

# Safe Guarding Fact Sheet

## Policies and procedures:

Policies and procedures are two different things:

Your policy is your overview. It is where you set out with clarity and transparency the way your organisation works and what you as manager and others can expect from your organisation.

Your procedure is the day to day detail. How you will achieve aspects of the goals and organisational ethos outlined in your policy.

**So your policy says what you do and why and your procedures say how you will do it.**

Policy and procedure are important whether you are a large organisation eg professional college or large multi venue school or a very small independent business, Saturday morning infant classes taught by you as a sole trader with no other staff.

Even when we think we work alone we often engage with many other people, those we hire halls from, theatres we hire, organisations we choose to have in for projects or summer schools and it is important that all these people know how we work and why. You may have people who do not work for you but who choose to support you, for example parent helpers, student helpers and all of those need to know what to do in certain situations and what is expected of them.

Policy and procedures are for employees, self employed workers working with you and helpers and they are also for parents and (where age appropriate) pupils. Everyone who engages with your organisation has the right to know what how you work and how you address issues that come up in your school.

As a parent choosing school for a child to see good basic safeguarding policies in place and being followed would lead me to feel reassured that that school had given appropriate consideration to the safety of my child and others.

It is important that you have clear policy and procedure to promote accountability. If something happens in your school that you do not like and wish to challenge eg bullying / cyber-bullying or harassment of a student, poor practice from a teacher or inappropriate behaviour from a parent these issues are much easier to challenge professionally if you have clear policy and supporting procedure which states your school position on these issues.

All of your policies should join together to give a comprehensive overview of how your school works... for example you may have a health and safety policy and within that you may talk about prevention from harm for staff and students through safe working environments... prevention from harm is of course also about **safeguarding** staff and students, you keep them safe whilst they are with you. In the same way when we start to explore a safeguarding policy and consider aspects such as bullying and intimidation we need to be mindful of the cross over with our equality and diversity policy and make sure that we are applying anti discriminatory practice at all levels of our organisation, with parents and teachers as well as students.

When writing a policy it is important that we consider the law, for example a safeguarding children policy should be written to reflect an understanding of the legislation protecting children for example the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

Our supporting procedural documents should let us know how to apply these policies practically and provide details of who can support us to do this and what we should do if we come across issues or need support regarding the implementation of policy.

What policies does your school already have? What policies does it need? Do you have guidance documents and procedural statements for those working with you to help them implement policy?

### **Safeguarding Adults Guidance:**

Do you teach adults with care and support needs: remember you might not know, as adult's many of us choose not to disclose our care and support requirements. Do you need a safeguarding adult's policy for your school or studio? Do you have classes with targeted advertising to those with care and support needs, or those who are older? Do you teach in other venues such as residential or nursing homes or at particular targeted community groups? Remember you may see safeguarding concerns in other venues you work at. Would you be clear on what to do and who to contact if you did?

The law in the England that gives us information on safeguarding adults is the Care Act 2014 and the safeguarding chapter within the Care and Support Statutory guidance is chapter 14. There is a duty under the Care Act (section 42) to safeguard adults when that adult:

(a) has **needs for care and support** (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs).

(b) is **experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect**.

(c) as a result of those needs is **unable to protect himself or herself** against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

As a general rule as adults we protect ourselves however sometimes care and support needs we have may leave us in a position where we are unable to protect ourselves and need the support from others to be safe.

An example of care and support needs **could** be:

- An older person.
- A person with a physical or learning disability or a sensory impairment.
- Someone with mental health needs, including dementia or a personality disorder.
- A person with a long-term health condition.
- Someone who misuses substances or alcohol to the extent that it affects their ability to manage day-to-day living.
- A carer, providing unpaid care to a family member or friend.

This does not mean that we should assume that, for example, someone with a physically limiting illness would not be able to protect themselves but that we should be mindful that these could be contributing factors to an inability to protect themselves.

If we feel that someone is at risk or experiencing harm it could be that they are subject to:

- Physical abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self neglect

We might identify this harm through things we see; signs, symptoms and indicators of abuse and neglect for example poor hygiene, repeated unexplained injury or a sudden change in behaviour, mood or ability to socialise.

We might be made aware of harm and abuse via disclosure; that individual or another individual telling us about something that has happened to them.

Safeguarding Adults referral and the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

If we believe an adult with care and support needs is experiencing harm abuse or neglect and is unable to protect themselves we must firstly try to establish if they would like help and support.

The law in the UK says as capacitated adults we have a right to choose how we live our lives and that means we are able to choose if we would like support and what that support should look like. This means that we should **ASK** before we act. We need to get consent to make a referral.

Please remember though that there are many barriers to an individual asking for help, they may feel, confused, ashamed, embarrassed, may have strong feelings toward the person who has harmed them or may be struggling to realise that what they are experiencing is abusive. Offer reassurance and support and if in doubt seek a second opinion.

Sometimes an adult may not be able to consent to support. This may be because they don't have capacity to do so. We may start to notice that someone is unable to understand what we are saying,

that they are unable to communicate with those around them, they may not be able to remember what happened or remember aspects of the conversation they have had with us (for example due to short term memory loss) or may be unable to process and use and way the information we have discussed with them. If this is the case this may be due to an underlying impairment or disturbance in the functioning of their mind or brain. For example it could be that a brain injury, severe learning disability or dementia may leave them unable to make a decision about their safety for themselves. If this is the case **ACT**. Raise your concern with your local safeguarding adult team and seek further advice and professional support.

If you become aware of harm and abuse contact your local authority adult safeguarding team for advice or to share a concern.

If you work with individuals who you want to support, eg those who are lonely and isolated but not currently at risk consider talking to them about ways to support themselves eg contacting organisations for advice or support or encourage them to talk to their GP or local social care team

Research the phone number for your local authority adult safeguarding team. In an emergency contact the police.

Remember if you can ASK before you ACT but if in doubt make a phone call and discuss your concerns. Please remember GDPR is not a barrier to sharing safeguarding concerns with local authorities or the police.

### **Safeguarding children guidance:**

The key pieces of legislation in the UK that govern the safeguarding of children are the Children Act 1989 and 2004. The guidance document that supports these laws is called Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The safeguarding children duty in the UK applies up until someone's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (after that please see safeguarding adults guidance note).

The law makes it very clear that EVERYONE who comes into contact with children and young people whatever their roles has a duty to safeguard them.

Safeguarding children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

(Taken from Working Together, 2015)

To do this we need to be able to recognise harm:

'Harm' means ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;

'Development' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development;

'Health' means physical or mental health;

'Ill treatment' includes sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

(Section 31(9) Children Act 1989)

This means that to be able to recognise harm to children it is important to have a good understanding of child development. To recognise an impact and impairment on health or development we should be able to identify what we would reasonably expect from a similar child of a similar age.

Children can be subject to:

Physical harm

Emotional harm

Sexual harm

Neglect

Harm and abuse are not always easy to spot but you may notice signs, symptoms and indicators of harm in the form of changes in behaviour or presentation, change in mood and emotional responses, injury, change in language or topics of conversation, change in cleanliness or health.

Children may also tell you things, they may make disclosure:

If a child tells you about harm, abuse or neglect:

Be believing

Be supportive

Do not promise to keep secrets

Do not interrogate them

Do not lay blame or be judgemental.

Whether you see things that concern you or a child makes a disclosure you must:

Write down what you see or are told then

Contact your local children's social care team immediately (or the police in an emergency)

Remember children and young people are often afraid to ask for help: There are many barriers to them disclosing so sometimes what they tell us may seem a muddled or inaccurate. **It doesn't matter**, we do not need all the information or all the correct information to make a safeguarding referral, we just need to know we are worried and we can then pass it on and allow social care to work out what's happened. Never be afraid to raise a concern with only partial information, you never know what other people may know and how it may help.

Produced for the IDTA by Dance School Safeguarding Services.

[www.danceschoolsafeguardingservices.com](http://www.danceschoolsafeguardingservices.com)

[danceschoolsafeguardingservices@yahoo.com](mailto:danceschoolsafeguardingservices@yahoo.com)

Call Vicky on 07869396069

Public and private training sessions available

Specialist information just for dance teachers