

## Safeguarding Children, Young People & Adults at Risk Policy

### 1.1 General Policy Statement

Established in March 2009, **DanceSyndrome** is a Charity (No 1152664) and company limited by guarantee, registered in England, company number: 8402154

**DanceSyndrome's** vision is: to empower people through inclusive dance. We provide dance and dance leadership opportunities for people with learning disabilities, empowering individuals to be more active and visible citizens, whilst offering social opportunities and increasing physical health and personal well-being.

**DanceSyndrome** comprises of aspiring dance leaders with learning disabilities; and professionally trained dance artists. We co-lead inclusive dance workshops, choreograph and perform new work together, and share and pool our dance, leadership and life skills.

We aim to: increase opportunities for learning disabled people to access dance; and be inclusive and learning disabled-led.

This policy will be made available to all dancers, freelance staff and volunteers, as well as to service users, funders and stakeholders of **DanceSyndrome**.

### 1.2 Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy

**DanceSyndrome** has a duty of care to safeguard all children, young people and adults at risk, involved in its activities, from harm. Everyone has a right to protection and the specific needs of disabled and learning disabled children, young people and others who may be particularly vulnerable are taken into account. **DanceSyndrome** aims to ensure the safety and protection of all children, young people and adults at risk, involved in our activities through adherence to this policy and associated procedures. We are fully committed to this aim, which over-rides all other concerns, and all other company policies will be reviewed to complement this policy.

*We believe that:*

- The welfare of the child, young person or adult at risk is paramount;
- All children, young people and adults at risk, 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 should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;

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- Staff and volunteers should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

### **1.3 Policy Aims**

**DanceSyndrome** is committed to safeguarding all children and adults at risk that come into contact with our work. We believe that all children, young people and adults at risk have a right to protection from abuse, regardless of their age, race, religion, ability, gender, language, background or sexual identity and we consider their welfare as paramount.

The aim of this policy is to implement and promote good practice and to allow all associates, staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to any safeguarding issues that may arise.

### **1.4 Definitions:**

#### **What is 'abuse'?**

Abuse (emotional, neglect, physical or sexual) can occur within many situations including the home, the school and the arts environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them.

#### **Who is a 'child' and who is a 'young person'?**

This policy defines a child as a person aged under 18 (The Children Act 1989, 2004 and Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006). In this document, a 'young person' is in the upper age ranges of the official definition of a child. The term has no legal status – it acknowledges that people aged 16 or 17 may not think of themselves as 'children'. We also recognise that there may be additional needs associated with children and young people with disabilities, those from minority ethnic backgrounds or who are otherwise excluded from mainstream services.

#### **Who is an 'adult at risk' or 'vulnerable adult'?**

**DanceSyndrome** uses the broad definition referred to in the 1997 consultation paper *Who decides?* issued by the Lord Chancellor's department which says: *'a vulnerable adult is a person [over the age of 18] who is, or may be, in need of community care services because of mental disability or other disability, age or illness, and who is, or who may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation'*. An adult at risk may be a person who:

- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Is physically frail or has a chronic illness
- Has a mental illness or dementia
- Has a learning disability
- Is old and frail
- Misuses drugs and/or alcohol
- Has social or emotional problems

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- Exhibits challenging behaviour

A person's vulnerability will depend on their circumstances and environment, and each case must be considered individually.

### **Who does the term 'staff' refer to?**

Where this policy or the associated procedures refer to 'staff' this includes anyone engaged or employed by **DanceSyndrome** either through the payroll, on a freelance basis as a project worker, manager, dance practitioner or as a volunteer. It refers to anyone engaged in a formal capacity to ensure the delivery of activities or to deliver projects directly to children, young people and adults at risk on behalf of **DanceSyndrome**.

We enable all our staff and those who work with us to make informed and confident decisions regarding safeguarding issues and take all suspicions and allegations of abuse seriously. We expect everyone (Board, freelance staff, dancers, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of **DanceSyndrome**) to have read, understood and adhere to this policy and associated procedures.

**DanceSyndrome** will take every reasonable step to ensure that children, young people and adults at risk are protected where:

- Our own team are directly involved in a project, programme or provision of services;
- We work in partnership with another organisation or agency.

We will endeavour to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them;
- Adopting this policy and adhering to our associated procedures and code of conduct for staff;
- Ensuring safe and appropriate recruitment of everyone associated with **DanceSyndrome** and ensuring all the necessary checks are made;
- Providing effective management of freelance staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training;
- Sharing information about safeguarding, child protection and good practice with freelance staff, volunteers, carers, parents, service users and other relevant parties;
- Reviewing this policy and procedures annually and updating our action plan as appropriate.

### **1.5 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks**

The roles of all dance practitioners and volunteers are respected and valued by all. **DanceSyndrome** aims to do everything possible to minimise the risk of involving unsuitable people in our work with children, young people and adults at risk. DBS checks will be undertaken for individuals who wish to

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take part in the delivery of **DanceSyndrome** activities. These checks will be undertaken by Mayflower Disclosure Services who will administer DBS checks on behalf of **DanceSyndrome**.

All dance practitioners and active volunteers will have Enhanced Disclosures irrespective of any other work undertaken with children, young people and adults at risk. These will be renewed on a 3-yearly basis. It is highly recommended that if you hold a DBS Certificate, that you register with the DBS Update Service. This service allows you to keep your current DBS Certificate up-to-date and allows us to check the status of your certificate. The cost is £13 per year (free to volunteers). You can find out more details about this at [www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service](http://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service). You can register with the service within 14 days of receiving your certificate.

Whilst awaiting a DBS to be processed volunteers will be able to volunteer to support sessions but will not be left unsupervised with children and young people. In some instances, volunteers who do not work directly with children, young people or adults at risk may not be required to undertake a DBS check. However, **DanceSyndrome** board members and volunteers involved in handling personal data will require a basic DBS check. Volunteers who support Dance Artists will not be routinely checked as they will not be left with children or vulnerable people unsupervised.

### **1.5.1 Review of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks**

If a DBS disclosure reveals any convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings of which **DanceSyndrome** has not been informed (by the applicant) during the application process and prior to the DBS being requested, **DanceSyndrome** will refuse the applicant's involvement in any **DanceSyndrome** activity.

If **DanceSyndrome** is made aware of any convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings by the applicant prior to a DBS request, the Board will review the implication of the disclosure in line with **DanceSyndrome's** Safeguarding Policy and the charity's operations. Having a conviction, caution, reprimand or warning does not necessarily stop individuals from working with DanceSyndrome, however the Board will determine what, if any, involvement the applicant may have in **DanceSyndrome** activities. This may include additional safeguards are put in place such as individual risk assessments. The applicant will be notified of the decision within 14 days of receiving the disclosure.

Anyone wishing to disclose an issue in relation to a DBS check is invited to speak, in confidence, to Dawn Vickers, Managing Director, or a **DanceSyndrome** Trustee. A disclosure may also be submitted in writing on the DBS application form.

### **1.6 Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually and amended when necessary. It may also be reviewed should any new, relevant legislation require this.

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Date of implementation: February 2013

Date of next review: November 2020

Signed: ... *Sue Blackwell* .....

**Sue Blackwell, Acting Chair – DanceSyndrome – 01.11.2019**

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