



Safeguarding Policy for Children and young people

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is a proactive and preventative approach that promotes the welfare and wellbeing of individuals particularly children, young people, and adults at risk.

At Body Politic, safeguarding is at the heart of what we do. This policy sets out our commitment to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where everyone: participants, staff, and visitors can feel supported and protected.

We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff, regardless of role or employment status, are expected to understand and act on their duties to safeguard children and adults. This includes recognising signs of harm, reporting concerns appropriately, and working in partnership with others to promote a culture of vigilance.

Safeguarding applies to both children and adults at risk. Where procedures differ, this policy clearly distinguishes between the two.

Key Principles of Safeguarding:

- Empowerment

Encouraging individuals to make their own choices, express their preferences, and have control over their lives, while ensuring their rights and dignity are respected.

- Prevention

Identifying and addressing potential risks and concerns before they escalate, through education, awareness, and proactive measures.

- Proportionality

Balancing the response to safeguarding concerns with the level of risk involved, ensuring that interventions are proportionate and necessary to protect the individual's well-being.

- Partnership

Collaborating with relevant agencies, professionals, and stakeholders to share information and coordinate efforts in safeguarding individuals effectively.

- Accountability

Body Politic is a registered charity in England and Wales.
Charity Number: 1207375
www.bodypoliticdance.com



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Clearly defining roles, responsibilities, and accountability for all individuals involved in the safeguarding process, ensuring transparency and effective communication.

Understanding Vulnerability:

Safeguarding recognises that certain individuals may be more vulnerable to abuse, neglect, or harm due to factors such as age, disability, illness, mental health, socio-economic status, or other circumstances. It is essential to identify and address these vulnerabilities to provide tailored support and protection.

Types of Abuse:

Safeguarding encompasses various forms of abuse, including but not limited to:

Physical Abuse	Inflicting physical harm or injury on an individual.
Emotional or Psychological Abuse	Causing emotional distress, intimidation, or psychological harm.
Sexual Abuse	Inappropriate or non-consensual sexual conduct.
Neglect	Failure to provide adequate care, attention, or support.
Financial Exploitation	Misuse or misappropriation of an individual's financial resources.

Recognising potential signs of harm is vital to keeping people safe. While some indicators may be subtle, others are more visible.

This section outlines common signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation for both children and adults. These signs are not exhaustive, and all concerns should be taken seriously and reported.



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Specific signs of Harm in Children

Type of Harm	Specific Signs
Physical Abuse	Unexplained bruises, burns, or injuries Frequent injuries or injuries in unusual patterns Fearful or flinching response to physical contact
Emotional or Psychological Abuse	Withdrawn behaviour, depression, or anxiety Sudden changes in behaviour, mood swings, or aggression Low self-esteem or excessive need for approval
Sexual Abuse	Inappropriate knowledge or behaviour related to sexual matters Fear of a specific person or reluctance to be alone with someone Sexualised play or drawings that are developmentally inappropriate
Neglect	Poor hygiene, unwashed clothes, or persistent body odour Consistent hunger or inappropriate weight loss Frequent absence from school or lack of necessary medical care
Child Exploitation	Involvement in criminal activities, including theft or drug abuse Evidence of self-harm or suicidal ideation Frequent association with older individuals involved in exploitative behaviours
Bullying or Peer Abuse	Unexplained injuries or missing personal belongings Reluctance to attend school or social events Changes in academic performance or engagement
Online Risks	Excessive secrecy about online activities Inappropriate or explicit online content Sudden withdrawal from social interactions or online platforms
Domestic Violence Exposure	Behavioural regression or fear of specific family members Frequent disruptions to family life, including police involvement Aggressive or violent behaviour modelled at home
Exploitation by Others	Unexplained gifts, money, or possessions Involvement in criminal activities or gangs Sudden change in friendships or social circles
Educational Neglect	Persistent absenteeism or truancy Lack of necessary educational resources (e.g., books, uniforms) Regression in academic performance or developmental milestones



If you notice any of these signs, or something just doesn't feel right, it is your duty to report your concerns following the procedures outlined in this policy.

Commitments of Body Politic and Staff

At Body Politic, we are dedicated to creating a culture where all participants feel valued, respected, and safe. This commitment extends to every person we work with children, young people, and adults at risk.

All staff including freelancers, volunteers, and external visitors are expected to uphold safeguarding standards. This includes:

- Understanding the different forms of abuse and knowing the signs
- Responding calmly and appropriately to concerns or disclosures
- Reporting safeguarding issues to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay
- Maintaining accurate, confidential records in line with data protection law
- Working with parents, carers, and other professionals to ensure a holistic safeguarding approach
- Undertaking safeguarding training appropriate to their role and renewing it regularly

We believe safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and we are committed to supporting staff with the knowledge and tools they need to protect others confidently and compassionately.

Information Sharing

Effective safeguarding depends on responsible and timely information sharing.

Staff should always follow the "**Seven Golden Rules**" of information sharing:

1. **Be open and honest** explain what information you might share and why.
2. **Seek advice** if you're unsure without revealing personal details unnecessarily.



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3. **Share with consent** where possible, but understand that safety can override consent in cases of risk.
4. **Consider the individual's safety and wellbeing** as the main priority.
5. **Share the right information** that is necessary, relevant, and proportionate.
6. **Do so securely**, complying with GDPR and data protection requirements.
7. **Record your decision-making** and what information was shared, when, and with whom.

If you're ever unsure, consult the DSL. Sharing concerns in the right way ensures the right help is given at the right time.

What to Do if You Receive a Disclosure or Perceive a Safeguarding Concern?

If someone discloses abuse or you observe something concerning, your response matters greatly. Here's what to do:

Do:

- Stay calm and listen carefully without interrupting.
- Reassure the person that they've done the right thing in speaking up.
- Explain what you need to do next and who you must tell.
- Make a written record as soon as possible, using the person's own words.

Do not:

- Promise to keep the disclosure a secret.
- Ask leading questions or attempt to investigate the concern yourself.
- Delay reporting the information to the DSL.

Note: If the individual can understand the situation and consequences, it is appropriate to ask for their views. However, even if they do not consent, information must still be shared if it is necessary to protect them or others from harm.

All concerns should be passed directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy without delay.

Confidentiality

Information should be shared solely with Designated Safeguarding Leads, Social Care and/or the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) as appropriate. Personal information, such as sexual orientation or gender identification, should not be disclosed to the workforce as a whole.



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If staff and volunteers wish to discuss situations with colleagues to gain a wider perspective, this should be done on an anonymous basis with names and other identifying information relating to the child or adult and their family remaining strictly confidential. For more information, please see our *Confidentiality policy*.

Reporting concerns

The Body Politic DSL will support the member of staff making the referral to provide the following information as accurately and as completely as possible.

- Full names, dates of birth and gender of all child(ren) and adults at risk in the household;
- Home address and (where relevant) school/nursery/care provision attended;
- Identity of those with parental responsibility and any other significant adults who may be involved in caring for the individual such as grandparents;
- Names and date of birth of all household members, if available;
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of individual and parents/carers;
- Any special needs of individual or parents/carers;
- Any significant/important recent or historical events/incidents;
- Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location;
- Individual's current location and emotional and physical condition;
- Whether the individual needs immediate protection;
- Details of alleged perpetrator, if relevant;
- Referrer's relationship and knowledge of individual and family;
- Known involvement of other agencies / professionals (e.g. GP);
- Information regarding individual / parental knowledge of, and agreement to, the referral;
- The individual's views and wishes, if known.

Parents/carers must be informed about any referral unless to do so would place the individual at an increased risk of harm.



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Reporting an Immediate Concern

If you believe a child or adult is at immediate risk of harm, it is vital to act without delay.

Steps to take:

1. **Report your concern immediately** to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the most senior person available.
2. **Complete a Safeguarding Concern Form** as soon as possible, documenting the facts clearly and objectively.
3. If the risk is urgent or life-threatening (e.g. a crime is in progress), **contact emergency services** by calling **999**.
4. For urgent safeguarding concerns rated as **Level 4** under the Oxfordshire Threshold of Needs, contact the **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** directly on 0345 050 7666

You must not delay action to gather further information. The safety and welfare of the individual come first.

Reporting a Non-Immediate Concern

If you have a concern that does **not require an urgent response**, follow these steps:

1. **Consult the Oxfordshire Threshold of Needs Matrix** to help assess the level of concern:

[Threshold-of-needs.pdf](#)
2. Reporting a non immediate concern to contact your DSL for advice. If you have engaged in a conversation with a family and the family are aware you will be seeking advice from LCSS then a "named conversation" can take place.
 - **LCSS Central:** 0345 241 2705
 - **LCSS North:** 0345 241 2703
 - **LCSS South:** 0345 241 2608
3. If advised to refer the concern:



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- Use the **MASH referral form** for children

 - Or submit an **Adult Safeguarding Concern Form** for adults at risk via:
Oxfordshire Adult Safeguarding
4. Outside of office hours, contact the **Emergency Duty Team at 0800 833 408**.

Always document your concerns and any advice or decisions made.



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Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the act of reporting concerns about malpractice, misconduct, or unsafe behaviour within your organisation—particularly if it involves someone in a position of authority.

If your concern involves a manager, DSL, or another senior staff member and you feel unable to report through the usual safeguarding channels, follow these steps:

1. **Report to the Artistic Director** in the first instance.
2. If not appropriate, contact the **Chair of the Board of Trustees**.
3. If necessary, you may report directly to an external authority such as the **Charity Commission, NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline (0800 028 0285), or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**.

You will be supported throughout the process. Body Politic will not tolerate any form of retaliation against whistleblowers acting in good faith.



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Safer Recruitment

Please see our *Staff Recruitment Policy* for more information on how we ensure safe recruitment in our organisation to prevent unsuitable persons from gaining access to children and vulnerable young people.

Partnership with Parents & Carers

We will always endeavour to have excellent communication with parents and carers. Both as part of ensuring children are kept safe and in identifying any signs of abuse or neglect. Body Politic staff will strive to be open with parents/carers about their concerns; to include the family in constructive discussions about concerns and any action taken. Unless this is not in the best interests of the child or young person.

Staff Training

Body Politic will ensure that all staff have the correct training to be able to fulfil their safeguarding duties to their full potential. This includes helping staff understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and ensuring they undertake the required level of training for their role in line with Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership standards - every 3 years for Generalist L2 and Advanced Safeguarding and every 2 years for Designated Leads.

External Visitors

The term 'external visitor' is defined as anyone who is not employed by Body Politic who enters our premises on any given day. External visitors must never be left unsupervised or alone with children or young people unless these visitors have undergone the appropriate safer recruitment checks for this to be approved.

Social Media

Body Politic recognises the benefits of social media for children, young people and adults however are also aware of the risks that our service users can encounter online. Exposure to upsetting and/or inappropriate content, grooming or sharing personal information online are just some examples of these potential dangers. Sessional staff are instructed to follow Safeguarding procedures if a child, young person or adult is showing any indicators that they are experiencing exposure to any of these risks.



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Contact Details and More Information

If you have a safeguarding concern or would like advice, please contact our designated team:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Emma-Jane Greig

emj@bodypoliticdance.com | 07791 905851

Deputy Safeguarding Lead:

Nat Wong

education@bodypoliticdance.com

Trustee Safeguarding Lead:

Lucia Prentice

luciag@live.co.uk

This policy will be:

- Shared with all staff and freelancers
- Available on our website
- Reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or best practice changes

Last reviewed on: 01 September 2025

Reviewed by: Emma-Jane Greig & Lucia Prentice



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Appendix: Legal Framework

This policy is based on the principles and legal duties established in key safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- What to Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused (2015)
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2015)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991)
- Guidance from Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

This policy applies to:

- All staff and volunteers
- Freelancers and visiting practitioners
- Trustees and board members
- Anyone working in a position of trust with Body Politic