**Safeguarding Children and Young People**

**Safe Working Practice Agreement**

**DANCEBITES**

Dancebites is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all its staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

It is everyone’s responsibility to ensure that students are cared for appropriately and safeguarded from all harm, and their duty of care is to promote health, safety and welfare of all members of the Dancebites community.

All adults paid or unpaid of Dancebites are in a position of trust and their conduct, therefore, governed by specific laws and guidance and the policies and procedures agreed with Samantha Lindsay.

Every child and young person who participates in Dancebites activities should be able to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in Dancebites. We recognise that child abuse can be an emotive subject. It is important to understand the feelings involved and not to allow them to interfere with judgment about any action that needs to be taken.

Dancebites recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital, in prison or in a Young Offenders’ Institution does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection.

**Dancebites will ensure that:-**

* The welfare of the child remains paramount.
* All children whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/ or sexual identity have the right to be protected from harm.
* All staff will behave in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner at all times
* Provide a good example and ‘positive role model to all students
* Treat all students fairly, never confer favour on particular children, or build ‘special relationships’ with individual children
* All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
* All staff (paid/ unpaid) working in the organisation have a responsibility to report concerns to Samantha Lindsay.

**Dancebites will report to Samantha Lindsay as soon as possible**

* Any behaviour or situation which may give rise to complaint, misunderstanding or misinterpretation against yourself.
* Any difficulties that they are experiencing, for example, coping with a child presenting particularly challenging behaviour, situations where you anticipate that you may not be sufficiently qualified, trained or experienced to deal with or handle appropriately.
* Any behaviour of another adult within Dancebites which give you cause for concern or breach of this code of conduct.

**As a representative of Dancebites you should never:-**

* Behave in a manner that could lead a reasonable person to question your conduct, intentions or suitability to care for other people’s children.
* Touch children in a manner which is or may be considered sexual, indecent, threatening, gratuitous or intimidating.
* Discriminate either favourably or unfavourably to any child.
* Give personal contact details, text, e-mail or telephone except for agreed Dancebites purposes using IT, or make arrangements to contact, communicate or meet students outside of work.
* Develop personal or sexual relationships with children.
* Push, hit kick, punch, slap, throw missiles or smack a child or threaten to do so.
* Use force as a form of punishment.
* Be sarcastic, embarrass or humiliate, make remarks or ‘jokes’ to children of a personal, racist, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise inappropriate or offensive nature. (Please note it is the perception of the person subject to a remark or action rather than your stated intention that defines ‘appropriate’ or ‘inappropriate’.
* Give or receive (other than a token) gifts.
* Allow, encourage or condone children to act in an illegal, improper or unsafe manner e.g. smoking or drinking alcohol.
* Behave in an illegal or unsafe manner, for example, exceeding the speed limit, being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, driving a vehicle which is known to be un-roadworthy or otherwise unsafe or not having appropriate insurance, using a mobile while driving, fail to use seatbelts and must drive in a safe manner at all times whilst transporting children.
* Undertake any work with children when you are not in a fit and proper physical or emotional state to do so. For example: under the influence of medication which includes drowsiness; with a medical condition which dictates you should not be caring for children; under extreme stress which is likely to impair your judgement.

**What should you do if a young person reports abuse?**

If someone discloses that they are being abused, then upon receiving this information you should

* React calmly.
* Reassure the child that they were right to tell and that they are not to blame and take what the child says seriously.
* Be careful not to be deemed as putting words into the child’s mouth, the easiest way of doing this is by asking questions.
* Do not promise confidentiality.
* Inform the child/ young person what you will do next.
* Make a full and written record of what has been said as soon as possible and do not delay in passing on the information.

The report should include

* The child’s known details including name, date of birth, address and contact numbers.
* Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
* The nature of the allegation, including dates, times, specific factors and any other relevant information.
* Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
* A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also, any indirect signs such as behavioural changes.
* Details of witnesses to the incidents.
* The child’s account if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or others injuries occurred.
* Accounts from others, including colleagues and parents.

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I …………………………., agree to abide by the Safe Working Practice Guidance applied above.

Signed …………………………………………………. Date ……………………………..

Samantha Lindsay and Dancebites thank you for your support of the arrangements made for the safety and care of young people and adults in our dance school.

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