

# VDT SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Policy written: 2015

Last reviewed: June 2023

## Introduction

The purpose of the Vincent Dance Theatre (VDT) Safeguarding Policy is to:

- serve as guidelines and best practice in protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults who take part in any VDT activities
- provide anyone employed by or working on behalf of VDT with clear guidelines and overarching principles of VDT's safeguarding practice and procedures

This policy is drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children (Performances & Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Equalities Act 2010
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- HMG: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- HMG: What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing Safeguarding Services DfE 2018

VDT recognises it has a responsibility to **promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and to keep them safe**. VDT is committed to practice in a way that protects them whilst providing them with the best possible experience and opportunities.

This policy applies to anyone employed by or working on behalf of VDT and is approved by the VDT Board of Trustees on an annual basis.

## Aims

VDT recognises that:

- the welfare of all participants is paramount
- all participants whatever their age, ethnicity, culture, disability, gender or religious beliefs have the right to protection
- everyone working with children, young people and vulnerable adults has a responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of each person in our care
- anyone employed by or working on behalf of VDT should have the appropriate safeguarding knowledge in order to carry out their responsibilities effectively
- working in partnership with children, young people, vulnerable adults their parents, careers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- the use of information technology can present challenges in terms of how we use it responsibly and, if misused, can be potentially harmful

VDT seeks to keep those in its care safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- ensuring proper recruitment and training for anyone working on behalf of VDT
- sharing policies and protocols with external contractors and associates
- sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- implementing an effective e-safety/digital policy and procedures
- ensuring all documentation and sensitive information is treated confidentially and held securely
- ensuring that the relevant consent procedures are taken for photography, filming and audio recording
- ensuring that there is sensitivity to the content of project sessions which considers the age, gender and abilities of all participants.
- ensuring at least one adult will hold the appropriate DBS check and have had references checked. If only one adult is available, then appropriate measures will be identified and action taken to mitigate against risk
- Following the necessary steps as set out in VDT & Playing On Theatre Company's [Safeguarding Questions Resource](#) when starting a new project

### **Safeguarding Code of Conduct**

Anyone employed by or working on behalf of VDT are expected to adhere to the safeguarding code of conduct, which promotes good practice, challenges inappropriate behaviour and serves to maintain professional and respectful standards of behaviour whilst representing VDT in any capacity. It is designed to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from any form of abuse and to reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations of abuse.

It is expected that anyone employed by or working on behalf of VDT report any concerns or breaches of this code of conduct to the **Safeguarding Officer**. A serious breach may result in a referral to the Police, Local Children's Safeguarding Board and the DBS.

Working with children, young people and vulnerable adults when representing VDT, it is expected that you:

- treat everyone with respect and your conduct leads by example
- avoid favouritism
- do not allow yourself to be drawn into any inappropriate or attention-seeking behaviour
- do not make derogatory gestures or remarks towards or in front of anyone
- ensure that there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people
- avoid being alone with them
- respect their right to personal privacy
- ensure they are not left unsupervised at any time
- challenge inappropriate language or behaviour
- avoid physical contact where possible, unless it is clearly set out within a physical activity
- encourage them to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- ensure contact is appropriate and in relation to the work of the project
- recognise that caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues
- choose music with lyrics and content is appropriate to the age and ability of participants
- report all allegations/ suspicions of abuse to the **VDT Safeguarding Officer** as soon as possible
- avoid jumping to conclusions

Working with children, young people and vulnerable adults when representing VDT it is expected that you must not:

- socialise with them alone outside project hours
- exchange personal contact or social media details with any participant
- offer money, or lifts home from the project
- take photographs, film footage or audio recordings on personal devices
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of participants
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- exaggerate or trivialise any abuse issues
- show suggestive images on electronic devices or engage in discussions of a sexual nature
- conduct a sexual relationship or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a participant
- take a chance when good sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach
- rely on your good name or that of the VDT to protect you
- believe 'it could never happen to me'

All physical contact must be appropriate to the activity and should never compromise the physical or emotional safety of participants. VDT recognises that as a Dance/Theatre company it makes work that necessitates physical contact between performers and the director/choreographer. In the studio the company will use *safe touch* contact and adhere to the code of conduct set out as above.

*Safe touch* physical contact is that which takes place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity. It should take place in a safe environment with the extent of the contact being made clear to the participant and parent/carer. Once agreed, *safe touch* should be undertaken with the permission of the child/young person. Contact should be relevant to their age or understanding and adults should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

- Be aware that every physical contact with a child, young person or vulnerable adult, however well- intentioned, may be misinterpreted
- Consider if physical contact is necessary. Use your skills in demonstration, clear instruction, imagery and intonation of voice to support participants to access activity and develop their technical and creative skills
- Where physical contact may be useful or necessary, ensure that permission is given, that clear explanation of the nature of the contact is given, and that an understanding or learning has occurred

- No participant should be forced into physical contact against their will. It is sometimes necessary to look at body language to check comfort and safety, and respond appropriately to meet the needs of the participant
- Any weight bearing activities should be assessed and alterations made to ensure physical safety of participants.
- Social physical contact beyond handshakes should be avoided (eg. hugging, tickling etc)

VDT will use the resource '[Safeguarding Questions for Working in the Arts](#)' (created by VDT & Playing on Theatre Company and going live online in September 2022) when conceiving any project.

The **Safeguarding Questions for Working in the Arts** has been created to allow artists, facilitators, gatekeepers, producers, programmers and arts organisations to reflect on their approach to safeguarding and wellbeing within the planning, creation and delivery stages of projects, productions and programmes.

The series of checklist questions emerged from extensive discussions between **Vincent Dance Theatre** and [Playing On Theatre Company](#) whilst reviewing the complex parameters that interplay when working with vulnerable and young participants to create work that addresses potentially triggering content.

The **Safeguarding Questions for Working in the Arts** is a series of prompts – allowing VDT to consider the real issues at play and to scrutinise the options for support and safeguarding for the **participants, creative team** and **audience members** involved in its work.

## **Safer Recruitment & Training**

Anyone employed by or working on behalf of VDT will undergo a thorough recruitment process, including application, interview and reference checks, to prove they have the necessary skills to fulfil their role.

Those who will be in charge of children, young people or vulnerable adults when undertaking VDT activity, will be additionally subjected to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) with barred lists check before they can begin work. They will also be exempt from the Rehabilitation Act 1974. DBS checks will be carried out each year or staff will be enrolled on the auto-update service. VDT understands that sometimes it is not possible to gain the required level of suitability check from partners and artists who are not resident in the UK, which means they will not be permitted to work alone with children, young people or vulnerable adults, nor have access to sensitive information (including; photos, film footage and audio recordings).

All employees or freelancers contracted by VDT will receive clear job descriptions and will be asked to abide by VDT's [Code of Conduct](#).

VDT will provide an induction at point of contract that requires that the company Safeguarding Policy and procedures are, understood and agreed to. VDT will ensure that anyone employed by or working on behalf of VDT are provided with the necessary support and supervision in their role and are offered regular Safeguarding training when required. It is expected that all staff read the updated Safeguarding Policy annually. VDT will conduct ongoing checks on staff suitability and regular supervision to include discussion of safeguarding concerns and impact.

## **Staff Roles & Responsibilities**

All VDT staff are responsible for:

- Identifying signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity and responding in a timely and appropriate way (according to this Policy & VDT's Procedures)
- Keeping up to date with Safeguarding training and attending relevant training when their certificate/s run out
- Keeping a register of all children and staff on premises or on partners' premises either on paper or digitally
- Recording all visitors, signing them in and checking their ID, not leaving them unsupervised with children, young people or vulnerable adults
- Recording/responding to absences
- Gaining travel information/consent forms from all parents/guardians/carers to ensure that children are collected by an identified responsible adult or that young people have written permission to travel solo
- Ensuring there are security measures in place to prevent unwanted access to premises
- Laying out rooms/spaces to ensure constant supervision of children, young people or vulnerable adults

## **Working with Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults**

### **External/ Host Organisation Setting**

Anyone employed by or working on behalf of VDT will be expected to ensure the following procedures are in place:

- A signed contract or letter of agreement for the provision of the sessions (which should also include provision for a support worker to provide appropriate cover as required). A copy to be held securely in the VDT HQ.
- A site risk assessment must be undertaken if the session is taking place in any new school or setting formal or otherwise and/ or no risk assessment already exists. This should be documented and appropriate action taken to mitigate against identified risks.
- There should always be at least 2 adults present if possible, both of whom must meet policy requirements for DBS and Written References. If no second/ support worker is possible, then VDT must undertake a risk assessment and ensure any action to mitigate risk is identified and carried out. It must be decided prior to engagement who will be responsible for:
  - Arranging provision of second/support worker.
  - Leading the sessions.
  - Supporting the sessions (second/support worker).
    - Designated Safeguarding Officer (it is normally expected to be the external organisation).
    - Obtaining all necessary consent forms.

### **VDT Initiated Project Setting**

The guidelines applied to working with external/ host organisation setting should be applied as appropriate. Additionally, anyone employed by or working on behalf of VDT will be expected to ensure the following procedures are in place:

- External groups must have a support worker (e.g. community group support worker or teacher) to provide support for their group.
- External group support workers are expected to obtain and confirm all necessary consent has been gathered from the participants in advance of the session, providing copies of the completed consent forms to VDT.

### **Prevent Duty**

In line with section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, VDT has due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. VDT staff will be trained to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified.

### **Risk assessment**

When working with children and young people on a project, VDT will assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them. The general risks affecting children and young people may vary from area to area, and according to their age. VDT is aware of the increased risk of online radicalisation, as terrorist organisations such as ISIL seek to radicalise young people through the use of social media and the internet.

### **Risks & Signs**

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views. VDT staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately. Even very young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others, whether in the family or outside, and display concerning behaviour. The Prevent duty does not require staff members to carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life but as with any other safeguarding risk, they must take action when they observe behaviour of concern. General safeguarding principles apply to keeping children safe from the risk of radicalisation and VDT staff members should contact the Prevent Coordinator at B&HCC if they are concerned or wish to make an online referral.

### **Prevent Coordinator, Nahida Shaikh, Partnership Community Safety Team**

t. 01273 290584; m. 07717 303292; E. [Nahida.Shaikh@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:Nahida.Shaikh@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk)



## **E-Safety/Digital Safety**

VDT recognises that children, young people or vulnerable adults that use information technology can be exposed to potentially harmful, illegal or unsuitable content, such as:

- Pornography
- Child Abuse Images
- Dangerous Advice (e.g. encouraging eating disorders, self-harm or suicide)
- Excessive violence or race-hate materials

Children, young people or vulnerable adults may also face the following online risks:

- Contact- Being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- Conduct- Being subjected to online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm
- Commerce- risks with a financial implication

Children, young people or vulnerable adults may inadvertently or be pressured into sharing personal information that may put them at risk of bullying or grooming. Whilst, some websites and games use age restrictions and checks to make sure that children don't see unsuitable content. Children must be at least 13 to register on most social networking websites, some join at a younger age and therefore can also be exposed to unsuitable content in this manner. Consequently, VDT seek to promote E-Safety by:

- appointing an **E-Safety Officer**
- implementing procedures to anyone employed by or working on behalf of VDT which provide clear directions on the appropriate use of ICT (through supervision, support and training)
- implementing an e-safety agreement for use with children, young people, vulnerable adults and their parent/ carers
- children and young people will not normally have access to the internet and will never have unsupervised access when undertaking a VDT activity
- if staff access the internet with children for the purposes of a creative project, permission is gained from parents/carers/guardians who are shown this policy
- the E-Safety Officer has overall responsibility for ensuring that children and young people are safeguarded and risk assessments in relation to online safety are completed

- supporting and encouraging the children, young people and vulnerable adults to use the opportunities offered by ICT and the internet in a way that keeps themselves safe and shows respect for others
- dealing firmly, fairly and decisively with any inappropriate ICT use, complaints or allegations
- informing parents/carers of incidents of concern as appropriate
- reviewing and updating the (physical & digital) security of our information systems regularly
- ensuring only official email accounts are utilised and that user names, logins and passwords are secure and used effectively
- ensuring that the personal information, photos, film and audio recordings of participants are not published online or digitally without permission and only for the purpose for which consent has been given
- any new online, digital or social media tools or emerging new technologies used must be risk assessed in advance before they are used by VDT

### **Mobile phone safety with staff, children and young people**

#### **Mobile phones**

- Children and young people are asked to turn off and store their personal mobile phones in their bags when taking part in VDT activity. Phones can be used to contact parents/carers/guardians with the permission of VDT staff members/s present or for a specific creative activity as directed by VDT (i.e. using their cameras to film creative activity/as a video diary during the creative process). A risk assessment will be carried out for all creative activity involving children and young people using their phones. Children are not allowed to access social networking sites when undertaking VDT activity
- When working with children and young people, all VDT staff personal mobile phones should be either turned off or on silent and not accessed during working hours. Personal mobile phones can only be used on a designated break and this must be away from the children and young people. Members of staff will not use their personal mobile phones for taking photographs of the activity, children or young people
- VDT staff may use work mobile phones specifically for work calls/texts and/or to take images of VDT activity for marketing and archival purposes (with the written consent from the children or young peoples' parents/carers/guardians- see Photography, Filming and Audio Recording section of this Policy)
- Parents and visitors are requested not to use their mobile phones whilst attending VDT activity. Visitors will be advised of a quiet space where they can use their mobile phone, where there are no children present

**Social Media**

- VDT staff are advised to manage their personal security settings to ensure that their information is only available to people they choose to share information with
- VDT staff should not accept children and parents as friends due to it being a breach of expected professional conduct
- VDT staff should avoid personal communication, including on social networking sites, with the children and parents with whom they act in a professional capacity

**Further guidance**

NSPCC and Keeping Children Safe Online: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

### **Photography, Filming and/ or Audio Recording**

- VDT uses photos, film footage and audio recording to document and promote its work. These will only be used when written consent is given by the parent/ carer of participants or by a relevant school authority. For those young people over 18 and not considered vulnerable written consent will be given directly by themselves
- VDT recognises that some participants, their parents/ carers may wish photos, film footage and audio recording appear only in documentation which is not widely distributed and do not want these to appear through social media and will make provision for this upon request to the **Safeguarding Officer**
- VDT also recognises the *Right to be Forgotten*, if at any time either the parent/carer of the child, young person or vulnerable adult wishes data used as activity, promotional and archive purposes to be removed, seven days' notice must be given to the VDT Safeguarding Officer after which the data will be removed
- VDT will take all reasonable steps to ensure that use of photos, film footage and audio recording does not put any participant at risk. VDT will not attach names of participants to any photos, film footage and audio recording unless they have written consent from their parent/carer/guardian, in which case VDT will use first names only. All photos, film footage and audio recording will be stored securely and in-line with General Data Protection Regulation 2018 and UK GDPR (See VDT's Data Collection Policy)
- Photography, Filming and/ or Audio Recording on personal devices is not permitted, doing so is a breach of confidentiality and lead to allegations of abuse. All photography, Filming and/ or Audio Recording will be carried out by professional photographers, staff photographers or film makers engaged by VDT or the participating partner organisations to do so
- **VDT Consent Form for Photography, Filming and/ or Audio Recording** is included in this policy as an appendix

## **Raising a Safeguarding Concern, Disclosure of, and Reporting Abuse**

### **Raising a Safeguarding Concern- adult**

Anybody can raise a safeguarding concern for themselves or for another person. A Safeguarding concern is when any person has a reasonable cause to believe that:

- an adult has needs for care and support and,
- may be experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect and,
- is unable to protect themselves from that abuse or neglect because of their care and support needs

If on the basis of the presenting information available, it appears that these stages are met then a safeguarding concern should always be raised with the local authority. In an emergency, the emergency services should be contacted.

Whenever there is information which indicates that an adult may be, or is, at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation, this should be shared with the local authority even when it is also shared with other agencies that may need to be advised, such as the Care Quality Commission or the police.

Where possible and safe to do so, the person contacting the local authority about a safeguarding concern would have a conversation with the adult regarding their consent, views and wishes.

The exception of this could be if the person contacting the local authority was unable to have a conversation because of concerns that it would have increased the risk for the adult.

### **Disclosure**

Disclosure is when a person shares information about abuse. Disclosures can be verbal or physical. It is sometimes the case that a disclosure occurs during more creative or emotionally engaging activities and to an adult who is less well known to the participant. Staff need to be well equipped to deal with disclosures and know the procedures necessary to support the child, young person or vulnerable adult.

Every concern must be acted upon. It is not the responsibility of the staff member or the Designated Safeguarding Officer to judge whether the information is true. Appropriate action will be taken following a consultation between the Designated Safeguarding Officer and a professional or professionals from child protection agencies. These include the police, NSPCC and Social Services.

It is imperative that anyone employed by or working on behalf of VDT knows how to respond to and report any disclosure. VDT **Disclosure Referral Flowchart** is included in this policy as an appendix.

### **Barriers to Disclosure**

A child, young person or vulnerable adult may not tell anyone that they are being abused for a number of different reasons:

- Scared/ under threat from abuser
- Believe it is their fault and they will be punished if it is discovered
- Embarrassment to disclose such personal experiences and details
- Communication or learning difficulties
- Too young or vulnerable to understand what is happening to them is abuse
- Fear of not being believed or of being ignored

The person to whom the disclosure has been made may not know who to contact or what to do with the information they hold. It may be that the allegation is against someone they know and they cannot face the consequences of becoming involved. Adults also face difficult decisions when they discover that abuse may be taking place. It can be very stressful and time consuming to become involved in allegation processes of this type. Some people fear that they may have got it wrong and don't want to cause unnecessary upheaval for the child, young person, vulnerable adult or their family.

By ensuring that anyone employed by or working on behalf of VDT have read, understood and agree to adhere to this policy, VDT hope to mitigate against this. If you witness abuse or there are signs that lead you to suspect abuse is taking place then please report it.

### **Responding to and Reporting to a Disclosure /Referral**

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult discloses to you it is important to follow these guidelines.

- Stay calm
- Actively listen, allowing the participant to speak at their own pace
- You **cannot promise** to keep the disclosure a secret
- Tell the participant what will happen next and who will need to know the information
- **Do not ask leading questions.** Only ask clarifying questions
- **Reassure** the participant that they have done the right thing by telling you
- Where possible **ensure that you are not alone** during the disclosure

- As soon as possible, **record in writing** what was said using the **participant's own words**. (Include the date, time, child/young person/vulnerable adult's name, your name and job title, location disclosure took place, what was happening immediately before the disclosure was made (the activity), any other witnesses)
- **Report the disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Officer** as soon as is possible on the **report form** (VDT Disclosure Report Form is included in this policy as an appendix)
- If the child, young person or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or that a crime has been committed, **call the police**
- **Inform parents** before a referral is made on behalf of a child or young person unless this puts the child at significant risk
- **You must not share information about the disclosure with other colleagues**, though it is recommended that you inform your line manager that a disclosure has taken place so that you can be given the support that you may need

**The Designated Safeguarding Officer will discuss concerns or report concerns to:**

- **The Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) if the allegation is against an adult:** If you believe or have evidence that a VDT staff member or freelancer, who works with children, may have caused or could cause them harm in the future, please report your concerns to: e: [LADOenquiries@Brighton-Hove.gov.uk](mailto:LADOenquiries@Brighton-Hove.gov.uk)
- **Front Door for Families (FDfF) if the concern is regarding a child or young person:** t: 01273 290400 (9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4.30pm Friday); Emergency out of hours t. 01273 335905 or 335906. You can also use the [Online Referral Form](#) to make a Child Protection Referral to the Front Door for Families
- **Prevent Concerns:** Prevent Coordinator, Nahida Shaikh, Partnership Community Safety Team, t. 01273 290584; m. 07717 303292; E. [Nahida.Shaikh@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:Nahida.Shaikh@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk)
- **FGM:** By calling 101, [online](#), or in person at [local police station](#)
- **County Lines:** In an emergency phone 999 and ask for the police. If it is not an emergency you can contact the police by phoning 101. You can also report online at [www.sussex.police.uk](http://www.sussex.police.uk).
- **You may also get in touch with the Social Services, NSPCC or Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) who will take the recommended action**

If you have concerns about a participant, other staff member or volunteer, please discuss your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer at VDT or the participating partner organisation.

## **Consent**

Children should be given the opportunity to decide whether they agree to their personal information being shared. If a child doesn't have the capacity to make their own decisions ask their parent or carer (unless doing so would put the child at risk from harm).

You should always seek consent to share information about an adult. The exception to this could be if the person contacting the local authority was unable to have a conversation because of concerns that it would have increased the risk for the adult.

There are some situations where you would need to break someone's confidence and pass on information:

- If the person intends to harm themselves
- If the person is at risk of causing harm to others
- If there is an indication that a serious crime has been or is about to be committed
- If you receive information about abuse

Ensure you inform them that you must pass on this information.

If consent is refused or if you're unable to seek consent, you can still share information with relevant professionals if this is in the public interest.

This includes protecting children from significant harm and promoting the welfare of children. The legal principle is that the "welfare of the child is paramount". The right of a child, young person or vulnerable adult to protection takes precedence over their right to confidentiality. The Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) do not affect this principle.

When deciding whether to share information without consent, you should consider each case individually.

- Decide if the need to share information is in the public interest and whether it outweighs the need to maintain confidentiality
- Consider all the implications of sharing the information, for example if you are sharing sensitive details about a person's life. If you're sharing information without consent keep a written record

## **Storing Data & Retention**

VDT is registered with the ICO hold data digitally, VDT's registration number is: ZA291587. VDT works within the General Data Protection Regulation 2018, meaning that:



- All Safeguarding concerns and disclosures should be written down using VDT's templates provided
- Names of children, young people, vulnerable adults or staff members about whom there are concerns or who have breached the code of conduct should not be shared with other staff members aside from the Designated Safeguarding Officer
- records containing personal information should be: dated, adequate, relevant and not excessive for the purpose(s) for which they are held, labelled clearly, accurate and up to date, signed and only kept for as long as is necessary
- All paper records will be scanned and stored in a confidential folder (with limited access to designated people) on VDT's SharePoint system and the physical copies shredded and destroyed
- Information about child protection concerns and referrals should be kept in a separate child protection file for each child
- Retention period: child protection records should be kept until the child is 25 (this is seven years after they reach the school leaving age)

If in doubt, follow the NSPCC Child protection records retention and storage guidelines: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1442/child-protection-records-retention-and-storage-guidelines.pdf>

## **Safeguarding Staff & Contacts**

### **Designated Safeguarding Officer/Lead:**

Charlotte Vincent- AD / CE | e: [charlotte@vincentdt.com](mailto:charlotte@vincentdt.com) | t: 01273 911 616 m: 07562 653120

- Leads on child protection and safeguarding relating to VDT activity
- Responsible for liaison with local statutory children's services and with the [BHSCP](#)
- Provides support, advice, and guidance to any staff on an ongoing basis and on any specific safeguarding issues as required

**Dates of training:** Level 2: Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults- 30 March 2021 (valid until 30 March 2024)

### **Deputy Safeguarding Officer** (Leads in the absence of the Safeguarding Officer).

Sian Williams, Participation & Digital Development Director | e: [sian@vincentdt.com](mailto:sian@vincentdt.com) | t: 01273 911 616

**Dates of training:** Level 2: Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults- 30 March 2021 (valid until 30 March 2024)

### **Board Safeguarding Lead** (Board Oversight of VDT Safeguarding Policies & Issues)

Tasneem Bhopalwala | e: [admin@vincentdt.com](mailto:admin@vincentdt.com) | t: 01273 911 616

**E-Safety/Digital Safety Officer**

Sian Williams, Participation & Digital Development Director | e: [sian@vincentdt.com](mailto:sian@vincentdt.com) | t: 01273 911 616

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

e: [LADOnquiries@Brighton-Hove.gov.uk](mailto:LADOnquiries@Brighton-Hove.gov.uk)

**Front Door for Families (FDfF)**

t: 01273 290400 (9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4.30pm Friday); Emergency out of hours t. 01273 335905 or 335906

**Police**

t. 01273 665502 or 0845 6070999 or 101

**Prevent Coordinator, Nahida Shaikh, Partnership Community Safety Team**

t. 01273 290584; m. 07717 303292; E. [Nahida.Shaikh@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:Nahida.Shaikh@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk)

**NSPCC Whistleblowing** - 0800 028 0285

**Public concern at work** - 020 3117 2520

## **Appendix 1: Definitions**

**Child:** The legal definition of a child is a person up until their 18th birthday.

**Young Person:** Not a legal term, widely used to include older children and those into their early 20's.

**Vulnerable Adult:** Person 18 years or over, who is deemed to require extra support with care, access or learning.

**Child Protection:** Protecting children from abuse and neglect through adhering to legislation.

**Safeguarding:** Recognised as the wider practice of supporting the needs of children, young people and vulnerable adults which also includes preventing impairment to health or development and where their welfare is actively promoted.

## **Appendix 2: Types of Abuse & Recognising Abuse**

It can take a great deal of courage for a child to talk to an adult about what is happening and it can sometimes be hard for an adult to listen or recognise what is going on. It is vital that everyone who works with children, young people or vulnerable adults is equipped to recognise signs of abuse at the earliest opportunity so that harm can be stopped and damage can start to be repaired. Even experienced child protection professionals do not always find it easy to recognise signs of abuse but it is important for you to have an understanding about some of the signs to look out for when you are concerned about a child.

Any child can be targeted by those seeking to harm or abuse, but children who are most at risk include those who: have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), show signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour, have challenging family circumstances, such as substance misuse, domestic violence or mental health problems, have been previously abused or neglected, feel isolated, have few friends or don't 'fit in', identify as or are perceived as LGBTQ+, have behavioural or mental health issues, are going missing from education.

**Physical Abuse:** This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness.

**Recognising Physical Abuse:** Most children get cuts and bruises during their day-to-day activities, which makes it hard to spot when these may not be accidental.

- injuries which a child cannot explain, or explains unconvincingly.
- injuries which have not been treated or treated inadequately.
- injuries on parts of the body where accidental injury is unlikely (e.g. cheeks, chest or thighs).
- bruising which reflects hand or finger marks.
- cigarette burns or human bite marks.
- broken bones (particularly in children under the age of two).
- scalds, especially those with upward splash marks where hot water has been deliberately thrown over the child, or "tide marks" – rings on the child's arms, legs or body where they have been made to sit or stand in very hot water.
- reluctance to have their parents/carers contacted.
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
- running away or showing fear of going home.
- flinching when approached or touched.

- reluctance to get undressed for activities where changing into other clothes is normal.
- covering arms and legs when this is not usually done.
- depression or moods which are out of character with the child's general behaviour.
- unnatural compliance with parents or carers.

**Emotional Abuse:** The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, young person or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects to their emotional development. It may involve:

- conveying they are worthless or unloved
- conveying they are inadequate or valued only when they meet the needs of another person.
- developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed.
- preventing normal social interaction.
- witnessing the mistreatment of others.
- serious bullying.
- exploitation or corruption.

**Recognising Emotional Abuse:** This is also hard to identify with certainty. Some children are by nature shy but this does not mean they are being abused. Experiencing physical or sexual abuse will mean it is likely there are elements of emotional abuse present.

- a failure to grow or thrive (particularly if the child thrives when away from home)
- sudden speech disorders
- delayed development, either physical or emotional
- compulsive nervous behaviour such as hair twisting or rocking
- an unwillingness or inability to play
- an excessive fear of making mistakes
- self-harm or mutilation
- reluctance to have parents/carers contacted
- an excessively high regard or level of admiration towards others, especially adults
- an excessive lack of confidence
- an excessive need for approval, attention and affection, an inability to cope with praise

**Bullying:** The majority of calls to helplines by children, relate to bullying. Bullying can result in the child, young person or vulnerable adult feeling isolation, loneliness, worthlessness, self-loathing and can lead to suicide attempts.

**Recognising Bullying:** Bullying may be present in the form of physical, mental or verbal abuse.

**Sexual Abuse:** Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children, young people or vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Recognising Sexual Abuse:** Both boys and girls can be victims of sexual abuse, it can happen at any age and it can happen to any child (including those with disabilities). Several factors make it difficult to identify including the fact it is likely to happen in private and abusers may go to great lengths to prevent discovery.

- pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in the genital or anal areas.
- stomach pains or discomfort when the child is walking or sitting down.
- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour.
- apparent fear of someone.
- self-harm, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide.
- abuse of drugs or other substances.
- eating problems such as anorexia or bulimia.
- sexualised behaviour or knowledge in young children.
- sexual drawings or language.
- possession of unexplained amounts of money.
- taking a parental role at home and functioning beyond their age level.
- not being allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence).
- alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal.
- reluctance to get undressed for activities where changing into other clothes is normal.

**Neglect:** Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child, young person or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/ or psychological needs, like to result in the serious impairment of their 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, clothing and/ or shelter. It can also include:

- 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
- failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

**Recognising Neglect:** This is a very difficult form of abuse to recognise and is sometimes seen as less serious than other forms, but its effects can be very damaging.

- being constantly hungry and sometimes stealing food from others.
- being in an unkempt state, frequently dirty or smelly.
- loss of weight or being constantly underweight.
- being dressed inappropriately for the weather conditions.
- untreated medical conditions – not being taken for medical treatment for illnesses or injuries.
- being tired all the time.
- frequently missing school or being late.
- having few friends.
- being left alone or unsupervised on a regular basis.
- compulsive stealing or scavenging of food.

**Abuse of Trust:** Adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults have a duty to not to abuse their positions and should behave responsibly and professionally towards the children and young people in their care. If an older person is in a position of authority, influence or trust, it is inappropriate for them to become involved in a sexual relationship with a young person under the age of 18, even if they are both over the age of consent.

**Mate Crime:** Mate crime is a type of hate crime where perpetrators befriend a person with a disability but in fact soon begin to exploit, hurt or harm them. This can include sexual abuse, forced prostitution, financial exploitation, physical abuse, violence and even murder.

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):** CSE is where an individual or group takes advantage of a power imbalance to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person into sexual activity. Children who are exploited may receive gifts, money or affection in 'payment' for participating in sexual activities. They may be tricked into thinking that they are in a loving relationship and that everything is consensual. It's important to remember that 16 and 17-year-olds can still be victims of child sexual exploitation even though they can legally consent to sexual activity. CSE is a hidden crime. This is because children who are exploited often trust their abuser, believe they are in a relationship with them, are fearful or embarrassed, or don't know that they're being abused.

**Signs of CSE:** Hanging out with groups of older people and gangs, having older romantic partners, being intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations, being involved in petty crime such as shoplifting, displaying change in physical appearance such as weight loss, going missing from home, care or education, showing changes in behaviour or attitude.

**Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE):** County Lines: CCE is a geographically widespread form of abuse that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity. This is where drug networks or gangs groom and exploit young people to carry drugs, guns, money and other items that are used in criminal activity. CCE can involve anyone under the age of 18. However, children under 10 are often targeted due to being under the age of criminal responsibility. The child may be forced and/or enticed into taking part in the activity, and often the gangs use violence or threats against the child, their family or friends to make them take part.

**Signs of CCE:** Hanging out with groups of older people and gangs, having been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. Knife crime), is involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, or handing over and collecting money for drugs, is found in accommodation that they have no connection with, going missing from home, care or education, shows signs of substance misuse.

**Female genital mutilation (FGM):** Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is also known as female circumcision or cutting. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse. It is dangerous and a criminal offence. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It does not enhance fertility and it does not make childbirth safer. It is used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

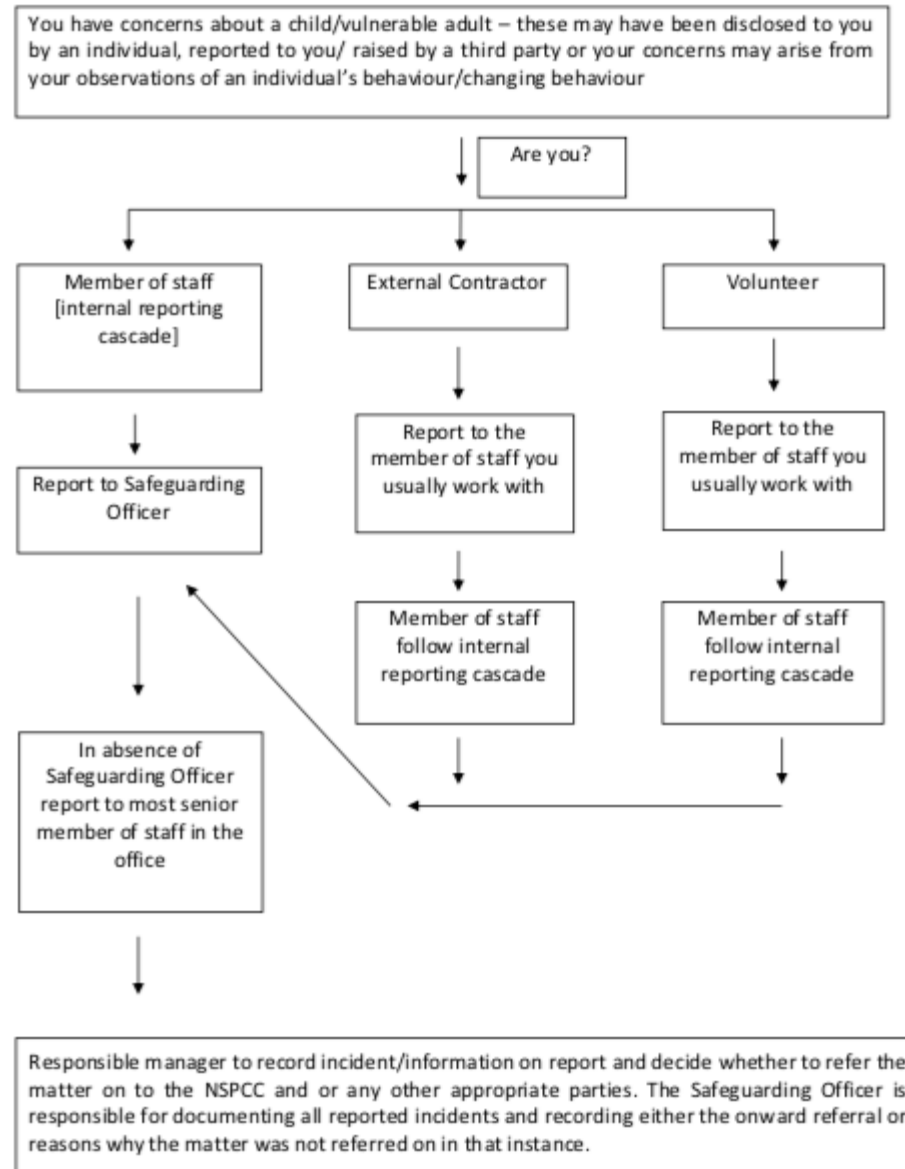
**Signs of FGM:** A long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family, relative or cutter visiting from abroad, a special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage, a female relative being cut, having difficulty walking, standing or sitting, spending longer in the bathroom or toilet, appearing withdrawn, anxious or depressed, have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college, being particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations, asking for help but may not be explicit about the problem due to



embarrassment or fear. All staff working with children, young people and vulnerable adults will receive training on FGM and have a duty to inform if they become aware of or spot the signs of FGM

If a girl appears to have been recently cut or you believe she is at imminent risk, act immediately – this may include phoning 999.

### Appendix 3: Disclosure Referral Flowchart



#### **Appendix 4: Consent Form for Photography, Filming and/ or Audio Recording**

Vincent Dance Theatre (VDT) would like to take photographs, film and/ or audio recordings of the workshop/ event that you and/ or your child is taking part in. We will only use the photographs, film and/ or audio recordings if we have permission to do so.

VDT recognises the need to ensure the welfare and safety of all young people involved in its activities and will follow the guidance for the taking and use of photographs, film and/ or audio recordings as set out in the VDT Safeguarding Policy (available on our website [www.vincentdt.com](http://www.vincentdt.com)). The recordings may be used:

- for creative purposes in the generation of material for VDT productions, either in their original form or otherwise altered (e.g. audio may form part of a soundtrack for a live or filmed work).
- for activity reporting, promotional and archive purposes on VDT, partner and associates website.
- for activity reporting, promotional and archive purposes on VDT, partner and associates web channels and social media (including brochures & newsletters).

VDT has final usage rights.

VDT will take all available precautions to ensure recorded materials are used solely for the purposes they are intended. If you become aware of any inappropriate use you should inform the VDT Safeguarding Officer immediately. If at any time the parent/carer/guardian of the young person wishes data used as activity, promotional and archive purposes to be removed, seven days' notice must be given to the VDT Safeguarding Officer after which the data will be removed. All data collected in the EU and EEA, and utilised in the UK will comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and the UK GDPR.

This form should be signed by the parent/carer/guardian of a child or young person under the age of 18, together with the child or young person if applicable; doing so provides permission for the photographs, film and/ or audio recordings of the child/ young person to be used by VDT as outlined above. Please note that you will have to fill in a separate form for each child.

**Consent Form for Photography, Filming and/ or Audio Recording 2019 Participant Consent.**

Event Title:

Name of Participant:

I, the above named participant, consent to Vincent Dance Theatre photographing, filming and/ or audio recording my involvement in its activities under the stated conditions.

Signed:

Date:

**Parent/ Carer Consent (if participant under 18).**

Name of Parent/ Carer: Name of Participant:

I, the above named parent/ carer, consent to Vincent Dance Theatre photographing, filming and/ or audio recording the involvement of the named participant in its activities under the stated conditions. I confirm that I am legally entitled to give this consent. I also confirm that the named participant is not under a court order.

Signed:

Date:

***Please sign and return the bottom half of this consent form to VDT workshop/ event leader and retain the top half for your information.***