



Child Protection Policies and Procedures

This Policy was adopted on the 05/03/2012

(Previously : Safeguarding Children)

This Policy was revised on the 07/12/2022

Date to be reviewed: 06/12/2023

TDS Dance Studios
434 Fulham Palace Road
London
SW6 6HX

www.tindlesdance.co.uk

© 2022 TDS Dance Studios. All rights reserved.

Index

Child Protection

1. Children's Rights and Entitlements

2. Safeguarding Children and Child Protection

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 S52)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Human Rights Act (1999)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976) Regulations
- Equalities Act (2006)
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance
- Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003)

Further Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised HMG 2015)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2006)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework (2006)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- Information Sharing: Practitioners' Guide (HMG 2006)

3. Looking after Children

Further guidance

- Guidance on the Education of Children and Young People in Public Care (DfEE 2000)
- Who Does What: How Social Workers and Carers can Support the Education of Looked After Children (DfES 2005)
- Supporting Looked After Learners - A Practical Guide for School Governors (DfES 2006)

4. Confidentiality and Client Access to Record

Legal framework

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998

Further guidance

- Information Sharing: Practitioners' Guide (HMG 2006)
- www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/ACB1BA35C20D4C42A1FE6F9133A7C614.pdf

5. Information Sharing

Legal framework

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998

Further guidance

- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers
- www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/116ABBC875E8FEE7BC1E03F534A1EFAA.pdf

1.6 Uncollected Child

1.7 Missing Child

1.8 Supervision of Children on Outings and Visits

1.9 Maintaining Children's Safety and Security on Premises

1.10 Making a Complaint

Safeguarding Children

1.1 Children's Rights and Entitlements

TDS Dance Studios promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home back ground.

We promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.

We promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

We help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with other children and with other adults.

We work with parents/guardians to build their understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of safeguarding all our children.

1.2 Safeguarding Children and Child Protection

This Policy complies with our Local Authorities Safeguarding Children Board Policies.

We acknowledge that all children have a right to grow in an environment that is not abusive.

We are aware that child abuse occurs to children of both sexes, at all ages and in all cultures, religion, social classes and to children with and without disabilities.

We have a responsibility to our members and to Social Care to report suspected child abuse. Procedures will be followed sensitively but absolutely.

Our loyalty in such circumstances will remain with the child.

The child or young person's safety and well-being are our main concerns. We are therefore committed to all aspects of safety, welfare and protection of children and young people. This includes:

- Having child protection procedure
- Having a rigorous staff recruitment and selection policy
- On appointing a new member of staff a DBS Disclosure will be checked or done.
- For existing staff part of their supervision will include regular appraisals, whereby staff are asked to disclose any new information since their essential DBS Disclosure.
- Ensuring correct supervision and monitoring of staff
- Maintaining an accident and incident book
- Providing appropriate training for staff in all aspects of child development and protection
- Any historical allegation will be taken as seriously as a recent allegation
- Any concerns will be reported to the Principal (Nominated Child Protection Officer)

We operate Prevention Duty by assessing the risk of children being drawn into terrorism and protect children and young people from being drawn into terrorism.

We make sure that staff have training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism.

We learn about and operate with Fundamental British Values

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs

Child Protection Procedures (CPP)

Appropriate Action in Relation to Concerns about Either a Parent or Carer of a Child

Remember:

- Maintain confidentiality on a *need to know* basis only
- Ensure the CPO follows up with Social Care
- Workers must report any concerns to the Principal
- The person reporting the concern will be asked to write down the details of their concern, it is important to write date, times, and to sign the account of the concern.
- The Principal will document the information provided by the person reporting the concern, keeping a record of all details which will be signed and dated.
- The Principal will then decide on a course of action as laid down by the Local Authorities Safeguarding Children Board

Are you concerned about the behaviour of a parent or carer?

YES

Report your concerns to the Child Protection Officer (CPO),

If the CPO is not available, report to manager/deputy or refer your concerns to Social Care or the Police immediately.

Record what the child has said, or what has been seen. Include dates and times and, if possible, send a copy to Social Care. Use CPP forms provided

Appropriate Action in Relation to Concerns About a Member of Staff or Volunteer

Are you concerned about the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer?

YES

Is it serious poor practice/an alleged breach of the code of ethics?
Could it also be child abuse?

If concerns remain, refer to the Child Protection Officer (CPO) who will inform the settings registered provider who will report to the Local Authorised Designated officer "LADO"

If your concerns apply to the CPO inform another member of staff.

Investigation

Possible Outcomes of Hearing:

No case to answer
Warrants advice/warning as to future conduct/sanctions
Further training and support needed

Possible Outcomes:

Police inquiry
Criminal proceedings
Possible civil proceedings

Appeals:

Appeals procedures should be available to anyone under investigation as part of natural justice.

Why we have Child Protection Procedures

- It is the responsibility of everyone to protect children.
- No one person ever sees the total picture.
- Children cannot protect themselves.

When the Procedures should be used

- Abuse of a child is not always as obvious as a bruise; therefore it is important to discuss any concerns be it small or large with the Principal.
- Concerns in isolation may seem trivial but others may have similar concerns.
- It is crucial therefore that concerns are reported and recorded immediately.

Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse

It is important that members of the organisation react responsibly and sensitively if a child discloses information of abuse. It is important that you read through and understand the information below to help you give the right service to a child.

If a child talks about something which indicates that abuse may have taken place:

- Listen to what the child says. Be comforting and sympathetic. Tell the child they are not to blame and ensure that the child feels as little responsibility as possible. Do not show distaste, disgust or anger. Tell the child that it was right to tell and you are pleased he/she has told you and that this should help you to make them safe. (It can be valuable to have another adult present)
- Advise the child that he/she may have to be formally interviewed later. It is important not to minimise the number of times information is repeated.

- It is particularly important not to make suggestions to the child regarding how the incident may have happened. Do not interrogate the child by expecting them to clarify what they are saying. Don't ask direct questions. E.g. who, what, where, when. Don't put words into the child's mouth by suggesting by whom. Do not stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Reassure the child but do not make promises of confidentiality which may not be feasible in the light of subsequent events. Explain early on that the information will need to be shared and what you will do next (as simply as possible).
- Write down exactly what the child says and what you have said in response. Sign and date what you have written. Make a full record of what exactly has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible using the child's own words, and what you have said in response. Sign and date what you have written. Talk as soon as possible to your nominated child representative.
- Bear in mind that if the parent/carer is said to be involved in abuse and knows that the child has told someone, then threats or other pressures may be applied to encourage the child to retract. Do not contact or confront the individual who is alleged to be responsible.

Take what the child says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what a child who has a speech disability and /or differences in languages says.

When a child wants to confide in you:

DO/DON'T

- DO** Be accessible and receptive **DON'T** jump to conclusions
- DO** Listen carefully **DON'T** try to get the child to disclose
- DO** Take it seriously **DON'T** speculate or accuse anyone
- DO** Reassure children that they are right to tell **DON'T** make promises you cannot keep
- DO** Find help quickly **DON'T** negotiate getting help
- DO** Make careful records of what was said.
- DO** Keep calm, and even if you find what they are saying difficult or painful, keep listening.

Child Protection Issues

All employees throughout the country who work with children are being encouraged to be more aware of child abuse, sexual, physical, emotional, peer on peer and FGM

Please take note of the following points:

- If you suspect abuse of any kind from marks on the body in unusual places, or from mood changes, or from any other indicators that you feel may be significant, inform our Child Protection Officer who will then be obliged to contact Social Care and/or the police immediately. It has been known for children to wrongly accuse employees of abuse. If children arrive with injuries such as broken limbs or significant cuts and bruises, it is advisable for your own protection that you complete a body map form. This is a record of any injuries witnessed by a third party. This form will help to remove doubt in a situation such as this.
- Please be cautious about touching and carrying children at any time. However it is understood that this is sometimes difficult to avoid, particularly with younger children.
- As much as possible do not allow yourself to be alone with a child, always have another assistant or another child with you, even for First Aid.

Recognising Abuse – Common Signs and Conditions

General considerations

- Identification of child abuse may be difficult. It normally requires both social and medical assessment.

- Always listen to the child – pay particular attention to any spontaneous statement. In the case of children without speech, or with limited language, pay attention to their signing or other means of expression, including behaviour and spontaneous play.
- Beware if explanation of an ‘accident’ is vague, lacking detail, is inconsistent with the injury or varies with each telling.
- Take note of inappropriate responses from parents/guardians or carers.
- Observe the child’s interaction with the parents/guardians – particularly wariness, fear or ‘frozen watchfulness’ i.e. persistent anxious regard of an adult by a baby or young child.
- Any history or patterns of unexplained injury/illness requires the most careful scrutiny.

Definitions of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse can include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns symptoms or deliberately causes ill health to a child.

Some signs that may be due to physical abuse are:

Bruises

- One of both eyes are bruised
- Grasp marks on the limbs or finger tips bruises on the chest of a small child
- Finger marks on the face (i.e. 3-4 small bruises on one side of the face and one on the other).
- Symmetrical bruising
- Bruising to the ear
- Outline bruising (i.e. belt marks, hand prints, shoe marks)
- Linear bruising
- Bruising on soft tissue with no obvious and verifiable explanation
- Different age bruising

The following are uncommon sites for accidental bruising:

Mouth, cheeks, behind the ear, neck, abdomen, chest, under the arm, back, back of legs, buttocks, genital area, rectal area, soles of feet.

Bites, Burns and Scars

- Oval or crescent shaped bites. Bites more than 3cm across will have been caused by an adult or older child
- Burns or scalds with clear outlines
- Burns of uniformed depth over a large area

Scars

Most children have scars. Notice should be taken of:

- An exceptionally large number of different age scars, or unusual shaped scars
- Small round burns which may be cigarette burns

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetration for example, rape or buggery, or non penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to act in a sexually inappropriate ways.

Some signs, which may be due to sexual abuse, are:

- Sexual transmitted diseases
- Genital warts
- Recurrent Urinary infections
- Genital and rectal itching and soreness
- Unexplained bleeding and discharges
- Bruising in genital region
- Inappropriate sexual play and / or masturbation
- Sexually explicit behaviour
- Young children with a lot of sexual knowledge

Accompanying conditions (which also occur in non-abused children)

- Sleeping and eating disturbances
- Recurrent abdominal pains
- Headaches, sleeping and appetite disorders
- Social withdrawal
- Restlessness and aimlessness
- Sexually abusive behaviour towards other children, particularly those younger and / or more vulnerable than themselves
- Poor trust and secretiveness
- Promiscuous behaviour
- Drug abuse
- Running away
- Self mutilation
- Suicide attempts
- Hysterical fits, faints etc

NB. In many cases, a sexually abused child presents no physical symptoms of abuse. The most important indicator is what the child says her / himself.

Involvement of a child by an adult in unlawful sexual activities is sexual abuse, whether this is apparently forced or apparently willing; and whether this is an abuse of position or paid or rewarded by persons known or by strangers.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Children suffering emotional abuse may show:

- Abnormally passive, lethargic, or attention seeking behaviour

- Specific habit disorders, e.g. soiling with faecal smearing, excessive drinking, self mutilation, inappropriate appetite, i.e. persistent eating of inedible substances
- Severely delayed social development; poor language and speech development attributable to actions/inactions of parent/carer
- Weight and height that is disproportionately low that cannot be explained by medical reason.

Peer on Peer Allegations

TDS Dance Studios has put in place safeguards to reduce the likelihood of peer on peer allegations. There is an established ethos of respect, friendship, courtesy and kindness with a clear, Behaviour Policy which sets out the TDS Dance Studios expectations and consequences for unacceptable behaviour together with visible staff presence. TDS Dance Studios seeks to educate all pupils on healthy relationships through the curriculum, however we recognise despite this we need to be alert to peer on peer abuse. It is important to recognise that children do engage in sexual play and experimenting, which is usually age appropriate. Child sexual abuse is a subject many people find very difficult to talk about. It is important not to criminalise behaviour that is a perfectly normal and healthy part of growing up. However, the idea that children can sexually abuse others is still very hard for us to accept. The presence of one or more of the following points in situations where there has been sexual activity between children should always trigger some concern:

- There is an age difference of two years or more between the children
- One of the children is significantly more dominant than the other
- One of the children is significantly more vulnerable than the other eg. in terms of disability, confidence, physical strength
- There has been some use of threats, bribes or coercion to secure compliance or to maintain secrecy

Any peer on peer allegation must be referred to the CPO immediately, using TDS Dance Studios child protection procedures. Where a concern regarding peer on peer abuse has been disclosed to the CPO advice and guidance will be sought from Children Social Services and where it is clear a crime has been committed or there is a risk of crime being committed the Police will be contacted.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

Indicators

- A girl may have difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- A girl may spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- A girl may have frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- There may be prolonged or repeated absences from school.
- A prolonged absence from school with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return could be an indication that a girl has recently undergone FGM.
- A girl may be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations.
- A girl may confide in a professional.
- A girl may ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- A girl may talk about pain or discomfort between her legs.

If TDS Dance Studios staff have a concern about a pupil being at risk of, or has undergone, FGM they must report this using the TDS Dance Studios Child Protection Procedures to the CPO without delay. The CPO will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where the CPO discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there will be a statutory duty to report this to the police. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

Guidelines for the Nominated Child Protection Representative

You are the person with responsibility for making sure any child protection issues are responded to properly.

You should:

- Know about signs and symptoms of abuse
- Know about how abusers (perpetrators) behave. Ask about training if you don't know these things
- Know about Local Authorities Children Board guidelines on dealing with concerns about abuse. Ask your local council's principal officer for child protection for a copy of the guidelines and about any training available from the Safeguarding Board.
- Know who to contact in Social Care so that you can either ask for advice when you are not sure what to do or refer a case without delay where there are child protection concerns
- Make sure the children and young people in our care know about the child protection policy and procedures that you are the person to speak to if they have any concerns and who to speak to if you are not there.
- Make sure staff and volunteers know how to respond if a child or young person talks to them about abuse and that they have access to guidelines.
- Provide information about help lines and other sources of help for children and young people.

Keeping a Record of Concerns

When a child protection concern arises, it is essential you record what is said or seen and what action was taken.

This record or any other written record should be kept in a locked cabinet or drawer. Access should be limited to only:

- The person who has completed the form
- The nominated child protection representative or deputy

It may be shown to the police or Social Care and could possibly be used in court, although this is rare. The young person concerned can be shown this document but discretion should be used. Their permission should be obtained before showing to the parent/guardian.

1.3 Looking after Children

TDS Dance Studios is committed to providing quality based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff are committed to doing all they can to enable 'looked after' children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Children and young people become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement.)

TDS Dance Studios recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced disruption and that a child's separation from their home and family has an impact on their emotional well-being. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled.

Our designated Child Protection Representative is the designated person for looked after children.

As with every child at TDS Dance Studios we ensure the class teacher has all the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.

The designated person and key worker will promote the effective relationships with the carers of LAC.

The designated person and key worker will liaise with other professionals and agencies when appropriate.

The designated person and key worker will aid and adhere to a care plan that incorporates the child's learning needs. This plan is to be reviewed after 2 weeks, 6 weeks and 3 months. Thereafter at 3-6 monthly intervals. It will consider:

- The child's emotional needs and how they are to be met
- How any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed
- How the child's sense of self, culture, languages and identity are to be supported
- The child's need for sociability and friendship
- The child's interests and abilities and possible learning journey
- How any special needs will be supported

The designated person and key worker will contribute to any written reports on the LAC policy.

TDS Dance Studios recognises the role of the local authority social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing changes, especially with regards to the birth parent's or foster carer's role in relation to the setting without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.

The term 'looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC.

Where a child who normally attends our setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer we will continue to offer a place for the child.

1.4 Confidentiality and Client Access to Records

Confidential information is information of some sensitivity, which is not already lawfully in the public domain or readily available from another public source, and which has been shared in a relationship where the person giving the information understood it would not be shared with others.

(Information Sharing: Practitioners Guide)

At TDS Dance Studios, staff and management can be said to have a 'confidential relationship' with families. It is our intention to respect the privacy of children their parents/guardians and carers, whilst ensuring that they access high quality care and education in our setting.

We aim to ensure that all parents/guardians and carers can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their child(ren.)

We use record keeping systems which meet legal requirements; means of storing and sharing that information take place within the framework of the Data Protection Act and the Human Right Act.

TDS Dance Studios cannot be held responsible for information shared beyond staff and management.

Client Access to Records Procedures

Parents/guardians and carers with parental responsibility may request access to any confidential records held on their child and family following the procedure below:

- A request must be made in writing to the Principal
- TDS Dance Studios will provide access within 14 working days
- The Principal prepares the file for viewing
- All third parties (anyone referred to in the records) are written to, stating that a request for disclosure has been received and asking for their permission to disclose to the person requesting it. Copies of these letters are retained on file.
- When all the consents/refusals to disclose have been received these are attached to the copy of the request letter.
- A photocopy of the complete file is taken.

- The Principal removes all information which a third party has refused consent to disclose. Where possible with a thick black marker, to score through the third party reference.
- What remains is the 'clean copy'
- The 'clean copy' is photocopied for the parents/guardians or carers who are invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be given straight over, but should be explained.
- Legal advice may be sought before sharing a file.

1.5 Information Sharing

"Practitioners need to understand their organisation's position and commitment to information sharing. They need to have confidence in the continued support of their organisation where they have used their professional judgement and shared information professionally." *Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (DCSF 2008)*

We recognise that parents/guardians have a right to know that information they share will be regarded as confidential as well as be informed about the circumstances, and reasons, when we are obliged to share information.

We are obliged to share confidential information without authorisation from the person who provided it, or to whom it relates, if it is in the public interest. This is when:

- It is to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to
- Prevent harm to a child or adult; or
- Not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.
- The decision should never be made as an individual, but with the back-up of other members of staff.

The three critical criteria are:

- Where there is evidence that the child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm.
- Where there *is reasonable cause to believe* that a child may be suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm.
- To *prevent* significant harm arising to children and young people or serious harm to adults,
- Including the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime.

Our procedure is based on the 7 golden rules for information sharing as set out in *Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (DCSF 2008)*.

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.

Our policy and procedures on information sharing provide guidance to appropriate sharing of information with external agencies.

2. Be open and honest. Explain to families how, when and why information will be shared about them and with whom. Seek consent to share information, unless it puts the child at risk or undermines a criminal investigation.

In our studios we ensure parents/guardians are aware of our information sharing policy when starting their child and that information may be shared without their consent when it is a matter of safeguarding a child or vulnerable adult.

We ensure parents/guardians are aware of our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy; and the circumstances when information will be shared with external agencies, for example, with regard to any special needs the child may have or transition to school.

3. Seek advice when there are doubts about possible significant harm to a child or others.

The Principal contacts children's Social Care for advice where they have doubts or are unsure.

4. Share with consent where appropriate. Respect the wishes of children and parents/guardians not to consent to share confidential information. However, in the interests of the child, know when it is reasonable to override their wish.

5. The Principal is conversant with this and is able to advise staff accordingly. Consider the safety and welfare of the child when making a decision about sharing information – if there are concerns regarding 'significant harm' the child's well being and safety is paramount.

In our studios we: record concerns and discuss these with the setting's *designated person* for child protection matters. Record decisions made and the reasons why information will be shared and to whom; and follow the procedures for reporting concerns and record keeping.

6. Information shared should be accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose it is being shared for, shared only with those who need to know and shared securely.

Our Child Protection procedure and Record Keeping procedure set out how and where information should be recorded and what information should be shared with another agency when making a referral.

7. Reasons for decisions to share information, or not, are recorded.

Provision for this is set out in our Record Keeping procedure

Parents/guardians have a right to be informed that their consent to share information will be sought in most cases, as well as the kinds of circumstances when their consent may not be sought, or their refusal to give consent may be overridden. We consider the following questions when we need to share:

- Is there legitimate purpose to sharing the information?
- Does the information enable the person to be identified?
- Is the information confidential?
- If the information is confidential, do you have consent to share?
- Is there a statutory duty or court order to share information?
- If consent is refused, or there are good reasons not to seek consent, is there sufficient public interest to share information?
- If the decision is to share, are you sharing the right information in the right way?
- Have you properly recorded your decision?

1.6 Uncollected Child

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session, TDS Dance Studios puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified person who is known to the child.

We will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible.

We inform parents/guardians of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

Parents/guardians of children starting at TDS Dance Studios are asked to provide the following specific information which is recorded on our Registration Form:

- Home address and telephone number
- Mobile telephone number (if applicable).
- Names, addresses, telephone numbers of adults who are authorised by the parents/guardians to collect their child from TDS Dance Studios, for example a childminder or grandparent.
- Who has parental responsibility for the child.

On occasions when parents/guardians or the persons normally authorised to collect the child are not able to collect the child, they provide us with written details of the name, address and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child.

We agree with parents/guardians how to verify the identity of the person who is to collect their child. Normally with a password.

Parents/guardians are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us so that we can begin to take back-up measures.

We provide parents/guardians with our contact telephone number.

We inform parents/guardians that we apply our child protection procedures as set out in our child protection policy in the event that their children are not collected from TDS Dance Studios by an authorised adult within half an hour after TDS Dance Studios has closed and the staff can no longer supervise the child on our premises.

If a child is not collected at the end of a session, we follow the following procedures:

- The register is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.
- If no information is available, parents/guardians /carers are contacted at home or at work.
- If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents/guardians to collect their child from TDS Dance Studios and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the Registration Form are contacted.
- All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents/guardians or nominated carers.
- The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form or in their file.
- If no-one collects the child after half an hour and there is no-one who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the procedures for uncollected children.
- We contact our local authority children's social services care team.
- The child stays at TDS Dance Studios in the care of fully-vetted workers until the child is safely collected either by the parents/guardians or by a Social Care worker.
- Social Care will aim to find the parent or relative. If they are unable to do so, the child will become looked after by the local authority.
- Under no circumstances do staff go to look for the parent, nor do they take the child home with them.

A full written report of the incident is recorded.

Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents/guardians for the additional hours worked by our staff. Parents/guardians understand that late collection of their child may result in a charge of £10 per half an hour. In an emergency they will ring TDS Dance Studios.

1.7 Missing Child

This very rarely happens but complacency is a hazard we must avoid at all costs. The welfare of the children in our care is paramount. Children may go missing and EVERY member of staff has equal responsibility in ensuring the safety of the children and knowing where they are.

Systems in Place to Minimise the Risk of Children Going Missing

Appropriate steps are taken to ensure that the premises and surrounding site is secure.

Staff are required to register the child's arrival.

It is the responsibility of every member of staff to be aware of how many children are present and a quick head count takes place at intervals during each session.

Teachers are aware of new children always take extra care to be aware of their whereabouts and ensure they know the boundaries of where they can and cannot go.

Parents/guardians are advised of our security procedures and will be given opportunity to discuss any concerns, particularly if their child has an adventurous nature.

Parents/guardians are made aware of the need of supervision of children at all times especially of their responsibility to ensure their child's arrival and departure is noted by a member of staff.

Children are always counted before going out and again when they are to come back indoors.

A member of staff will always be at the end of the line to ensure no children are left behind.

Every care is taken to ensure our children are accounted for at all times.

However, in the unlikely event that it is suspected that a child has gone missing the following procedure will be followed:

The most senior member of staff at the time will take an immediate roll call of all children.

If it is discovered that a child is unaccounted for then a full search of the building and its immediate surroundings will take place.

On no account will any other children be left unsupervised at any time.

If after a thorough search it proves unsuccessful in establishing the whereabouts of the child, the emergency services and the parent / guardian will be contacted.

On the arrival of the emergency services and the child's parent / guardian the TDS Dance Studios senior member of staff will be responsible for appraising them of all information in respect to the missing child and what action has been taken.

Once the situation has been resolved an internal investigation will take place to examine how it occurred and to put immediate measures in place to ensure it does not happen again.

1.8 Supervision of Children on Outings and Visits

As part of our curriculum the children are taken to dance events that are off the premises and permission will be sought for every child to be included in such outings.

Parents/guardians will be informed in writing of any visits or outings involving transportation (by public transport, private coach/car) of children away from TDS Dance Studios. They will be asked to sign a consent form each time such an outing takes place.

For local outings (where children and staff walk to the destination), we ask that parents/guardians give their consent for these trips by signing the relevant consent form. We will let parents/guardians /carers know in advance that their child will be attending a local trip.

A risk assessment will be carried out for each outing, and staff will follow the specific procedures outlined below:

When taking a child on such a trip, outing or special event, TDS Dance Studios will:

- Advise parents/guardians on the equipment needed for the trip i.e. coats, rucksack, packed lunch etc.
- Operate a safe staff to children ratio and ensure at least two members of staff are present.
- Provide a designated person in charge and a designated First Aider.
- In case of a child going missing the Lost/Missing Child Policy will be followed.

The staff members will:

- Ensure that the staff to children ratio is maintained at all times.
- Take a list of children (or register) with them.
- Take a first aid kit and cool pack.
- Take a mobile phone and contact numbers for staff and children.
- Take anything else that is deemed necessary for the comfort of the trip.
- Ensure all children are wearing TDS Dance Studios uniform.
- Take the register of children attending the trip before setting off, on arrival, half way through the visit, before departure, and again on arrival back at TDS Dance Studios.
- Take head counts as deemed necessary throughout the trip.
- Make provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those speaking English as an additional language ensuring that their individual needs and safety are properly met whilst on the outing e.g. by obtaining specific words in their first language, the use of pictures, photographs or signs to enhance their experiences whilst on the trip.
- Ensure any incident or accident that occurs on the outing is recorded in writing
- Inform the local Health and Safety Executive of any serious incidents or accidents.
- Follow TDS Dance Studios code of conduct and maintain the high standards of care and professionalism whilst on outings and trips.

Use of Vehicles for Outings:

When planning a trip or outing using vehicles, records of vehicles and drivers including licenses, MOT certificates and business use insurance will be checked by the Manager.

If a vehicle is used for outings the following procedure will be followed:

- Ensure that written consent has been obtained from all parents/guardians.
- Ensure vehicles fitted with seat belts, child seats, booster seats and airbags are used correctly.
- Ensure the maximum seating is not exceeded.
- All children will be accompanied by staff members.
- No child will be left in a vehicle unattended.
- Care will be taken when getting in or out of a vehicle. Where possible, the vehicle should be parked away from busy roads and children should enter and exit on the pavement side.

Procedure to be Followed for All Outings:

The staff member in charge of the outing will:

- Carry out a risk assessment of the destination in advance of the trip. Should this be a destination that is frequently visited staff will complete a risk assessment once a year but be mindful of any safety concerns on every visit, and update the risk assessment as appropriate.
- The risk assessment must be counter-signed by the senior member of staff before the outing commences.
- Assign each child to an adult who will be responsible for their safety throughout the outing.
- Ensure that the group stays together as one unit at all times. The group will normally be led by the designated person in charge.
- Plan a safe walking route to the destination using approved pedestrian crossings.
- Ensure that each adult maintains a constant vigilance whilst at the destination, in particular keeping sight of the children for whom they are responsible

Visiting Other Settings or Clubs

TDS Dance Studios encourages children's involvement with other settings and clubs.

We endeavour where possible to help parents/guardians in taking their children to and from other settings and clubs.

Any child being taken to or from another club or setting will have a signed Other Settings & Clubs Form from the parents/ guardians.

We cannot guarantee that we will be able to fulfil all requests.

1.9 Maintaining Children's Safety and Security on Premises

TDS Dance Studios maintain the highest possible security of our premises to ensure that each child is safely cared for during their time with us.

Children's Safety

We ensure all employed staff have been checked for criminal records by an enhanced DBS Check.

Staff supervise the children at all times.

Ratios are kept at all times.

The layout of the resources allow the children to move around freely.

Any equipment is checked for cleanliness and safety and any dangerous items discarded or repaired.

Children are taught to store and handle equipment safely.

Children will learn about health, safety and hygiene during planned and unplanned activities.

TDS Dance Studios carry out risk assessment to ensure children are not made vulnerable within any part of our premises, nor by any activity.

Security

There are systems in place to record and monitor the arrival and departure of children - The Register.

Unauthorised persons will not gain entry to TDS Dance Studios unless invited. When arriving to pick up their child staff will hand the child over to the adult at the door, unless they do not know who they are in which case the password will be asked for.

1.10 Making a Complaint

At TDS Dance Studios we take pride in the quality of service we offer and welcome comments and concerns that parents/guardians may have. Should a parent/guardian have a complaint or grievance about any aspect of TDS Dance Studios then they can expect to be treated in accordance with this following policy.

The Purpose of our Complaints Procedure is:

To ensure that parents/guardians /carers who wish to make a complaint know how to do so.
To state clear timescales for dealing with any complaints received.
To show parents/guardians /carers how seriously we take their complaints.
To outline the action that we will take when it receives a complaint.

Stage 1: Informal Discussion

The parent/guardian should in the first instance:

Approach their child's teacher informally to discuss their concerns. We hope that direct contact with the child's teacher will resolve the matter.

Should this prove unsatisfactory, or if the complaint is about the child's teacher, then the Principal should be contacted in writing. [See Stage 2]

At this stage the child's teacher will make a written record of any concerns or complaints and the date on which they were made. Should the matter not be resolved within 5 working days of the complaint or if the outcome is unsatisfactory then you are advised to proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Written Complaints

Should the informal approach prove unsatisfactory, parents/guardians /carers should put their complaint in writing to the Principal.

At this stage the Principal will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action. In most cases, it would be hoped that the Principal would be able to meet with the parents/guardians or carers within 5 working days to discuss the complaint and agree on a resolution.

If the Principal decides that further investigations are necessary to resolve the issue, then a reasonable timescale for the investigation to take place will be agreed with the complainant.

Once the Principal is satisfied that, as far as is practicable, all relevant facts have been established then the complainant will be informed of the outcome in writing. The Principal will give their reasons as far as is reasonably possible. Records of any concerns or complaints and of the action taken to resolve the issue, including any further investigations, will be kept.

Should the matter not be resolved within this agreed time frame or if the outcome is unsatisfactory then you are advised to proceed to Stage 3.

Stage 3: Formal Discussion Panel

If the written complaint procedure does not satisfactorily end the matter, parents/guardians are encouraged to ask for panel to hear the complaint. This panel will:

Be convened by the TDS Dance Studios Principal, within 10 working days of the request, who will make sure that all parties involved are given adequate notice.

Be made up of at least 3 people who were not directly involved in Stage 2 of the complaint process.

Include the complainant who may wish to be accompanied to the hearing.

Include one person who is independent of the management and running of TDS Dance Studios.

Provide a written summary of recommendations to all those who attended, within 5 working days of the hearing date.

Keep confidential records of every stage of this process.

Head Office

TDS Dance Studios Head Office must be informed of all complaints.