



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Elibah School of Dance is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. Elibah School of Dance acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse. All staff and volunteers will endeavour to work together to encourage the development of an ethos, which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

Elibah School of Dance recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014, the Children Act 1989 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013.

Elibah School of Dance will keep up-to-date with changes in legislation. It will hold a register of every child involved with the organisation and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies. The Principal of the school, Kali Forde, takes the lead responsibility for dealing with child safeguarding and protection issues and liaising with other agencies as necessary. She can be contacted on kali@elibah.dance. If an allegation is to be made against Kali Forde, this should be sent to Abby Thomas on abby@elibah.dance.

All staff at Elibah School of Dance have received Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks (updated every 3 years or on the update service).

Elibah School of Dance believes that:

- The welfare of children is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, gender, disability, language, religious beliefs, racial origin, and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All members and employees of the organisation should be clear on how to respond appropriately

Elibah School of Dance will safeguard children and young people by:

- Ensuring all children are treated equally and with respect
- Taking action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely and ensuring they have all received copies of this policy
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback - rather than negative criticism
- Working with parents and all adult members of the organisation to ensure a safe working practice
- Ensure that all children will have the opportunity to train in a safe and child centred environment

Elibah School of Dance endeavours to:



- Protect children from maltreatment
- Prevent impairment of children's health or development
- Ensure that children receive safe and effective care
- Take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

If anyone is concerned that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of being abused or neglected, they should not ignore their suspicions and should not assume that someone else will take action to protect that person.

Recognising Child Abuse and Neglect

Child abuse manifests itself in a variety of different ways, some overt and others much less so. A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institution or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely by a stranger.

Physical Abuse: This involves hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, suffocating or any other physical harm. Deliberately causing a child's ill health also constitutes physical abuse.

Sexual Abuse: This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. Showing children pornographic materials, sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways also constitutes sexual abuse.

Emotional abuse: Varying degrees of emotional abuse is present in virtually all child protection incidents, but can also constitute abuse in its own right. Emotional abuse involves persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or torture causing, or likely to cause, severe adverse effects on the emotional stability of a child. Such behaviour may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate, or making them feel unnecessarily frightened or vulnerable.

Neglect: Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional or psychological needs, such as is likely to have a severe impact on their health, development or emotional stability. Neglect may involve failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing for a child, or failing to adequately protect them from physical harm or ill health Neglect can

Child Protection Officer

Kali Forde is the Child Protection Officer at Elibah School of Dance.

The role of the child protection officer is to:

- Attend appropriate training as identified by Bracknell Forests Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB)
- Share Information with staff

- Access information and liaise with outside agencies to ensure information is up-to-date i.e., LSCB
- Collate information where there are concerns regarding a child
- Refer to the appropriate authorities i.e., social care

Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

There are 4 types of abuse: Physical, Sexual, Emotional and Neglect. Abuse to a child may be by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institution or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Spotting signs of abuse in children:

- Significant change in behaviour
- Extreme anger or sadness
- Aggressive and attention-seeking behaviour
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
- Lack of self-esteem
- Self-injury
- Depression
- Age inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Child Sexual Exploitation

If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of Elibah School of Dance, please make this known to the Principal. Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved.

If a child confides in you that abuse has taken place, follow the steps below:

1. Remain calm and in control but do not delay taking action.
2. Listen carefully to what has been said.
3. Allow the child to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Don't ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
4. Don't promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the person with responsibility for child protection. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share this information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
5. Reassure the child that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
6. Tell the child what you are going to do next.
7. Speak immediately to the Principal, whose responsibility it is to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually Children's Social care or the Police.

8. Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a child makes a disclosure.

9. As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the child's own words. Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned, and who you gave the information to. Make sure you sign and date your record.

Allegations against staff members and volunteers

If a staff member is concerned over a teacher/volunteer's behaviour towards a child/ren they have a duty to report this to the designated Child Protection Officer. The designated Child Protection Officer will listen to the teacher and record the allegations. If an allegation of any form of child abuse is made by a child against a teacher or volunteer the designated Child Protection Officer will record the allegation and contact the parents/carers. If an allegation is made against a teacher out of class, the same procedures will be carried out.

The designated Child Protection Officer will report the allegation to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO will advise if other external/internal agencies (e.g., police) should be informed, and we will act upon the advice given to ensure that any investigation is not jeopardised.

A full investigation into the allegations will be carried out to include:

- How the allegations were followed up and resolved
- Any actions taken
- Decision reached

A copy of this investigation will be given to the accused staff member and a copy will be stored on file.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, it will be factually recorded in the Incident Book stating the actions taken. All witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it.

If an allegation made by a child is deemed to be false the designated Child Protection Officer will still refer the matter to the Children's Safeguarding and Social Care services as the child concerned may be abused by someone else.

If the allegation by child or member of staff is found to be deliberately invented or malicious then disciplinary action will be taken and in some cases the police will be informed.

This policy will regularly be monitored by Elibah School of Dance and will be subject to annual review.