

Child Protection Policy

Prodigy Dance Studios

Lead Safeguarding Officer: Molly Southall

Prodigy Dance Studios is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice. It has a responsibility to protect children from harm, abuse, and exploitation. Prodigy Dance Studios acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse. Paid staff and volunteers will endeavor to work together to encourage an ethos that embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people, and adults.

Prodigy Dance Studios recognises that its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Children (Performance and Activities - England) Regulations 2014, the Children's Act 1989 and 2004 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

Prodigy Dance Studios believes that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs 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.

Prodigy Dance Studios will ensure that:

- All children will be treated equally and with respect and dignity.
- The welfare of each child will always be put first.
- a balanced relationship based on mutual trust will be built which empowers the children to share in the decision-making process.
- enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism.
- bullying will not be accepted or condoned.
- all adult members of the organisation provide a positive role model
- action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- Prodigy will keep up-to-date with health & safety legislation.

- Prodigy will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children.
- Prodigy will undertake relevant development and training.
- Prodigy 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 organisation has a dedicated Child Protection / Welfare / Safeguarding Officer, who is in charge of ensuring that the safeguarding policy and procedures are adhered to. That Person's name is Molly Southall and she can be contacted on 07984334716.

In implementing this child protection policy Prodigy Dance Studios will:

- Communicate to all workers/members their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation
- Communicate to all workers/members/volunteers/members their responsibility to work to the standards that are detailed by the appropriate council including but not limited to Surrey County Council and Slough County Council and the need to work at all times towards maintaining high standards of practice in protection of children
- Ensure that all workers/members understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a worker's conduct towards a child/young person, to Molly Southall
- Ensure that the organisations named person for child protection understands his/her responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. Police and/or Children's Social Care)
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of workers/members are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner
- Facilitate opportunities for children and young people to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues in connection with the service they are provided with and to have access to the organisation's Complaints Procedure.
- Facilitate involvement of parents or carers in the work of the organisation and to make child protection policies and procedures available to them

Prodigy Dance Studios is a versatile dance school that offers a wide array of training in many different styles. Prodigy's ethos is to bring affordable and inclusive dance training and performance opportunities to children and young people. We are committed to adhering to procedures that ensure the safety and welfare of children and young people within all dance classes, exams and performances.

Developing Procedures

These procedures have been designed to ensure that the welfare and protection of any child and young person who accesses the services provided by Prodigy Dance Studios. The procedures recognise that child protection and safeguarding can be a very difficult subject to deal with to the extent that it is sometimes easier to close your eyes to what is happening or believe that it is somebody else's problem to deal with. Prodigy Dance Studios is committed to the belief that protecting children and young people is everybody's responsibility and therefore the aim here is to provide guidelines that will enable all workers/members and volunteers to act appropriately to any concerns that arise in respect of a child/young person. As a diverse organisation with students of all backgrounds, we strive to commit to providing fair and equal opportunities to all in attendance.

Responsibilities of the Organisation

At the outset of any production the organisation will:

- undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process;
- identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for child protection;
- engage in effective recruitment of chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children, including appropriate vetting (if necessary, in consultation with the local authority);
- ensure that children are supervised at all times;
- know how to get in touch with the local authority social care services, in case it needs to report a concern.

Suspicion of Abuse

If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of the organisation, please make this known to the person with responsibility for child protection.

- If you suspect that the person with responsibility for child protection and safeguarding is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to the local authority designated officer (LADO)
- Please 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 serious allegation is made against any member of name of the organisation, chaperone, venue staff etc., action will be taken to ensure the individual does not have further contact with the child until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the theatre, rehearsal rooms, filming location, TV Studio, etc. and will not have any unsupervised contact with any other children in the production.

Disclosure of Abuse

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

- Remain calm and in control but do not delay in taking action.
- Listen carefully to what has been said.
- 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.
- Speak immediately to the person with responsibility for child protection
- Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a child makes a disclosure
- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said. 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.

Who to tell and what to tell them?

- If you have concerns about the wellbeing of a child in your care you have a duty to report it to the organisations welfare officer who will contact the child employment manager. earliest opportunity.

Photography and Video

There are risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs on web sites and in other publications such as theatre programmes.

Prodigy Dance Studios requires written consent for photography and video from parents / legal guardians. These may only be taken by registered members of staff. Any children exempt from photography will never be included in photos including programs. Prodigy will never use a child's name or further information that could be used to help identify them. Prodigy does not allow the use of photography and filming during their productions and there will be frequent announcements regarding this. Any audience member unable to adhere to this policy will be asked to leave the site.

E-Safety

Children and young people will not be communicated with directly and only via their legal guardian / parent. Prodigy has a strict no phone policy and the use of photography / filming in dressing rooms is strictly prohibited. Phones may only be used as a point of personal contact to the parent or legal guardian for the student if required. Cyber bullying will be treated in line with the bullying policies.

Parents

The organisation believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and the organisation. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the organisation and to share responsibility for the care of children. All parents will be given access to copy the organisation Safeguarding Policy and procedures. All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances. The organisation has a responsibility to ensure suitable arrangements are in place to take children home. Parents have a responsibility to inform Prodigy Dance Studios if pick-up arrangements change.

Unsupervised Contact

The organisation will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children. If possible there will always be two adults in the room when working with children. If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimise risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area or in a designated room with a door open. If it is predicted that an individual is likely to require unsupervised contact with children, he or she will be required to obtain a criminal record disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service. All children will be chaperoned at all times.

Physical Contact

All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from the children. Prodigy requires written consent for physical adjustment where absolutely necessary (i.e. Acro) and this will only be given with full consent. Adults will still communicate directly with the child and ask their consent before any contact is made.

Managing sensitive information

The organisation has a policy and procedures for the taking, using and storage of photographs or images of children. Permission is sought from the parents for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes. The organisations web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use. The organisation will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as criminal record disclosures.

Accidents

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

Chaperones and Enhanced DBS Helpers

Chaperones registered with their local authority, will be appointed by the organisation for the care of children during the production process. The chaperone is acting in loco-parentis and should exercise the care which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give to a child. The maximum number of children in the Chaperone's care shall not exceed 12. Chaperones will be made aware of the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

- Chaperones may have unsupervised access to children in their care consequently a criminal record disclosure will be sought as a requirement of the local authority before the grant approval for the chaperone
- Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the producer. If changes cannot be made satisfactorily the chaperone should consider not allowing the child to continue.
- If a chaperone considers that a child is unwell or too tired to continue, the chaperone must inform the producer and not allow the child to continue.
- During performances, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the stage door and signing them into the building.
- Children will be kept together at all times except when using separate dressing rooms.
- Chaperones will be aware of where the children are at all times.
- Children are not to leave the place of performance unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parents.
- Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets.
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms.
- Chaperones should be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the venue, and will ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger.
- Chaperones should ensure that any accidents are reported to and recorded by the organisation.
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances if anyone other than the legal guardian / adult is collecting.
- Children should be signed out when leaving and a record made of the person collecting.
- If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child until arrangements have been made to take the child home.