



Zest Dance – Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2025

Children and young people have the right to be safe and happy whilst participating in activities organised by Zest Dance. The company therefore takes all reasonable precautions to safeguard the welfare of the young people who work and train with us. We have a responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of all children and young people we work with and have an explicit duty to do so under Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Education Act 2002, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), and to follow principles set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024/25).

This safeguarding policy has been drawn up for the benefit of children and young people under the age of 18. It applies to all teachers, assistants, volunteers, and staff engaged by the company.

Everyone at Zest Dance has a strict duty never to subject a child to any form of harm or abuse. Failure to adhere to these procedures will be treated as gross misconduct.

Everyone at Zest Dance also has a responsibility to make the safety and welfare of children their business. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Distribution of policy:

- Distributed at induction sessions for new staff and volunteers.
- Sent to all freelance staff and volunteers when updated.
- A signed confirmation of receipt and understanding will be kept on file for all staff and volunteers.
- Made available via the Zest Dance website and to parents/carers on request.

Principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All adults at Zest Dance have a responsibility to report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Staff/volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.



Designated Safeguarding Lead:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at Zest Dance is **Frankie Young (07897 988735, frankie@zest-dance.co.uk)**.

A Deputy DSL will be appointed to cover in the DSL's absence.

The DSL receives regular training and updates, and will advise members of staff and volunteers on best practice and expectations at Zest Dance. The DSL is responsible for ensuring that all concerns are shared with the appropriate authorities.

Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Young People:**This includes:**

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of health or development.
- Ensuring safe and effective care.
- Taking action to ensure children have the best life chances.

At Zest Dance, we will:

- Provide up-to-date training for all staff.
- Share safeguarding information with children, parents/carers, staff, and volunteers.
- Ensure staff and volunteers are confident in reporting concerns to the DSL promptly.
- Share concerns with agencies who need to know, involving parents and children appropriately.
- Follow safer recruitment and selection procedures.
- Provide effective management through supervision, support, and training.
- Review safeguarding practices regularly.
- Support young people to communicate freely, fostering trust and appropriate professional relationships.
- Provide a safe and happy dance environment.

Consent and Information Sharing:

- Basic consents (including photo/filming consent and performance consent) are sought at enrolment.
- Additional consent must be sought for any activity outside the usual scope of work.
- Information sharing must comply with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Where consent is not given, referrals can still be made to Children's Social Care if necessary for safeguarding.
- Decisions to share information must be necessary, proportionate, recorded, and transparent.

Child Protection:

Child protection is part of safeguarding and refers to action taken to protect specific children at risk of significant harm.

- Abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, or multiple types (see NSPCC guidance).
- Concerns about harm must be recorded and shared with the DSL.



- No professional should assume another will share safeguarding concerns – responsibility lies with the individual.

Seeking Medical Attention:

If a child has an injury with safeguarding concerns:

- Seek urgent medical attention.
- Inform ambulance/hospital staff of safeguarding concerns.
- Report immediately to Children's Social Care.

Nothing should be allowed to delay urgent medical treatment

Protection of Children:

At Zest Dance, we will:

- Apply robust safer recruitment and vetting (references, ID checks, Enhanced DBS with barred list checks where appropriate).
- Provide safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers have current DBS checks.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure health, safety, and welfare of children.
- Foster an environment of good communication, transparency, and trust.

Safe Touch in Dance Teaching:

At Zest Dance we recognise that physical contact between staff and pupils may sometimes be necessary to:

- Demonstrate a movement or position.
- Correct posture or alignment.
- Prevent injury.
- Provide physical support in a safe lift, balance, stretch or acrobatic skill.
- Assist with changing or preparing hair/costumes etc, prior to examinations and performances.

We are committed to ensuring that all such contact is **appropriate, professional, and consensual**.

Guidelines for Safe Touch

- **Minimal and purposeful:** Touch should be limited to what is absolutely necessary for teaching or safety.
- **Consent:**
 - Pupils and parents/carers will be informed at enrolment that safe, minimal touch may be part of dance teaching.
 - Teachers should explain the reason for touch before making contact and seek the pupil's agreement where possible.



- **Respecting personal boundaries:** If a child expresses discomfort (verbally or through body language), the teacher must immediately stop and use verbal/visual correction instead.
- **Gender sensitivity:** Where possible, staff should be mindful of cultural or religious beliefs relating to touch.
- **Alternative strategies:** Teachers are encouraged to use verbal instruction, demonstration, mirrors, and imagery before considering physical correction.
- **Professional conduct:**
 - Touch should never be intrusive, secretive, or of a sexual nature.
 - Contact must not be used as a form of punishment or to manage behaviour.
 - Teachers are encouraged to verbally narrated in instances where touch is necessary.

Parental Involvement

- Parents/carers will be given clear information about our safe touch policy and may discuss any concerns with the DSL.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to reinforce to their children that they can say "no" to touch if they feel uncomfortable.

Staff Training

- All staff will receive guidance and training on appropriate use of touch in dance teaching.
- Breaches of this policy will be treated as a safeguarding concern and may be considered misconduct.

Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse:

- Stay calm, listen carefully to what is being said
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others - do not promise to keep secrets
- Allow the child to continue at his/her own pace
- Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- Record in writing what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible, note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated

Helpful statements to make

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the child says)
- Thank you for telling me
- It's not your fault

Do not say

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure that this is true?



- Why? Who? When? Where?

Never make false promises.

What to do after a child has talked to you about abuse:

1. Make notes as soon as possible. Ideally within 1 hour of being told you should write down exactly what the child has said and what you said in reply and what was happening immediately before being told (i.e. the activity being delivered). You should record the dates and times of when you made the record. All hand-written notes should be kept securely.
2. You should report your discussion with the designated person as soon as possible. If this person is implicated, you need to report to the second designated person. If both are implicated report to Social Services.
3. You should under no circumstances discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those nominated above
4. After a child has disclosed abuse the designated persons should carefully consider whether it is safe for a child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On these rare occasions, it may be necessary to take immediate action to contact Social Services to discuss putting safety measures into effect

Allegations against a member of staff/volunteer:

If any member of staff or volunteer has concerns about another member of staff or volunteer at Zest Dance such as:

- Believing they have behaved in a way that has harmed or may cause harm to a child
- Having possibly committed a criminal offence against or relating to a child
- Behaved toward a child in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children.

The allegation or concern should be reported to the DSL immediately. The DSL will then report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Whistleblowing:

- Staff raising concerns will be treated fairly and appropriately.
- If not appropriate to contact the DSL, staff may contact:
 - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
 - NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline: 0800 028 0285.
 - Ofsted Whistleblowing Line: 0300 123 3155.

Online Safety:

- Staff must not contact children directly via personal social media accounts.
- Parental consent must be obtained for online classes, recordings, or use of images/video.
- All digital materials must be stored securely and in line with GDPR.
- Online platforms used for teaching must have appropriate security settings enabled.



Policy Review and Approval:

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are significant changes in legislation, guidance, or safeguarding concerns. The review will be conducted by the DSL.

Contact Details for Local Authorities:

Warwickshire (Zest Dance Kenilworth & Stratford-upon-Avon locations)

- **Family Connect (Referral Point)**
 - **During office hours** (Mon–Thu 8:30 am–5:30 pm; Fri 8:30 am–5:00 pm): **01926 414144**
 - **Out-of-hours / emergency duty team: 01926 886922**
 - **If a child is in immediate danger: 999**

Important update (effective from 3 March 2025): Written referrals are no longer accepted—**only emergency services may submit written referrals** using the Multi-Agency Contact (MAC) form. All other professionals and individuals must make referrals by phone to Family Connect.

Worcestershire (Zest Dance Evesham Location)

- **Family Front Door** – Children’s Social Care Referral Point
 - **Tel (office hours):** 01905 822 666
 - **Emergency Duty Team (out-of-hours):** 01905 768 020
 - **If a child is in immediate danger:** call **999**.
- **Wychavon Early Help, Evesham** (Orchard Vale & Spring Vale Children’s Centre, Four Pools Lane, Evesham WR11 1BN)
 - **Contact:** Karen Green – 01386 765 467

Hampshire (Zest Dance New Milton Location)

- **Hampshire Children’s Services** – Public Contact Numbers:
 - **Main (office hours):** 0300 555 1384
 - **Out-of-hours (urgent safeguarding concerns):** 0300 555 1373
 - **Emergency (child at immediate risk): 999**

