



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Effective Date: 13-07-2025

1. Purpose

This Child Protection Policy outlines how Elevations Dance will respond to concerns that a child may be suffering from, or is at risk of, abuse or harm. It supports our overarching safeguarding policy and ensures staff, volunteers, and families understand our responsibilities and procedures.

2. Our Commitment

At Elevations Dance, we are committed to:

- Protecting children from all forms of abuse
- Creating an environment where children feel safe, heard, and valued
- Taking all child protection concerns seriously and responding appropriately

- Working in partnership with children, parents/carers, and safeguarding agencies
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3. Definition of Child Abuse

Child abuse is any form of harm or mistreatment that affects a child's safety, health, or development. Abuse can be:

- **Physical** – hitting, shaking, or causing physical harm
 - **Emotional** – constant criticism, rejection, or threats
 - **Sexual** – involving a child in sexual activities
 - **Neglect** – failing to meet basic needs like food, safety, or medical care
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4. Recognising Signs of Abuse

Staff and volunteers should be alert to signs that may indicate abuse, including:

- Unexplained injuries or bruises
- Changes in behaviour or mood
- Withdrawal, anxiety, or fearfulness
- Poor hygiene or malnourishment
- Inappropriate knowledge of sexual behaviour
- Reluctance to go home or speak about home life

Note: These may not always indicate abuse, but must be treated as a cause for concern.

5. Responsibilities

All staff and volunteers must:

- ✓ Report any concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- ✓ Not investigate or ask leading questions

- ✓ Record observations and concerns factually and confidentially
 - ✓ Maintain confidentiality and share information only with those who need to know
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6. Reporting Concerns

If a child discloses abuse or a concern arises:

1. **Listen carefully** – remain calm, don't express shock or disbelief
 2. **Reassure the child** – they've done the right thing by speaking up
 3. **Do not promise confidentiality** – explain that you must tell someone who can help
 4. **Record what was said** – using the child's own words
 5. **Report immediately** to the DSL
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7. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

DSL Contact:

Name: Hayley Byrne

Phone: 07790 225385

Email: hayley@elevationsleeds.com

In the absence of the DSL, concerns should be reported to the Deputy DSL or directly to the Local Authority.

8. Responding to a Concern

The DSL will:

- Assess the situation and decide whether it meets the threshold for referral
- Contact the **Local Authority Children's Services** or the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** if the concern involves a staff member
- Inform parents/carers, unless this would put the child at further risk
- Maintain accurate, secure records of all concerns, actions, and outcomes

9. Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

If a child protection allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer:

- The DSL will contact the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** immediately
- The individual may be suspended while the matter is investigated
- The situation will be handled with confidentiality and fairness to all involved

(Refer to our *Managing Allegations About Staff Policy* for full details.)

10. Confidentiality & Record Keeping

- All child protection records are kept securely and confidentially
 - Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis in accordance with data protection and safeguarding laws
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11. Training

- All staff and volunteers receive child protection training as part of their induction
 - Training is refreshed regularly and whenever guidance changes
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12. Review

This policy is reviewed annually or following any major changes in legislation or best practice.