

# YORKSHIRE DANCE

## PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

### CODE OF CONDUCT (for on- and offline contexts)

#### Introduction

For the benefit of both staff and clients, Yorkshire Dance insists on certain levels of behaviour from workers that have contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This code of conduct is aimed at safeguarding children and vulnerable adults' welfare, reducing likely situations where abuse of children may occur, protecting staff and workers from false allegations and ensuring that Yorkshire Dance delivers secure activities in safe environments, including online.

This Code of Conduct will cover:

- Definitions
- Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Relationships of Trust
- Interaction
- Working with children, young people and adults at risk
- Necessary Physical Contact
- Safe Touch
- Restraint and Disciplinary Measures
- Intimate Care
- Language
- Digital service delivery
- Broadcast and publication on social media
- Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse
- Managing Allegations made against a Child or Young Person
- Managing Allegations made against a Member of Staff or Volunteer
- Reporting Contacts
- DBS Disclosures
- Indicators of Abuse
- What to do if a child, young person or vulnerable adult wishes to disclose information about harm or abuse

We believe that there are certain behaviours which are not acceptable and it is our aim to clarify what is appropriate and inappropriate in terms of the conduct of our staff, trustees and volunteers.

In general we expect that people working with children, young people and vulnerable adults will retain an open atmosphere and environment, that they will respect the relationship of trust that they are in and that they will always put the welfare of the individual first. These professional standards should always be applied and should be sensitive to differences expressed through culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.

#### Definitions

For the purposes of this document:

- *"the organisation"* means Yorkshire Dance
- the terms *"staff"* and *"workers"* will refer to full time and part time staff, freelance teachers, musical accompanists, assistants, volunteers, attendant parents/carers or any other person or persons in a

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position of trust who come in to direct or indirect contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults

- the words “child” and “children”, ‘young person’ or ‘young people’ refer to anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- a “vulnerable adult” is someone over 18 years old who does not have the capacity because of their physical, emotional or psychological state to protect themselves, or make decisions to protect themselves, against harm or exploitation.

Respect for the individual is of paramount importance and the following good practice guidelines should be applied at all times including periods of contact that happen outside the normal scope of a planned dance activity.

### Designated Safeguarding Officer

The role of the *Designated Safeguarding Officer* within an organisation is to act as a lead in all matters relating to protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults, to ensure that the organisation’s protection policies and procedures are followed and to keep individual case records including action taken and further action required. If you have a suspicion about abuse or have received a complaint of abuse you must write them down using the template below and pass them on to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer at Yorkshire Dance is the Interim Executive Director, Louise Allen, who can be contacted either in person at the Centre or by telephone on 0113 243 9867 or in writing at the *Yorkshire Dance Centre, 3 St Peter’s Buildings, St Peter’s Square, Leeds LS9 8AH* or email [LouiseAllen@yorkshiredance.com](mailto:LouiseAllen@yorkshiredance.com).

In the absence of the Executive Director, you should contact the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer, Ione Barton who can be contacted at the above address and telephone number and by email [ionebarton@yorkshiredance.com](mailto:ionebarton@yorkshiredance.com)

### Relationships of Trust

Where one individual is in a position of power or influence by virtue of an activity, one individual may have the power to confer success or failure and the relationship may be distorted by fear or favour. ‘Grooming’ can occur in situations where the relationship of trust is abused, which can lead to exploitation, including child sexual exploitation, or radicalisation. The child, young person or vulnerable adult might be persuaded over a period of time that certain behaviours are normal or to be expected in a sustained and close relationship e.g. coach and pupil, care home worker and resident, or that certain views are acceptable including hatred for a specific country or religious group.

- Staff must acknowledge the position of trust that they are in and use it respectfully
- Workers should be an excellent role model in their dealings with other people
- Relationships with children, young people and vulnerable adults must be balanced and based on mutual trust which empowers the participant to share in the decision making process
- All relationships between staff and participants must remain professional
- Online contact between staff and participants must only be made through a work profile, never a personal profile. The DSO and Deputy DSO should also have access to any work profiles.

### Interaction

- All workers and volunteers working in ‘regulated’ roles will be required to obtain a satisfactory Data and Barring Service (DBS) check at the earliest opportunity. Appointees to posts that involve working

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unsupervised or in a position of trust with children or vulnerable adults may not be allowed to commence their new role until a satisfactory DBS check has been received

- Yorkshire Dance's policy is that workers ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children, young people or vulnerable adults, or at least that they are within sight or hearing of others. In a digital context, 'present' means 'on screen' or able to hear on screen communications. Private messaging and one-to-one classes should be avoided. Where these are to take place, the risk assessment should reflect the reasons why this is necessary and steps taken to protect the participant and staff member.
- Only in exceptional circumstances should a one-to-one activity (face to face or through online) be conducted with a child or vulnerable adult. In those cases, another adult should be informed.
- Activity delivered with children must always adhere to the NSPCC recommended adult to child ratios for other settings.<sup>1</sup>
- Workers must not take children, young people or vulnerable adults alone in a car on journeys, however short.
- Where necessary, workers may accompany children, young people or vulnerable adults into the changing rooms but must not assist with any intimate care. The Yorkshire Dance 'Toilet procedure' must be followed at all times.
- Workers must not take children, young people or vulnerable adults to their [worker's own] home. When a service is delivered digitally and the worker is in their own home, care must be taken to ensure that the visible workspace is neutral and nothing inappropriate can be seen or heard in the background.
- Workers must never share personal contact details with a child, young person or vulnerable adult
- Workers must challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all suspicions and allegations of abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

### Working with children, young people and adults at risk

It is important that workers are aware that some participants may be considered to be at an increased level of risk, such as babies, looked after children, children with a disability, asylum-seeker participants and participants for whom English is not their first language. When working with children, young people or vulnerable adults with an increased level of risk, workers should consider any extra steps that should be taken to ensure the participant's safety. This might include using additional or alternative methods of communication, or considering other explanations for disruptive behaviour. Workers should take steps to identify children, young people and vulnerable adults' preferred communication methods. Workers should always prioritise the child's strengths, requirements and needs. This applies when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults at risk in all contexts.

### Necessary Physical Contact

Contact is often a necessary part of the dance teaching process when the positioning of the body is vital to skills development. It can also be employed to encourage, protect or comfort a child in distress, however, workers must be aware that even the most innocent physical contact with a child, young person or vulnerable adult could be misinterpreted and therefore should take every effort to explain what they are going to do *and gain consent* before any physical contact is introduced.

- Physical contact between adults and children, young people or vulnerable adults should only be used when:
  - it is necessary to develop learning skills or technique
  - it is used to enhance a participant's engagement
  - treating an injury
  - preventing an injury
- Physical contact must not be forced upon anyone and must be consensual.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/recommended-adult-child-ratios-working-with-children/>

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- Any manual support should be provided openly
- Physical contact should never involve touching the genital areas, buttocks or breasts.
- Staff should not proactively hug or accept hugs from children, young people or vulnerable adults but seek alternative methods of consolation. Workers should adhere to safe touch guidance (see below).
- Workers must not allow children, young people or vulnerable adults to sit on their knee
- Staff must be easily identifiable to children, young people or vulnerable adults, wearing name badges, Yorkshire Dance t-shirts or a Yorkshire Dance lanyard where available.
- If physical contact is used as part of an online class, care must be given to how this is practiced safely between those making contact.

### **Safe Touch**

Safe Touch is defined as physical contact that, if otherwise avoided, would be inhumane, unkind and potentially emotionally or physically damaging for the child, young person or vulnerable adult. Safe Touch should never be invasive, humiliating or flirtatious. Workers should ensure that Safe Touch only occurs in the presence of other adults, and that it does not indicate favour towards particular participants.

If a participant attempts to engage in any inappropriate touch, the member of staff involved will report this immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. If another member of staff suspects or witnesses inappropriate physical contact, whereby the member of staff is willingly involved, they will report this to the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will keep a written record of all instances of reported inappropriate touch. Any allegations against staff will be dealt with as a matter of urgency, and in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

### **Restraint and Disciplinary Measures**

Restraint refers to instances when a child, young person or vulnerable adult is being held, moved or prevented from moving, against their will because not to do so would result in injury to themselves or others or would cause significant damage to property. Restraint must always be used as a last resort after other methods of controlling a situation have been tried and failed. All situations where restraint methods have been employed should be reported to the worker's line manager at the earliest moment. Restraint should never be used as a disciplinary measure.

Physical punishment, or threat of physical punishment, should never be used in any circumstances.

### **Toilet procedure and Intimate Care**

Intimate care involves a worker undertaking duties of a very personal nature for another person, e.g. showering, bathing, changing or assisting with toileting. This kind of activity would not normally occur in the line of work undertaken for Yorkshire Dance, and should normally only be carried out with the full understanding and prior consent of a child or vulnerable adult's parent/carer. However, in the unlikely event that such a situation should arise the worker should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Workers must encourage a child, young person or vulnerable adult to be as independent as possible in their intimate care.
- Workers should not assume that a disabled child or adult cannot perform personal duties for themselves.
- Workers should not perform any intimate care duties without another adult being present. In the event that no other adult is present, the individual's parent or carer should be notified at the earliest opportunity.
- All personal care tasks which are absolutely necessary are undertaken with discretion and with sensitivity to the child, young person or vulnerable adult, and another member of staff is informed
- Any toileting duties must adhere to the 'Yorkshire Dance Toilet Procedure'.

### **Language**

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Sometimes language can be as abusive as actions. What might be intended as playful or innocent can often be misinterpreted. Unwelcome comments intended to be complimentary can seem to be predatory or degrading by another person. Discriminatory, degrading or aggressive language (including aggressive shouting) is already proscribed by Yorkshire Dance's Equality Policy, but workers should take extra care when dealing with groups such as children, young people and vulnerable adults.

- Workers must not expose children, young people or vulnerable adults to lewd language or swear words either directly or indirectly (overheard). This applies to conversations in person and online (including language used in the background of a digital activity).
- Flirting is always inappropriate with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Workers must not engage in any kind of sexual innuendo or joke-telling of a sexual nature with children, young people and vulnerable adults individually or as a group
- Workers should be aware that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- Staff must not condone or allow to go unchallenged any aggressive, sexually suggestive, sexually explicit, violent or degrading language from children, young people or vulnerable adults, regardless of who it is aimed at

### Digital service delivery

When delivering a class or hosting/attending an activity online the following must be adhered to:

- Interaction with all participants during live online platforms must, at all times, be kind and considerate, and bullying behaviour will not be condoned.
- If the behaviour and/or actions of a participant is deemed inappropriate, their involvement will be terminated immediately, and disciplinary actions will be undertaken, which may include preventing them from participating in future Yorkshire Dance activity.

### Messaging

- Participants are discouraged from private messaging any Yorkshire Dance staff or other participants during the live session.
- If under 18, direct messaging function will be disabled on all classes (chat will only be possible if visible to the whole group).
- If under 18, all commenting will remain public to both participants and staff managing the live session. Staff will monitor this during the event to ensure appropriateness of comments.

### Bookings and use of Zoom

- The staff will set clear rules of engagement for working on digital platforms, and share these with the participants at the start of the session. (e.g. use of chat functions, mute/unmute, non-verbal confirmation that they have understood or need clarity etc.). Regular review of the suitability of the platform will take place. If another platform is used care must be taken to ensure the code of conduct can be followed.
- For participants under 18, bookings for Yorkshire Dance online classes must be made by parents/carers, who will be emailed a booking confirmation and access link to the class.
- The online platform Zoom is age restrictive, therefore if under 18 then parents/carers must access Zoom using their own account and should manage the controls of this and oversee their child accessing the service.
- If under 18, participants must have permission from parents/carers to take part in any online session provided by Yorkshire Dance.

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- If under 18, during live sessions parents/carers are responsible for chaperoning participants and must oversee their safety.
- If under 18, participants may be asked if permission to access the session is given by a parent/carer, if so, a parent/carer must provide visual approval.

### Privacy

- No photos, films or documentation shall take place without prior permissions being given. Should it be required to record the session, permission will be requested from participants and parents/guardians or participants will be notified of how the recording will be used.
- Unless stated at the time of booking, all classes will be closed events and only available to people who have booked in advance
- A password will be required to join all closed classes

### Control of broadcast

- A member of staff will retain host controls at all times, although sharing of audio or visual material may be allowed with the member of staff's permission.
- Staff members will monitor what is shared on the screen and in the chat. If any the situation becomes unsafe it will be addressed immediately (see Managing unsafe situations)
- All staff involved in the digital delivery should remain visible and audible whilst hosting a class or meeting.

### Managing unsafe situations

- Staff must have a plan in place to support anyone that becomes unsafe during the class. For example, by having contact details and an address of the person taking part.
- Plans to manage unsafe situations must be documented in advance in the risk assessment.
- Should an unsafe situation occur, the member of staff should document what happened as soon as it has been addressed and contact a DSO. If the person involved is in immediate danger that staff must call 999 before documenting what happened and contacting a DSO.

### **Broadcast and publication on social media**

When using digital media including; social media, photos, video content, recorded audio content, the Yorkshire Dance website, the following must be adhered to:

- Only digital content such as photos, film and audio recording that have adequate permission shall be used publicly.
- Care must be given to the content used on Yorkshire Dance's social media, printed marketing material and website to ensure that it is not inappropriate or offensive.
- When communicating with children, young people or vulnerable adults via digital formats (for example social media) this must only be done through Yorkshire Dance specific staff accounts. These accounts must be accessible by multiple members of staff, with passwords known by multiple members of staff, and checked regularly to ensure appropriate behaviour.
- No communication must be initiated with anyone under the age of the particular age restricted social media site. This communication must always be via their parent or guardian. In case any staff member is made aware that the person with whom they are interacting (online) is below the age of restriction, a company approved statement should be sent immediately, after which any communication should be directed to their parent or guardian.
- All Yorkshire Dance digital media accounts must be password protected. Passwords must be known to multiple members of staff including both Designated Safeguarding officers.

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### Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse

You may receive a report from a child, young person or vulnerable adult about an incident that has happened at Yorkshire Dance, online or elsewhere, or you may have suspicions about a colleague or a child's situation. Whatever the situation, you must ensure to the best of your ability that the child, young person or vulnerable adult is safe and should report allegations or suspicions of abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will take the decision on how to act.

**If you believe there is a serious and immediate threat to the child, young person or vulnerable adult, you should contact the police on 999 and inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer at the first opportunity**

Safeguarding is a sensitive and confidential issue and so this must always be done either face to face in a confidential space, via email or over the phone.

**You should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible** about observing the incident or receiving the report – see template below. You have a moral and professional duty to pass on all comments and reports to the Designated Safeguarding Officer stated above. However, you must not attempt to investigate, substantiate or corroborate any reports. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will decide whether Social Care or other related services are informed. Effective sharing of information between local organisations and agencies is essential for early identification of need, assessment and service provision to keep children and vulnerable adults safe. It is not your responsibility to decide if a child is being abused - your role is to act on concerns and gather information. **The Designated Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer are responsible for retaining and storing child protection records in line with NSPCC guidance.<sup>2</sup>**

**In the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) they list these 4 types of abuse:**

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse (includes Online abuse)
- Neglect (includes sense of self)
- Sexual abuse

### Indicators of abuse

Indicators may be physical or behavioural and may include one or a combination of those listed (this is not a complete list):

- Regular flinching in response to sudden but harmless actions, for example someone raising a hand quickly
- Knowledge of 'adult issues' for example alcohol, drugs and/or sexual behaviour which is inappropriate for their age or stage of development
- Self-harming or thoughts about suicide
- Changes in eating habits or developing eating disorders
- Bruises which reflect bites, hand marks or fingertips
- Any burns which have a clear shape of an object, for example cigarette burns
- Not receiving adequate medical attention after injuries
- Behaviour changes from being withdrawn to being overly aggressive
- Refusal to remove clothing for normal activities or keeping covered in warm weather
- Child appears not to trust particular adults
- Open references to domestic or other violence in the home
- Being unable to play
- Inability to make close friends

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<sup>2</sup> <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/3325/child-protection-records-retention-and-storage-guidelines-september-2023.pdf>

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- Regularly dirty or 'smelly', personal hygiene needs are not being met
- Child acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults
- Child regularly appears hungry
- Signs of alcohol or drug misuse
- Running away from home
- Spending longer in the bathroom
- Children who regularly miss school or don't take part in education

Additional possible indicators of 'grooming', child sexual exploitation or radicalisation

- Acquisition of money or possessions without plausible explanation
- Unknown adult(s) waiting outside to meet a child
- Open references to radical thoughts

Additional possible indicators of abuse against vulnerable/older adults

- Acting agitated or violent
- Loss of weight for no apparent reason
- Loss of interest in activities/things they previously enjoyed
- Concerned discussion of financial or property matters (financial abuse)

### **What to do if a child, young person or vulnerable adults wishes to disclose information about harm or abuse**

You may be in a position where a child, young person or vulnerable adult chooses to tell you information about harm or abuse that they have suffered or that they fear. It is very important that you give them the opportunity to communicate this.

It may be appropriate for you to find another person to listen to them with you, for example if you do not feel comfortable or confident or if another person is immediately available, but in many cases this may not be possible or desirable; you would need to judge whether the person wishing to disclose can wait or is willing to tell more than one person. Be prepared to listen to the person carefully and to make notes of what was said at the end of the conversation, using the checklist below.

During the conversation:

- Keep calm
- Observe and listen to the person rather than directly questioning them
- Be aware of your non-verbal communication
- Keep responses short, simple, slow, quiet and gentle
- Do not promise to keep secrets or promise that you won't tell anyone else
- Don't stop someone who is freely recalling significant events
- If you have difficulty in understanding the person's communication method, reassure them that you will quickly find someone who can help
- Tell the person they are not to blame and have done the right thing by telling you



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- Avoid criticising or confronting any alleged perpetrator personally
- Don't end the conversation abruptly, allow plenty of time
- Tell the person what will happen next; be honest about what you can do
- Make a written note of what is said, who is present and subsequent events

### Managing Allegations made against a Child, Young Person or Vulnerable Adult

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult displays inappropriate or harmful behaviour, you should inform the DSO or Deputy DSO as soon as possible. Report any allegations directly to the DSO or Deputy DSO. It's important to keep accurate and detailed notes on any concerns you have about a child, young person or vulnerable adult's behaviour. You should share this record with the DSO and Deputy DSO. Include:

- details (name, age)
- the date and time of the incident
- what was happening before the incident took place
- what the child said or did that gave you cause for concern (in as exact words if possible)
- whether the behaviour appeared spontaneous or premeditated.

Sometimes you might decide to talk to a child, young person or vulnerable adult immediately if you see them behaving inappropriately, in order to manage the behaviour. Remember that they may not realise their behaviour is unacceptable. Talk to them calmly and explain why their behaviour is unsuitable and what they can do to improve it.

### Managing Allegations made against a Member of Staff or Volunteer

You must ensure that the child, young person or vulnerable adult is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made, and inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately. In the case of an allegation against either of the Designated Safeguarding Officers, you should inform the other Designated Safeguarding Officer. You should make a written record, as above.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer should contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who is based within Children and Young People's Social Care, Child Protection Unit, tel: 0113 247 8652 for advice on how to proceed.

Regardless of whether a police and/or Children and Young People's or Adult Social Care investigation follows, Yorkshire Dance will undertake an internal investigation and consider the implementation of disciplinary procedures if appropriate. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or dismissal depending on the outcome of the investigation.

### Reporting contacts

#### Leeds Children's Services Duty and Advice Team

**0113 376 0336**

Speak to a social worker to log concern for a child  
(Mon to Fri 8.30am – 5.00pm)

#### Leeds Children's Emergency Duty Team

**0113 535 0600**

(Out of hours)

#### Leeds Social Care Emergency Duty Team

**0113 240 9536**

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(Out of hours)

**NSPCC Child protection Helpline**

**0808 800 5000**

**Leeds City Council Adult Social Care**

**0113 222 4401**

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

**Adult Social Care Out Of Hours**

**0113 378 0644**

(Out Of Hours)

### **FOR ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PROFESSIONALS/ VOLUNTEERS**

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

for practitioners working with children

**0113 378 9687**

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

for practitioners working with vulnerable adults

**0113 222 4401**

### **DBS Disclosures**

Yorkshire Dance promotes equality of opportunity for all and recognises the importance of employment in the rehabilitation of ex-offenders. For applicants who are offered employment in certain posts, including those where regulated activity is undertaken, a criminal record check from the DBS will be undertaken. Applicants to a post will be advised at the point of application that a DBS check will be undertaken if they are successful in securing the post.

If a DBS check identifies convictions which restrict or prevent an individual from carrying out any of the responsibilities of their role, the Designated Safeguarding Officers, along with the Senior Management Team and Board of Trustees will make a decision as to whether it is appropriate for the person to be appointed or continue in post or not.

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### CONFIDENTIAL

Template for reporting a concern. Once filled please pass it on to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (Executive Director).

Please give details of everything that you know based on the conversation that you have had and/or observed.

Name of individual:

Age and/or date of birth:

First Language:

Disability:

other info:

Parent's/carer's name(s):

Home address (and phone no. if available):

Are you reporting your own concern or passing on those of somebody else? Give details:

Brief description of what has prompted the concerns: include dates, times, etc. of any specific incidents:

Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs? :

Have you spoken to the individual? If so, what was said (please be exact and do not make judgement)? :

Have you spoken to the parent(s)/ carer(s)? If so, what was said? :

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Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, give details :

Have you consulted with anybody else? Please give details:

If any physical signs and you are able to, please note the location on this diagram by an X:



Your name and position:

Who are you passing this report to?:

Date of disclosure/concern: .....

Time of disclosure/concern .....

Location of disclosure/concern.....

Signature: .....