

Child Safety Policy for Leaps and Bounds

Leaps and Bounds is committed to ensuring the safety of our students at all times. The information below outlines our child safety policy and code of conduct for staff. Any concerns will be dealt with swiftly to ensure the ongoing safety, good health and happiness of students in our care.

Policy statement

Leaps and Bounds will ensure the safety and protection of all children and young people involved in dance through adherence to the Child Safety Policy. All children (those under 16 years) and young people (those between the ages of 16 and 18 years), regardless of their culture, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs, sexual identity or any disability have the right to protection from abuse. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to quickly and appropriately.

Policy aims

To promote good practice within our business and industry.

To provide children and young people with appropriate safety and protection.

Allow staff to make informed and confident responses to child protection issues.

Staff recruitment

Leaps and Bounds takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. All staff are required to have a current "Working with Children" check and a copy of each check is kept on premises.

Promoting good practice

The following will be encouraged:

Always working in an open environment with viewing windows to all classes.

Treating all children and young people equally and with respect.

Always putting the welfare of each child and young person as priority.

Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with dancers and gaining permission before making any physical corrections.

Building trusting relationships which empower children and young people to make decisions and express emotions without fear.

Promoting a fun and encouraging atmosphere.

Keeping up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance in dance.

Involving parents/guardians where it is deemed necessary.

Being excellent role models.

Giving constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.

Recognising the development and varying needs of children and young people – not being overly competitive or pushing them against their will.

Having consent forms from parents/guardians in relation to medical treatment and media release/photos.

Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

The following should never be sanctioned:

Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.

Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.

Reducing a child or young person to tears as a form of control.

Allowing allegations made by a child or young person to go ignored, unrecorded or not acted upon.

Doing things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.

Inviting or allowing children and young people to stay at the home of a staff member unsupervised by their parent or guardian.

Responding to suspicions or allegations of abuse

It is not the responsibility of anyone working at Leaps and Bounds to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

Leaps and Bounds will assure all staff that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports their concern that a colleague is or may be abusing a child or young person.

Any suspicion that a child or young person has been abused by a staff member should be reported to the principal, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child or young person in question and any other child or young person who may be at risk.

Internal enquiries and suspension

Leaps and Bounds will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police investigation. Irrespective of findings Leaps and Bounds will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff can be reinstated. The welfare of the child/young person will remain of paramount importance throughout.

Strategies to minimise risk

Supervision of children - children are supervised at all times in class by the responsible teacher/s assigned to that class. The studio does not take responsibility for the child outside of their class time - this responsibility lies solely with the parent/guardian.

Physical contact - some physical contact may be deemed necessary to demonstrate exercises and for personal correction; or if a member of staff needs to administer first aid. Staff will seek permission first where possible.

Protecting privacy and confidentiality - all information given to the studio is strictly confidential. Information is given to the child's teacher where it is in the best interest of the child.

Action in regards to bullying

All forms of bullying will be taken seriously.

Children and young people will be encouraged to share their concerns with staff.

Classes will remain in an open environment.

All allegations will be investigated and the victim's safety assured.

The victim and those accused of bullying will first be addressed separately.

The victim will be assured they will be helped, although others may need to be told and involved.

Records of conversations will be kept.

Any bullying incidents in classes will be reported to the Principal.

An apology to the victim will be sought.

Where necessary, the parent or guardian will be informed.

Staff members will be supported throughout the investigation of any incident.

Sanctions will be imposed where necessary.

Bullies will be encouraged and supported to try and change their behaviour.

All appropriate people concerned will be updated on any action taken and a record will be made of this.