



Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at Risk

Date approved by Directors	5 August 2026
Date for next review	1 August 2027

I. Our Commitment to Safety

Legato Dance is an independent ballet school rooted in the Tooting community. We teach children from age 3 up to adults of any age. We are deeply committed in our values and in our actions to protecting anyone from harm of any kind. We will always aim to be a safe space for all of our students, creating an environment and culture that gives people agency and confidence. The following policy explains everything that we do to keep our dance school safe. It is intended to inform teachers and parents alike, and anyone else who wants to understand our approach to safeguarding.

II. Roles and Responsibilities

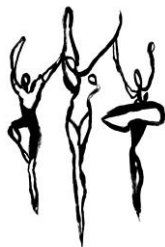
It is everyone's responsibility to keep children and adults at risk safe. None the less, we recognise the increased responsibility of our school whenever we are engaging with students. Our dance school is made up of the following key roles and each of these roles has their own responsibilities:

The Principal: The Principal is responsible for the day-to-day running of the school, engaging with all customers, deciding the curriculum and classes offered by the school, managing all teachers and assistants, and in ensuring that the school provides safe and quality classes. The Principal also teaches a significant number of classes.

The current principal is Nina who can be contacted via the following email:
hello@legatodance.co.uk

Designated Safeguarding Lead: The DSL is responsible for ensuring that the safeguarding policy is kept up to date, that it is implemented and is a point of contact for any concerns.

The current principal is William who can be contacted via the following email:
admin@legatodance.co.uk



Teachers: Teachers bear responsibility for safeguarding during classes, implementing best practise and responding to any concerns that emerge within the class.

Assistants: Assistants will follow best practise and will support the Teacher to run the safest possible classes.

If you any safeguarding concerns about Legato Dance, please contact the Principal or Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

If you do not feel comfortable contacting Legato Dance directly, there are many external organisations you can contact to discuss your concerns, including the Local Authority:

If you have concerns about a child/ young person, you can contact the Wandsworth Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub at 020 8871 6622 or via mash@wandsworth.gov.uk

If you want advise on any subject related to safeguarding, you can call the NSPCC free helpline at 0808 800 5000 or learn more via their [website](#)

Remember if you have concerns about the welfare of a child or adult at risk you should always act. If a child or adult at risk is believed to be in immediate danger, contact the Police (999)

III. Safe Staff

A vital part of Legato Dance being a safe school is ensuring that our staff are recruited carefully, that they are trained, and that there are clear expectations about behaviour. The following measures help us to achieve this:

The Principal will carefully consider the skills, attitudes, and appropriateness of appointing any teacher or assistant.

All staff, including the Principal, are required to hold an up-to-date DBS check with Legato Dance. This is a background check on to see if a person holds a criminal record or if they have been barred from working with children. Where cover assistants are bought in for sessional work, the Principal will request to see an up-to-date DBS certificate.



Under relevant legislation, our teachers and assistants who are working children are carrying out a regulated activity. This means that they are eligible for Enhanced DBS Checks with a children's barred list check. These are the checks will carry out for the Principal, staff, and assistants.

All staff and assistants will receive regular safeguarding updates. If additional training needs are identified, these will be made available to staff.

All staff must read and be familiar with this policy and sign the acknowledgement form at the end.

In terms of behaviour, our staff will follow these key principles of conduct:

- Staff will encourage all students to be honest and to share any concerns
- Staff will be supportive of all students, giving them a space to be confident
- Staff will stay informed about abuse and will be attentive to any signs of harm among students
- Staff will act on any concerns they have and report any abuse they become aware of.
- Staff must not contact children personally, via text, WhatsApp, social media or any other platform. The exception to this rule is when a parent gives consent for a child to be contacted. This must only be done via Whatsapp, during standard work hours and for legitimate purposes, such as travel delays.
- Staff must not give gifts to students or have favourites
- Staff must not use any derogatory or humiliating language or gestures towards any student
- Staff must not ignore or encourage others to ignore any signs of harm

Any abusive behaviour by staff within Legato Dance will not be tolerated and will be acted upon immediately. Abuse is a crime and will be treated as such.

IV. Safe Environments



To ensure a safe environment at all our classes we have considered the possible risks and will ensure the following practises are followed:

- We will ensure that there are the appropriate number of adults present to keep classes with children safe. For classes with under 8s, a teacher and an assistant will be present (in line with safety ratios) and there will not be more than 12 students in any class.
- We will make sure students are arriving and leaving safely. Children must be dropped off and collected by the parent or carer known to the School or prior notice must be given to the School of who will be doing this. For older students and where appropriate, it can be agreed in writing between the parent and the Principal that the students will arrive and leave from class by themselves.
- We will make sure to keep clear records of attendance. Registers will be taken for each class and we will ensure that all students remain under adult supervision at all times. In the event of a fire alarm, the register will be used to make sure all students are safe.
- We will consider how the spaces we rent are monitored. All sites we use have their own safeguarding policies. No one will be permitted to enter classes other than staff and students, except when parents are invited to do so such as at the end of classes.
- We will always consider the particular needs of children or adults with additional needs. For younger children, where toilet trips need adults support, this will be provided by a teacher or assistant. All staff have enhanced DBS checks and are trained in safeguarding.
- We have considered how physical contact is used in our education. Dance education sometimes involves appropriate physical touch. This must always be with the consent of the pupil and only used where necessary. We have developed a specific policy for this which you can find on the website.



- We will monitor student interactions to identify any concerning behaviour. We have developed an Anti-Bullying policy which you can find on the website or which you can request.
- We will always ensure students privacy. Photography or use of phones is not permitted within class, except by teachers with the explicit prior permission of students or their parents. You can find our privacy notice on the website or request it for further details on how personal data is managed.

V. Responding to Concerns or Allegations

This policy so far has described all the actions we have taken to prevent abuse from occurring. In the circumstances that any abuse should occur within Legato Dance, we also have clear steps in place to protect victims and to ensure that further harm is prevented. If we have any concerns about harm occurring to students outside of our School, we will also act on these.

Concerns, incidents, or disclosures of abuse may emerge in a range of different ways:

- A Legato Dance staff member may notice possible signs of abuse that concern them
- Any child or adult (at risk or not) may disclose a current or historic incident in which they or another person was abused
- A child or adult at risk may disclose that they have been abused by a staff member of Legato Dance
- A Legato Dance staff member may be concerned about the behaviour of one of their colleagues

It should be noted that often signs of abuse are not explicit and people who have experienced abuse, whether a child or adult, may find it very hard to communicate about it. They might feel ashamed, blame themselves, not have the language to describe what has happened, or be worried about what will happen if they say something. That is why throughout our work at Legato Dance, we want to create safe spaces and give students confidence. If dancing in a positive environment with well trained teachers gives someone the confidence and sense of safety to talk about what is happening (or has happened) to them, then our School is fulfilling its values.

If someone does disclose abuse to a member of staff at Legato Dance, the following principles must guide how we listen:



- Give a person your full attention, including your body language
- Be open, reassuring, and compassionate
- Ask open questions if you don't understand something
- Reflect back what you have heard to ensure you have understood
- Encourage the person that they are brave and that they have done the right thing
- Explain gently what steps you will need to take

The following actions must be avoided:

- Do not ask leading or intrusive questions
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Do not minimise what you are hearing
- Do not make the person feel embarrassed or ashamed

If someone has disclosed abuse to you or you have any concerns, there are clear and timely steps that need to be taken. These are detailed below.

If an employee of Legato Dance receives a disclosure or is concerned about the welfare of a child or adult at risk they must report this in the first instance to the Principal or to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) within 24 hours (roles and contact details are in an earlier section of this policy).

If a child or adult is considered to be at immediate risk of harm, the matter should be referred directly to the Police straight away and the Principal/ DSL must be notified at the earliest opportunity.

If there is no immediate risk, the Principal/ DSL should be informed within 24 hours. They will determine and document next steps, which may include a referral to the Police, Social Services, or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

If a situation is unclear and it is not certain whether abuse is occurring or not, a report must still be made to the DSL/ Principal. They will carefully consider the situation and seek external advice if necessary.

The DSL will usually seek consent from parents/carers to make a referral to the relevant Statutory Authorities (Police/ Social Services). However, no consent is required if to involve the parents would compromise the safety of the child. Information will be shared with families, unless to do so would compromise a child's safety as directed by Statutory Authorities.



If a concern or allegation relates to an employee of Legato Dance, the person in question should not be told about this concern until such an approach is advised and agreed upon by the Police/ Social Services/ the LADO. In liaison with these services, any accused employee must be temporarily suspended from any further contact with children or adults at risk following a concern or allegation pending the outcome of any investigation. Such a suspension is a neutral act and does not in itself imply guilt.

It is not the role of Legato Dance, its staff, Principal or DSL, to investigate cases of abuse. Rather the priority is to document concerns quickly, to report internally, and to report externally to the statutory authorities where needed.

As Legato Dance runs in Tooting, we fall under Wandsworth Council. Any concerns about employees of Legato Dance would involve the Local Authority Designated Officer. More information about this role can be found here, including how to make a report: <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children-and-families/lado/>

If a concern or allegation relates to the Principal or DSL themselves, it is advised to go directly to the Police or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or to seek advice from an independent organisation such as the NSPCC.

A record of all concerns and actions as detailed in this section must be made in writing and provided to the DSL within 24 hours (Reporting Template in Appendix I.) The DSL will keep a clear record of all actions and decisions. A report must also be made to the DSL of the rented site in which any concerns or allegation emerged. This will be done by the DSL or Principal.

VI. Relevant Laws

The Children Act (1989) sets out the key legislative framework for protecting children. This has in turn been strengthened by the Children Act (2004) and the Children and Social Work Act (2017). Updated statutory guidance on [*Working Together to Safeguard Children*](#) was published by the Department for Education in 2026.

Within the Sexual Offences Act (2003), it is ***illegal for anyone in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with anyone under 18*** who is in their care, regardless of the age of consent. Under changes introduced in 2022, this law would extend to employees of Legato Dance.



In the Crime and Policing Act (2026) was introduced that makes it a ***law for anyone working in regulated activity to report knowledge of child sexual abuse***. This law is relevant to Legato Dance staff, as they carry out a regulated activity. A report is required if a teacher or assistant is told about child sexual abuse, either by a child or an adult involved; witnesses child sexual abuse in person; sees or hears it in the form of images, videos or audio recordings. The Act sets out specific conditions where exemptions apply, including in relation to certain consensual activities between children and specified services where confidentiality is necessary for the safety and wellbeing of children. If an individual does not carry out the duty, they may be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service, who will assess their suitability to work or volunteer with children in the future. Anyone who prevents or attempts to deter someone else from reporting will face criminal charges.

Key legislation relating to adult at risks is set out in the Care Act (2014). An adult at risk is someone who has care and support needs that is consequently unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect. This may be because of a variety of reasons such as dementia, learning disabilities, or mental ill-health.

VII. Key Definitions and Types of Abuse

Throughout this policy, whenever we talk about children we mean anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Their rights are protected by law internationally and within the UK.

An adult at risk is someone who has care and support needs that is consequently unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect. This may be because of a variety of reasons such as learning disabilities or mental ill-health.

Sadly, there are many forms of abuse that are perpetrated against children and adults at risk. All abuse can cause life-long, and devastating effects for its victims. That is why it is so important for organisations to be aware of what abuse is, and what can be done to prevent it.

Abuse can be perpetrated by family, friends, peers, employees, volunteers, by strangers, and online. It is hard to think about but it is more common than we want to imagine. That is why it is important to be aware of the different types of abuse. The following outlines some key information about signs of abuse- this is not exhaustive:



Physical Abuse: where a child or adult at risk is deliberately hurt. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or suffocating. The signs of such abuse may include excessive bruising, marks in unexpected areas, and unexplained injuries.

Sexual Abuse: where a child or adult at risk is forced or enticed to take part in sexual activities. This can include contact and non-contact abuse. Abusers will often groom their victims, and the victim may not be aware of what is happening to them. The signs of such abuse may include physical signs, or changes in a person's mood or behaviour. They may want to avoid spending time with specific people or may show sexual behaviour that is inappropriate for their age.

Emotional Abuse: where a child or adult at risk is humiliated, mocked, ignored, scapegoated, controlled, isolated, etc. There are not always obvious signs of this type of abuse, but changes in behaviour or emotion may be noticeable. Such abuse can take place in its own right or accompany other forms of abuse.

Neglect: where a child or adult at risk's basic needs are not being met, resulting in serious damage to their health and development. This can include a lack of food, clothing, hygiene, or healthcare. Ongoing signs of hunger, lack of hygiene, or unattended injuries are signs of neglect. Neglect can include acts of omission and self-neglect.

Other types of abuse include, **Financial Abuse, Discrimination, Online Abuse, Spiritual Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation**, where young people are tricked or coerced into sexual activity; **Harmful sexual behaviour**, where inappropriate sexual behaviour takes places between children; **Domestic abuse**, where a domestic abuse situation effects a child or adult at risk; **Bullying, Child Trafficking**, and **Female Genital Mutilation**.

There are lots of sources of information online where you can learn more about the types of abuse and the signs to look out for. See for example:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>

<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse>