and the Safeguarding Lead will notify DBS.
- Should an individual accused of abuse be found not guilty and able to return to work, it is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead to ensure they are supported in their return.
- Upon entering into a contract with Integr8 Dance, staff and volunteers are issued a code of conduct. Should a staff member or volunteer be in serious breach of the code of conduct, these same procedures will apply.

Every effort should be made to reach a conclusion in all cases even if:

- The individual refuses to cooperate, having been given a full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations
- It may not be possible to apply any disciplinary sanctions if a person's period of notice expires before the process is complete.

Compromise agreements' must **not** be used (i.e. where a member of staff or volunteer agrees to resign provided that disciplinary action is not taken and that a future reference is agreed). A settlement/compromise agreement which prevents the employer from making a DBS referral when the criteria are met for so doing would likely result in a criminal offence being committed for failure to comply with the duty to refer. The organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service to consider whether to add the individual to the barred list. This applies irrespective of whether a referral has been made to local authority children's social care and/or the designated officer or team of officers. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

8. Social Media

It is Integr8 Dance's policy that employees and volunteer staff do not accept requests from athletes/dancers to 'Friend' or 'Follow' them on any social media

network. Any friend / follow requests made by children under the age of 18 will be rejected / blocked from coaches' personal accounts.

Online safety is a core safeguarding priority, as outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024*. Children may be at risk of online grooming, exposure to harmful content, cyberbullying, and image based abuse. All staff should be alert to the signs of online abuse and report concerns to the DSL as with any other form of abuse.

Integr8 Dance encourages digital literacy and safe online behaviour and will offer age appropriate guidance to children and parents. Staff are expected to maintain safe digital boundaries and avoid one on one communication with pupils through personal devices or accounts.

Integr8 Dance's copyrighted logos or associated branding should not be used on athletes/dancers' or parents' personal social media accounts.

Integr8 Dance reserve the right to all images connected to its name, logo or image. Any images posted on social media related to or promoting Integr8 Dance will be appropriate, with appropriate hashtags. If images are deemed to be inappropriate or in breach of safeguarding, we will ask that they be removed. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Integr8 Dance requests that athletes/dancers and parents use social media in a positive and sportsmanlike manner and not engage in negative discussions on cheerleading groups or forums, which will be interpreted as bullying and dealt with as such in relation p7 of this policy). Any activity on social media (including activity on personal accounts) deemed to be inappropriate, alert a safeguarding concern or defamatory to Integr8 Dance may result in removal from the school.

Integr8 Dance will regularly remind parents and athletes/dancers to be safe on the internet and mindful of appropriateness when posting cheerleading and dance related images.

Integr8 Dance may operate closed social media groups for the purpose of sharing training and competition-related information and updates e.g. videos from training sessions; stretching and conditioning plans, routine choreography

and competition schedules. Integr8 Dance will communicate with parents/guardians/athletes/dancers privately with any information and passwords required to join. To join these groups, children must also have a parent/guardian present on the group, or express written permission from a parent/guardian to be on Integr8 Dance without them.

9. Photography

It is important that children and young people feel happy with their achievements and have photographs and films of their special moments. Family and friends also want to be able to share the successes of their children when they have been part of a special event or activity.

However, some children, parents or carers may not be comfortable with images of themselves or their children being shared. For example:

- if a child and/or their family have experienced abuse they may worry about the perpetrator tracing them online
- children who choose not to have contact with some members of their family may decide to minimise their online presence
- families may have religious or cultural reasons for choosing not to be photographed.

It's important to be aware of child protection and safeguarding issues when taking photos of or filming children and young people. The potential for misuse of images can be reduced if organisations are aware of the potential dangers and put appropriate measures in place.

Integr8 Dance recognise that:

- sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and young people, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our organisation
- the welfare of the children and young people taking part in our activities is paramount
- children, their parents and carers have a right to decide whether their images are taken and how these may be used, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation

- consent to take images of children is only meaningful when children, their parents and carers understand how the images will be used and stored, and are fully aware of the potential risks associated with the use and distribution of these images
- there are potential risks associated with sharing images of children online.

Integr8 Dance will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- always asking for written consent from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image
- always explaining what images will be used for, how they will be stored and what potential risks are associated with sharing images of children
- making it clear that if a child or their family withdraw consent for an image to be shared, it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared or published
- changing the names of children/not using names of children whose images are being used in our published material whenever possible (and only using first names if we do need to identify them)
- never publishing personal information about individual children and disguising any identifying information (for example the name of their school or a school uniform with a logo)
- making sure children, their parents and carers understand how images of children will be securely stored and for how long (including how we will control access to the images and their associated information)
- reducing the risk of images being copied and used inappropriately by:
 - only using images of children in appropriate clothing (including safety wear if necessary)
 - avoiding full face and body shots of children taking part in activities such as swimming where there may be a heightened risk of images being misused
- using images that positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity.

We will also develop a procedure for reporting the abuse or misuse of images of children as part of our child protection procedures.

Any images identified by children, parents or coaches as a misuse of images should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead who will report them to the police.

If nude or inappropriate images are found online, they can in some cases be expunged by using Childline's REPORT REMOVE tool: <https://>

www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/remove-nude-image-shared-online/

We will ensure everyone involved in our organisation knows the procedures to follow to keep children safe.

9.1 Photography and/or filming for personal use

When children themselves, parents, carers or spectators are taking photographs or filming at our events and the images are for personal use, we will publish guidance about image sharing in the event programmes and/or announce details of our photography policy before the start of the event. This includes:

- reminding parents, carers and children that they need to give consent for Integr8 to take and use their images
- asking for photos taken during the event not to be shared on social media
- recommending that people check the privacy settings of their social media account to understand who else will be able to view any images they share
- reminding children, parents and carers who they can talk to if they have any concerns about images being shared.

9.2 Photography and/or filming as a training aid for athletes/dancers and dancers

We recognise that Integr8 Dance's staff may use photography and filming as a training aid for athletes/dancers. However, this should only be done with Integr8 Dance's permission and using Integr8 Dance's equipment*. Children, young people, parents and carers must also be made aware that photography and filming is part of Integr8 Dance's activities as a training aid and give written consent.

*From time to time Integr8 Dance employees to undertake this role, may on occasion need to use their personal devices. In these instances, all images and video will be deleted from their personal devices following the teaching application/before the end of the lesson. If they are required for Integr8 Dance's use on social media, they will be transferred to a secure Integr8 Dance owned hard drive, where regular GDPR policy will apply regarding their secure storage and use.

9.3 Someone acting suspiciously with a camera or phone

All employees and volunteer staff should be vigilant for any suspicious behaviour involving cameras/filming (by other members of staff, parents, athletes/dancers or members of the public) and any concerns should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Lead directly. Where possible, the person filming/taking pictures should be immediately challenged and a request to view the footage made. Should the footage be deemed inappropriate so as to raise a safeguarding concern, the device should be seized and the police called. Should it be deemed inappropriate but not raise a safeguarding concern they will be asked to delete it.

9.4 Externally hired photographers

If Integr8 Dance hire a photographer for one of our events, we will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- providing the photographer with a clear brief about appropriate content and behaviour
- ensuring the photographer wears identification at all times
- informing children, their parents and carers that a photographer will be at the event and ensuring they give written consent to images which feature their child being taken and shared
- not allowing the photographer to have unsupervised access to children
- not allowing the photographer to carry out sessions outside the event or at a child's home
- reporting concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography following our child protection procedures.
- Have sight of the photographers Child Protection Policy, DBS certificate/ update number and GDPR policy regarding safe storage of images.

9.5 Use of images for Integr8 Dance's social media

Integr8 Dance will not name athletes/dancers/dancers next to their image in public spaces on social media unless express permission is given by the parent/guardian for that specific image, and with particular reason for it to appear. If an athlete/dancer's image is used on Integr8 Dance's official public Facebook page, Twitter, Tiktok or Instagram accounts for publicity purposes, parents and athletes/dancers will be asked not 'tag' or name the athlete/dancer, so as to help us keep this policy in place and keep our athletes/dancers safe.

10. Recruiting and Selecting Personnel

10.1 Introduction

It is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children. This applies equally to paid staff and volunteers, both full and part time. To ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children the following steps should be taken when recruiting.

10.2 Controlling Access to Children

- All staff and volunteers should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about the applicants past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record.
- Consent should be obtained from the applicant to seek information from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children should be obtained. These references MUST be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo)

10.3 Interview and Induction

All employees and volunteers will be required to undertake an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees and volunteers should receive formal or informal induction during which:

- A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full, including sections on self-disclosures, and a DBS check if applicable to their role on staff
- Their qualifications should be substantiated
- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified
- They should sign up to Integr8 Dance Staff & Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Child Protection Procedures are explained and training needs identified e.g. basic child protection awareness

10.4 Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against what is deemed good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations

- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice and/or abuse
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child
- Work safely and effectively with children

Integr8 Dance requires:

- All staff and volunteers in positions of responsibility for children to undergo a DBS check
- All employees, volunteers, coaches and Safeguarding Lead to undertake relevant training or undertake a form of home study, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of positive culture towards good practice and child protection
- All staff and volunteers to receive advisory information outlining good/bad practice and informing them what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person
- All coaches, trainee coaches and leaders should have an up to date first aid qualification

Please refer to our Recruitment Policy for our full recruitment process.

All Integr8 Dance staff and coaches complete formal safeguarding training every three years. In addition, they participate in an annual refresher session to ensure their knowledge remains current and aligned with the latest legislation and statutory guidance.

11. Declaration

On behalf of Integr8 Dance, we the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Signed: Charlotte Sapey

Charlotte Sapey (Director)

Signed: Natalie Foster

Natalie Foster (Director)

Natalie Foster

Date: 4th September 2025

12. Policy Updated

Date 4th September 2025
Written by Joanna Cuthbert
Signed



Policy review due

Date 1st September 2026
To be reviewed by Integr8 Dance's Safeguarding Lead