



ROYAL
BALLET
SCHOOL

SETTING THE STANDARD

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

OCTOBER 2024

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KEY CONTACT DETAILS - SAFEGUARDING

Emergency

Where a child is in immediate need, to protect the child, the Police should be called on 999.

School Contact details

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mrs. Jill Tait-Harris, Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Welfare Telephone: 07799 032047; Email: jill.tait-harris@royalballetschool.org.uk)

Deputy DSL: Mr. David Gajadharsingh, Academic & Pastoral Principal: 07825 417626

Deputy DSL: Mrs. Michelle Kearsey (Houseparent) 07900 694021

Deputy DSL: Mrs. Victoria Dickins (School Nurse, White Lodge) Victoria.dickins@royalballetschool.org.uk

Deputy DSL: Mr Tom Bradshaw (Houseparent) 07425 714064

Deputy DSL: Elsa MacKechnie, (School Nurse, Upper School) elsa.mackechnie@royalballetschool.org.uk

Nominated Safeguarding Governor: Annie Davis annie.davis@royalballetschool.org.uk

Chair of Governors: Natasha Kaplinsky chair@royalballetschool.org.uk

Both governors can be contacted via Gill Robertson, Clerk to the Governors,
gill.robertson@royalballetschool.org.uk

External contacts:

White Lodge

If you believe a child or young person is in immediate danger then contact the police on 999.

If you are concerned that a child is being abused, is in need, or is at risk of significant harm then contact:

Richmond Children's Services Single Point of Access (SPA):

Tel: 020 8547 5008 (Monday to Thursday, 8am – 5.15pm; Friday 8am – 5pm)

Tel: 020 8770 5000 (out of hours).

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Tel: 07774 332675

Non-emergency calls can be made to the Police by calling 101.

NSPCC Helpline for reporting sexual harassment and abuse 0800 136 663

These above contact details can also be used for reporting FGM and issues related to Prevent.

Safeguarding children in Richmond borough is led by the **Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership (KRSCP)** Their details can be viewed at:

<https://kingstonandrichmondsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/>

Upper School

If you believe a child or young person is in immediate danger then contact the police on 999.

If you are concerned that a child is being abused, is in need, or is at risk of significant harm then contact:

Westminster's Access to Children's Services Team (SPA):

Tel: 020 7641 4000 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm)

Tel: 020 7641 6000 (out of hours Emergency Duty Team).

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Tel: 020 7641 7668

Non-emergency calls can be made to the Police by calling 101.

NSPCC Helpline for reporting sexual harassment and abuse 0800 136 663

These above contact details can also be used for reporting FGM and issues related to Prevent.

Safeguarding children in the City of Westminster is led by the **Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) of Westminster, Hammersmith & Fulham, and Kensington & Chelsea.** Their details can be viewed at:

<https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/lscp/>

Adult Safeguarding

As we have some students who are over 18 years old, there may be a need to report safeguarding concerns to the local Adult Safeguarding Team. The contact details for this team are:

Safeguarding helpline: 020 7641 2176 and for out of hours ring 020 7641 6000;

Email: adultsocialcare@westminster.gov.uk

In the case of a safeguarding referral of an over 18-year-old student, given that the student is still in an education establishment then it may be such that both Adult and Child local authority Safeguarding Teams are notified.

Additional Contacts for the Prevent Team

If anyone is concerned about issues relating to extremism and radicalisation in a school or organisation that works with children, they can contact the Department for Education (DfE) on: 020 7340 7264 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 6pm, excluding bank holidays); or email: counter.extremism@education.gov.uk

Additional contacts:

Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI)

CAP House, 9 - 12 Long Lane

London EC1A 9HA

Tel: 020 7600 0100 (this number is for reporting concerns about a school)

Email: concerns@isi.net

The Children's Commissioner for England

The Office of the Children's Commissioner

Sanctuary Buildings

20 Great Smith Street

London SW1P 3BT

Tel: 020 7783 8330

Email: info.request@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

NSPCC

NSPCC have a helpline to call if you have any concerns (or need advice) about the safety of any child:

Tel: 0808 800 5000 (Monday – Friday, 9am – 6pm; Weekends 9am – 4pm)

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

NSPCC also have a whistleblowing helpline, which is available to support staff with concerns about how child protection issues are being handled in their own or another organisation:

Tel: 0800 028 0285

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Childline

If you are under 18 and need confidential advice regarding the wellbeing of yourself or a peer, then you can contact Childline:

Tel: 0800 1111 (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Website: <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

The Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) statutory government guidance outlines the approach for all organisations and agencies who have functions relating to children. It supports Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCP) to coordinate the local area arrangements to ensure all agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area. The LSCP comprises the three key partners of:

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the local authority, a clinical commissioning group for the area, and the chief office of the police force within the area. The school works closely with the LSCP in each locality in which the school is based and their respective details are provided below.

Safeguarding children in Richmond borough is led by the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership (KRSCP). Their details can be viewed at:

Kingston & Richmond LSCB (kingstonandrichmondsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk) Safeguarding children in the City of Westminster is led by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) of Westminster, Hammersmith & Fulham, and Kensington & Chelsea. Their details can be viewed at:

<https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/lscb/>

The DSL and senior management may need to contact the police in the event of safeguarding concerns, when they believe a criminal offence has been committed. The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) has produced guidance for DSLs and senior leadership teams in schools and college on 'when to call the police'. This guidance can be seen below:

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/publications/publications-log/2020/when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf>

RELATED SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

This policy should be read alongside other related school policies, which can all be found in the Red Button folder on the RBS U: Drive on the school IT network. The other related policies, include:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Appropriate Physical Contact in Dance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Child Welfare Policy
- FGM Policy
- Low Level Concerns Policy
- Missing or Uncollected Students Policy
- Online Safety Strategy Policy
- Prevent Strategy Policy
- Restraint Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between students
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Student ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

INTRODUCTION

The safety and well-being of all students is the highest priority at The Royal Ballet School and the school takes a 'whole-school' approach to safeguarding and wellbeing.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes (KCSIE, 2024). This definition highlights the need not just to keep children from harm, but also to actively promote their interests and welfare. This focus is adopted at the school accordingly.

This policy applies to all Staff, Governors and Volunteers and is reviewed annually by the Board of Governors. The policy is written in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures.

The policy has been written with due regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024) (KCSIE)
- Working together to Safeguard Children (December 2023)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (March 2015)
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (July 2018)
- Boarding Standards; National Minimum Standards (September 2022)
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (April 2019)
- The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for Schools and childcare providers (June 2015)
- The use of social media for online radicalization (July 2015)
- Children Missing Education (September 2016)
- Sexting in Schools and colleges (August 2016)
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010

Any safeguarding and child protection concerns raised will be treated as a very serious matter and Staff, Governors and Volunteers are actively encouraged to speak up about any safeguarding concerns. The School will at all times pay due regard to the relevant guidance documents (and any updates) issued by the Department for Education (DfE) referred to above. The school is also inspected by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI), and the relevant safeguarding guidelines in the ISI's inspecting framework are also adhered to as well.

All relevant documentation can be found in the Red Button folder of the RBS U drive. This policy is also published on the School's website and Staff, Governors and Volunteers are issued with an up to date copy online. Any updates during the course of the year are also issued online.

Staff are also reminded to read the Staff Code of Conduct that sets out the expectations for a professional relationship between staff and students as well as paying particular attention to the Staff ICT Acceptable Use Policy and the Online Safety Strategy Policy. These are all available in the Red Button folder of the RBS U drive.

It is important that ALL staff, Governors and Volunteers remember that *'it could happen here'* and that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. **Staff must always act in the best interests of the child.**

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All Staff (including supply staff and contractors), Governors or Volunteers have a role to play in child protection: in particular, they should report any suspicion of, or evidence that, a student might be experiencing, or be at risk of, abuse, or be 'in need'. All concerns should be reported in accordance with this policy.

Responsibilities of the Governing Body

The Governing Body will ensure that the School's Safeguarding arrangements will operate the procedures of the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnership which includes understanding and reflecting the local protocols and the referral threshold documents.

Ms. Annie Davis is the Nominated Safeguarding Governor. The Governing Body has nominated this member to take leadership of the School's safeguarding arrangements and to ensure that they reflect the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), September 2024. All safeguarding referrals to local children's services are reported anonymously to the Student & Staff Welfare (SSW) committee on a termly basis. Any safeguarding referrals to local children's services are reported to Ms. Davis immediately and the Chair of Governors is also informed. The SSW committee reports on safeguarding and child protection matters to the main Board meeting every term and the Governing body formally approves the Safeguarding Policy once a year where it is agreed by the Chair of Governors. The annual safeguarding review also includes a review of the effectiveness of procedures and implementation and the School's contribution to inter-agency working.

Ongoing issues are delegated to the Student & Staff Welfare Committee.

The contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), the relevant DSL Deputies, and Independent Person are published at both School sites and in all boarding houses.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

The DSL is: Mrs. Jill Tait-Harris, Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Welfare Telephone: 07799 032047; Email: jill.tait-harris@royalballetschool.org.uk)

The Deputy DSL's are:

Mr. David Gajadharsingh (Academic & Pastoral Principal) 07825 417626

Mrs. Jill Tait-Harris (Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Welfare) 07766 162048

Mrs. Michelle Kearsey (Housemistress) 07900 694021

Mrs. Victoria Dickins (School Nurse, White Lodge) Victoria.dickins@royalballetschool.org.uk

Mr Tom Bradshaw (Houseparent) 07425 714064

Elsa MacKechnie, (School Nurse, Upper School) elsa.mackechnie@royalballetschool.org.uk

The DSL is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and reports directly to the SLT on matters around safeguarding and child protection. This responsibility of the DSL is clearly outlined in the job description. The DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the School to carry out the duties of the post. Time, funding, training, resources and support are provided to enable the post holder to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or to support other staff to do so as well as to contribute to the assessment of children.

The DSL and/or a deputy is always available during School hours for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns. They will have, from training and experience, a complete view of the safeguarding environment and be the best person(s) to advise on a safeguarding concern.

Staff should be aware that whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, remains with the DSL.

The School's records on child protection are kept either in a locked cabinet (if in paper form) only accessible by the DSL and the Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Welfare) and are separated from routine student records; or on a password-protected excel file stored in a secure area on the school's IT network. Access to the excel safeguarding document is only accessible by the DSL and Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Welfare). The Academic & Pastoral Principal, and the Artistic Director can access the records on request, where appropriate.

Responsibilities and role of the DSL:

- To take lead responsibility for safeguarding and Child Protection
- To take lead responsibility for all aspects of eSafety, including oversight of filtering and monitoring systems and processes
- To refer cases of suspected abuse to the relevant local authority children's services as required
- To support staff who make referrals to local authority children's services
- To refer cases to the Channel program where there is a radicalisation concern
- To support staff who make referrals to the Channel program
- To refer cases where a person is dismissed or left, due to risk of or harm to a child, to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required
- To refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required
- To keep a full and secure record of all child protection concerns
- To ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training
- To keep staff appropriately informed about matters to do with child protection
- To make referrals to external agencies if necessary and to represent the School at child protection conferences
- To liaise with other professionals and agencies which support children.

Working with others:

- Liaise with the Artistic Director and the Academic & Pastoral Principal to inform them of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989
- To liaise with Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Welfare) on a regular (e.g. weekly) basis on pastoral and safeguarding matters
- Meet termly with all Deputy DSL's to discuss current issues and any changes to policies or procedures
- To liaise with the 'case manager' and the designated officers (LADO) at the relevant Local Authority for child protection concerns as required
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.
- Where appropriate to do so, the DSL will share the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school and college leadership staff. This information sharing is designed to maintain the student's welfare as well as help promote their educational outcomes.

INDUCTION AND TRAINING

Training in safeguarding and child protection is an important part of the induction process and every new member of Staff (plus any Volunteer, Governor or Contractor undertaking regulated activity) receives training on their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and bullying and on the correct child protection procedures. Included in this training is awareness on the school's filtering and monitoring systems and processes. Safeguarding induction is managed online on the Safeguarding & Child Protection Induction page of the School website (the URL is emailed to all new starters by the HR Department) which includes the Safeguarding policy and policies on Appropriate Physical Contact in Dance; Behaviour, Children Missing Education, Child Welfare; 'if a child tells' card; Restraint; Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between students, Staff Code of Conduct; Staff ICT acceptable use and Whistleblowing.

All new staff are issued with Part 1 of KCSIE and those staff who work directly with children are also issued with a copy of Annex B and sign-off to confirm they have read both documents. In some cases, where reading the full Part 1 is deemed inappropriate or unfeasible (e.g. due to language difficulties or no direct contact with students), then it may be agreed by the DSL, APPW, and APP that the member of staff can read the condensed version of Part 1 outlined in KCSIE 2024 Annex A. This agreement will be on a case by case basis and the expectation at the school remains for all new staff to read the full Part 1 in the first instance.

In addition, there are referral forms, a document that identifies the DSL (and deputies) and other statutory guidance documentation. All inductees will be required to electronically sign off their understanding and acceptance of all documents. Any member of staff who may have difficulty with reading this material will be given the necessary assistance. At the beginning of the academic year, the DSL provides a safeguarding training update, which includes relevant information as part of an induction for new staff. Any member of staff who joins through the school year has an individual induction with the DSL within the first few weeks of their employment at least.

New Governors and Volunteers or Contractors in non-regulated activity will also be asked to read these documents online and they must sign off their understanding and acceptance of the contents.

Governors are also expected to know the role of the DSL and should read the DSL job description in Annex C of the KCSIE 2024 guidance.

Any updates to these documents will be issued online and all required parties will be asked to sign again to indicate that they have read and understood the updates. Updates usually occur annually or in response to changes to statutory or other guidance.

Staff and Volunteers or Contractors undertaking regulated activity are provided with (or required to undertake online if not available at Inset) Level 2 Child Safeguarding training in line with LSCP advice. Safeguarding and child protection refresher training is included in every September Inset.

A monthly safeguarding newsletter is sent by the DSL to all staff and governors, providing them with ongoing reminders of safeguarding information and relevant procedures. This newsletter contains a standing item on child-on-child abuse, as well as a standing item on online safety. The DSL also sends out a termly safeguarding newsletter to parents, providing them also with relevant safeguarding information and reminders of the appropriate contacts and procedures.

The DSL assesses the appropriate level and focus for staff training and responsiveness to specific safeguarding concerns such as radicalisation, Child Sexual Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, sexual violence and sexual harassment between students, cyberbullying and mental health to ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep children in their care safe.

As of September 2016, the DSL and Deputy DSLs are trained every two years in Level 3 multi-agency approaches to child protection in line with LSCP advice. This training provides the DSL and deputies with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role and to reflect the requirements of KCSIE.

In line with LSCP advice an additional Level 3 Safeguarding update course is undertaken by the DSL annually. The DSL also attends the LSCP Independent Schools' DSL Safeguarding Forums termly (approximately) and other relevant training courses. These additional training opportunities ensure that the DSL is able to keep up

with developments relevant to the role and to reflect the changes in KCSIE and other legislation.

Governors are required to undertake Level 2 Safeguarding training every three years (provided at a Board meeting or undertaken online) and an annual update provided during a Board Meeting. They will also be required to read the Safeguarding & Child Protection Induction webpage annually and must sign off their understanding and acceptance of its contents. Updates will be sent electronically. The Chair of Governors and the Nominated Safeguarding Governor will be trained to Level 3 at least every 2 years.

The DSL has undertaken Prevent Training for frontline staff in recognising, referring and responding to extremism and radicalisation. The Deputy DSLs, SLT, House Staff, Section Heads and Level 3 trained staff also complete the online general awareness training module on Channel. All staff undertake Prevent training and they are issued with the Prevent Strategy Policy via the Safeguarding & Child Protection Induction webpage. It is also available in the Red Button folder of the RBS U drive.

Regular updates are given at staff briefings on both sites (and followed up by email) on matters relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection. Many of these updates include information passed on from the LSCP. In addition, mechanisms are in place using email to assist staff to understand their role and responsibilities and to ensure that they have the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively and to reflect the requirements of KCSIE.

All teaching supply staff must have current Level 2 Child Safeguarding Training. They are also sent a link to the Safeguarding & Child Protection Induction webpage on arrival and asked to sign to indicate understanding and acceptance of the School specific requirements outlined in the School policies.

Visiting ballet teachers (and other visiting artistic staff, such as choreographers) are observed at all times by members of the School's artistic staff. The School's approach to training, including the process of corrections, is discussed before any lesson begins and these external professionals. This discussion not only usually happens with the artistic manager informally, but first and foremost, all visiting teachers are given an information sheet on the School's expectations of appropriate staff behaviour when working with students and this expectations document (along with any other safeguarding questions) is discussed at a brief safeguarding induction by the DSL or senior DSL deputies with the visiting member of staff prior to them teaching students.

DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE OF HARM OR ABUSE

Staff should be aware that children may not always be ready or able to talk about their experiences of abuse and/or may not always recognize that they are being abused. Any student disclosing abuse to a member of staff must be listened to carefully and sensitively. The member of staff should follow the guidance on the "...if a child tells..." card and bear in mind especially that:

- Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality whilst at the same time liaising with relevant professionals such as the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and local children's services if necessary. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.
- They should not probe or ask for more information than that which is offered and should take care not to ask 'leading' questions.
- An immediate record must be made of what has been said, using the student's actual words wherever possible: this must be a record of fact not of opinion. The record should be signed, dated and marked with a cross to indicate where the account ended on the page if handwritten and given to the DSL; or can be sent securely by email to the DSL, or entered directly on the same day on the MyConcern reporting system. The Cause for Concern Form can be used but is not essential.

The student should be reassured that they are right to tell and the next steps should be explained. It is

important not to jump to conclusions nor speculate or accuse anybody.

- The DSL will decide whether or not the issue should be referred to the relevant outside agencies, in line with local referral thresholds. (The failure to make such a report might be construed as neglect of care, which might, of itself, constitute abuse). The DSL will not, however, investigate the issue to determine and identify 'actual child abuse' as this is the role of the local Children's Services.
- The member of staff should record in writing the fact that such a report has been made: this is for the protection of the member of staff concerned. This record could include their MyConcern report. ALL staff must remember that if the relevant senior staff are not available it is their responsibility to make a direct referral to the local children's services (see contact details at start of this document).
- In circumstances where a crime may have been committed the matter should be reported to the Police.

Advice as to how best to deal pastorally with a student making such an allegation should be discussed with the DSL and additional guidance can be found in the 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' publication available in the Red Button folder of the RBS U drive and on the Safeguarding & Child Protection Induction webpage.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ABUSE

Staff (henceforward this includes Governors and Volunteers or Contractors in regulated or non-regulated activity) must report any concerns of abuse. The School does not require parental consent before making a referral to a statutory agency.

The School uses an electronic platform called MyConcern to record and monitor any concerns. All staff have logins to the system which is linked to the School MIS platform, iSAMS, for student data. The DSL (and senior DSL deputies) are able to see all concerns and can invite other members of staff to join teams to investigate and conclude any concern. The system provides an electronic record of all concerns with a detailed audit trail that can be used in any referral.

For Governors and volunteers who do not have access to MyConcern they can raise a concern using the 'Cause for Concern' form that can be found in the Red Button folder of the RBS U drive and on the Safeguarding & Child Protection Induction webpage. The concern should be entered to MyConcern at the earliest possible opportunity so that the School has a complete record for each student. If the concern is deemed a safeguarding matter to be dealt with by the DSL, then the DSL will add the record to the school's safeguarding spreadsheet (described earlier in this document). The DSL will then carry out the appropriate follow-up actions and document them on this spreadsheet (unless deemed more appropriate to keep record keeping on the MyConcern system). If the MyConcern report is deemed a pastoral matter, then the Assistant Principal for Pastoral and Welfare will lead on any follow-up actions and document them appropriately.

If a member of staff believes a concern requires immediate attention they should seek out the DSL (or deputy) before inputting to MyConcern or completing a 'Cause for Concern' form.

Reporting a child in immediate danger or at risk of harm (section 47)

Where there is a need to protect a child because they may be being harmed or at risk of significant harm, a referral should be made **to the local children's services (see contact details earlier in this policy) or the Police immediately on 999**. Anyone can make a referral in these circumstances. In such circumstances the DSL should be informed as soon as possible if the referral is made by someone else (see contact details earlier in this policy).

Reporting a concern about a child (section 17)

If staff members have a **concern** about a student they should report to the DSL, via MyConcern, as soon as possible. If this is not possible, or if they want to discuss the concern in more detail then they can contact the DSL directly (see contact details earlier in this policy). A course of action will then be agreed with the DSL. If the DSL believes that it is not at the threshold for internal safeguarding concerns, then they will refer the concern to the Assistant Principal for Pastoral and Welfare (APPW) as a “pastoral matter”, which will then be managed through the School’s pastoral support process. If the DSL does believe it warrants further investigating and/or managing as a safeguarding concern then the DSL will take the lead in this process and document the matter in the safeguarding spreadsheet. This process could include an internal investigation, safeguarding actions, and/or a referral to statutory services.

If a staff member makes a referral direct to the local children’s services, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible (see contact details earlier in this policy).

Reporting a concern during school holidays or during school closure (e.g. if remote working is active)

The methods for reporting safeguarding concerns when the school is closed and/or when it is outside of term time are largely similar to in-term procedures. Specifically, these are:

- If a member of staff wishes to raise a concern then they can use the online MyConcern system as usual, or contact the DSL directly (using the contact details at the top of this policy). If the DSL is on leave, then an appropriate DSL deputy will still be contactable. This is usually the APPW (see contact details at the top of this policy).
- If a member of staff has any urgent concerns then they could contact the student’s local Children’s Services in the locality in which the student resides. If they do this, then they should also inform the DSL that this has been done, so the DSL can make a record and follow it up as necessary.
- If a member of staff has any concerns of a student’s immediate safety then they should dial 999 as required.

The above guidance also applies for when the school is closed in response to the coronavirus (Covid 19) pandemic and there is remote education in place instead.

Peer Reporting of Concerns

The school uses an online anonymous reporting system called **Whisper**. This approved and secure system allows students to report any safeguarding or wellbeing concerns to staff anonymously. They may report them about themselves or about others. The report is received by the DSL and Assistant Principal for Pastoral and Welfare (APPW) in the same way to the MyConcern system where staff report their concerns. The DSL or APPW will then follow-up on the reported concern on **Whisper** and action anything that needs to be put in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the relevant students. It must be noted that although the system allows for anonymous reporting as the default, the DSL and APPW have the ability on the system to identify the person making the report. They will only do this in circumstances where knowing the identity will help prevent harm to that person or to any others.

General Guidance on making a referral to Children’s Services

Before making a referral, staff should make sure that they have the child’s relevant details including name, date of birth, home address, School address, name of parents and clear details of the concern.

All verbal referrals must be followed up by a written referral within 24 hours.

The relevant Local Authority Children's Services should decide within one working day of a referral being made about what course of action they are taking and should let the referrer know the outcome. If that information is not forthcoming the referrer should follow this up. In all cases of a referral it should be recorded on MyConcern as soon as possible. The DSL will also need to be made aware as they also keep a record of any referrals made to Children's Services on the school's safeguarding spreadsheet. All discussions, decisions made and the reasons for these decisions should be recorded.

If it is unclear if a referral to Children's services is required, the DSL will liaise closely with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/or the local Children's Services directly. Where required, a multi-agency approach will be adopted through contacting the **Richmond and Kingston SPA** (White Lodge) or the **Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster Children's Services** (Upper School). This may lead to an Early Help Assessment which will identify a young person's needs and the services that will be required to address those needs. The relevant contact details for these two organisations can be seen earlier in this policy.

If after referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL (or the person that made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly so that the child's situation improves.

The School pays particular attention to the Threshold Document: Continuum of Help and Support (Kingston & Richmond LSCP) and The Thresholds of Needs Guide (Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and City of Westminster LSCP) when judging the level of individual need and making referrals to children's services. These can be seen at the links below, with the respective websites providing relevant updates where necessary:

<https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/thresholds.html>

<https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/pdf/Threshold%20of%20Needs%20Guide.pdf>

INFORMATION SHARING AND DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION

Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will act and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision.

Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers (2018) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may

be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.

5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.

6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).

7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children.

Further advice on general information sharing and confidentiality can be seen in the school's *Data Protection and Security Policy*, located in the school's policies folder on the U: drive on the school IT network.

DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STUDENTS

If staff suspect that there is, or has been, a case of child-on-child abuse it should be reported, via MyConcern, to the DSL and / or Assistant Principal Pastoral and Welfare (APPW) and an Anti-bullying record form should be completed. Where the behaviour is deemed to reach the threshold for safeguarding, then the DSL will also be notified. Regardless of whether or not the behaviour reaches the threshold for safeguarding, a clear record of each allegation is made to ensure that the school is aware of any patterns of bullying or child-on-child abusive behaviour.

In cases where allegations of abuse or assault have been made against one or more students all students involved, whether perpetrator or victim, are considered to be at risk and a thorough risk-assessment of the situation (considering the views of relevant statutory authorities, where appropriate) will be undertaken to ensure the safety of all students. In such circumstances the School will ensure that both the victims and perpetrators receive additional support. Where it is appropriate it may be necessary to remove a student from the School for a period of time, or from particular classes, change sleeping arrangements for boarders, prevent contact between individuals or provide counselling – this list is illustrative rather than exhaustive. As in all safeguarding issues detailed records will be kept of conversations, meetings and communications.

Child-on-child abuse

See also policy on sexual harassment and sexual violence between students

The school takes a 'zero-tolerance' approach to abuse and will not pass allegations off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. All allegations will be taken seriously, which may include, but is not limited to allegations of bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual violence and harassment and sexting (consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images). When supervising students, staff should be vigilant and alert to inappropriate student relationships and to the signs of child-on-child abuse. Staff must recognise that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated or ignored or minimized.

Staff should also be aware of the many different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse. This could include, for example, students being sexually touched or sexually assaulted or being

subject to initiation or hazing type violence; or Upskirting.

The school takes a preventative approach to safeguarding and delivers Relationships, and Sex Education (RSE) lessons to all students. In addition, to minimise the likelihood of child-on-child abuse staff should encourage students to foster positive relationships in School through the House and tutor system, assemblies, PSHE (includes the RSE content) and tutorial programmes and the various mentor systems in place, amongst others. Staff should maintain positive, open and supportive relationships with students where they encourage students to speak out if they are worried about anything. Students are able to anonymously report any child-on-child abuse concerns directly to staff or anonymously via the secure online system, called **Whisper**. Students are taught how to use this programme.

Victims of child-on-child abuse should be supported through the House and tutor systems, counselling provision and the broader healthcare teams. Any student involved in child-on-child abuse will be dealt with under this policy and/ or the School's Anti-bullying Policy. In cases of child-on-child abuse the School will seek advice from statutory agencies, as appropriate and will make a referral to Children's services if an incident meets the referral threshold set by the relevant local authority. If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, an immediate referral to children's services and/or the police will be made.

Sexual harassment and abuse can also be reported through the NSPCC Helpline 0800 136 663

DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

The School works closely with the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) and reports any child welfare concerns to the team within 24 hours. The first point of contact is the Designated Officer (formerly referred to as the LADO). Any safeguarding allegations against staff refers to where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers and volunteers has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The following reporting procedures should be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse against:

1. A member of Staff, Governor, Supply Staff, Volunteer or Contractor: this must be reported to the Academic & Pastoral Principal (APP) and the directly or through the DSL. In all cases where School Staff, Governors, Supply Staff, Volunteers or Contractors are believed to have been involved in abuse the APP and the Artistic Director must be informed, unless they are believed to have been involved, in which case the procedure below will be followed.
2. The DSL or Academic & Pastoral Principal: this must be reported to the Artistic Director.
3. The Artistic Director: this must be reported to the Chair of Governors and the Nominated Safeguarding Governor and will be reported without informing the Artistic Director.
4. In all situations covered in points 1, 2, and 3 above, allegations will first be clarified by the DSL and/or senior staff member. If there are deemed to be no safeguarding concerns, then the matter will be dealt with as a "low level concern" and followed up by the relevant line manager and/or HR department following the School's Staff Conduct or Low-Level Concerns policies. For all allegations, advice will be sort from the LADO. If the allegations are upheld, then the case will be referred to the LADO by the DSL (or senior member of staff). All allegations of abuse against staff, regardless of whether or not referrals to the LADO are made, are recorded on the school's safeguarding

spreadsheet to identify any patterns and/or repeat offenders of such inappropriate/harmful behaviour, along with being documented using Confide, the secure online reporting system. If the allegation is against a Supply Teacher who is not directly employed by the school then the LADO will be contacted and their advice will be followed. The supply teacher's Agency will be notified of the allegation and involved in the relevant response.

5. In all situations covered in points 1, 2, and 3 above, the Safeguarding Governor and the Chair of Governors will be informed when an external referral to the LADO is made.
6. In the event that an allegation is made against a member of the School boarding staff, alternative accommodation will be provided away from boarders. Immediate contact will be made with the LADO to discuss the allegation, consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including any involvement of the Police. Detailed records should be kept of discussions and any communication with both the individual and the parents of the student/students.
7. The decision on whether suspension is appropriate or whether alternative arrangements can be made should be considered. The School will give weight to the view of the LADO when making such a decision about suspension.
8. There are restrictions on the reporting and publishing of allegations against teachers and so every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwarranted publicity in such an event. These restrictions apply up to the point where the accused is charged with an offence, or the DfE / Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) publish information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case.

Further details relating to the further action taken by the School when dealing with such allegations can be found in the Staff Code of Conduct and Employment Handbook, as well as in the school's Low Level Concerns policy.

The School complies with the legal duty to make a referral to the DBS of anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child; where the harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual; where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence; and that the individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been had they not left. Referrals to the DBS are made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual.

Where appropriate, consideration will be given to making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed or would have been dismissed (had he or she not left earlier) and a prohibition order may be appropriate because of unacceptable professional conduct or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence.

The School is committed to creating an atmosphere of openness and accountability – *see the Whistleblowing Policy*.

The Whistleblowing Policy should be used to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practices at the School or the potential failures by the School or its staff to properly safeguard the welfare of students. The Low Level Concerns policy also promotes a culture of staff raising concerns about staff behaviour towards children and outlines the procedures for dealing with such behaviour.

Contact details for the NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline are given above and in the Whistleblowing Policy (in the Red Button folder of the RBS Compliance U: Drive).

CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School and can occur between children outside School. All staff, but especially the DSL and any deputies, should consider the

context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. The School will as part of the wider assessment of children, consider whether environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. The School will share as much information with Children's Services as possible as part of the referral process to enable consideration of all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

EARLY HELP ASSESSMENT

An Early help assessment means providing support to a child to improve a family's resilience and outcomes and reduces the chance of problems getting worse. It is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later and it can also prevent concerns escalating. It relies on local agencies working together to identify children and families who would benefit from early help assessment of their need and provide services to address the needs of the child, with the aim of significantly improving the outcomes for the child.

All staff have a role to play in identifying emerging problems and they should discuss these in the first instance with the DSL. Staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help assessment for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child
 - has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from school
 - has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending

Once emerging problems have been identified they can be shared with other professionals to support early identification and assessment. In some cases, staff may be asked to act as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

The School contributes to inter-agency working in accordance with the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP). This may be, for example, through a coordinated offer of early help through MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub), the CAF (Common Assessment Framework) or TAC (Team around the Child) and involvement with another inter-agency working.

The DSL will keep up to date records of any student who is open to Children's Services (in whichever locality) and use this information appropriately when advising staff on safeguarding and welfare decisions within the school, as outlined in KCSIE (2024).

The child's wishes

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Where there is a safeguarding concern, the child's wishes and feelings should always be considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide. All actions should be undertaken with the best interests of the child at their heart.

SAFER EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE

The Royal Ballet School follows the Government's recommendations for the safer recruitment and employment of staff who work with children. All members of Staff, Governors, Volunteers and Contractors undertaking regulated or non-regulated activity, and resident family members (over 16 years of age) of staff who live on site, are subject to the relevant checks. Similarly, recruitment does not simply rely on a curriculum vitae (CV), but requires a full application form to ensure relevant safeguarding aspects are covered at this stage. In addition, the school may undertake an online search of any applicant as part of its due diligence checks and in line with KCSIE 2024 guidance. See the school's *Safe Recruitment Policy* for full information on safer recruitment at the school.

CATEGORIES AND INDICATORS OF CHILD ABUSE

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, or in an institution or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside their home. They are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

Child abuse may take many forms but is usually divided in the following four categories (see following table). Some possible indicators are listed. The presence of a single indicator is not necessarily evidence of abuse; usually several indicators will be present, BUT, all concerns should be reported to the DSL using MyConcern, the Cause for Concern Form or email directly to the DSL. Emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse but can occur in isolation. In addition, staff should be alert to the specific concerns raised in Annex A of KCSIE (September 2024) of Child-on-Child Abuse, Children Missing from Education, Honour Based Violence, Child Sexual Exploitation, FGM and Forced Marriage and Radicalisation and Extremism – see notes below.

Physical Abuse (includes fabricated & induced illness)		Sexual Abuse (includes grooming a child in preparation for abuse, possibly online; consideration must also be given to women and other children who also sexually assault)	
<i>Physical indicators</i>	<i>Behavioural indicators</i>	<i>Physical indicators</i>	<i>Behavioural indicators</i>
<p>Unexpected bruises, welts, lacerations or abrasions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On face, lips, mouth, torso, back, buttocks, thighs In various stages of healing Clustering forming regular patterns Reflecting shape of article used, e.g. belt, buckle On several different surface areas Regularly appear after absence, weekend, or holiday Bite marks or fingernail marks Cigar or cigarette burns especially on soles, buttocks, palms or back 'Immersion' burns Patterns like electrical burner, iron etc. Rope burns on arms, legs, neck or torso <p>Unexplained fractures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To skull, nose, facial structure In various stages of healing Multiple of spiral fracture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flinching when approached or touched Reluctance to change clothes Wary of adult contacts Difficult to comfort Apprehension when other children cry Crying or irritability Frightened of parents Afraid to go home Rebelliousness in adolescence Reported injury caused by parents Behavioural extremes - aggressiveness, withdrawal, impulsiveness Regression or childish behaviour Apathy or depression Poor peer relationships Neglect Panic in response to pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty in walking, sitting down Stained or bloody underclothing Pain or itching in genital area Bruising, bleeding, injury to external genitalia, vaginal and/or anal areas Vaginal discharge Bed-wetting Excessive crying Sickness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge for the child's age or promiscuity Sudden change in behaviour Running away from home Wary of adults Avoidance of touch Reporting of assault Substance abuse Emotional withdrawal Over-compliance with requests of others Frequent complaints of unexplained abdominal pains Eating problems Sleep disturbances Poor peer relationships Possessing money or 'gifts' that cannot be adequately accounted for Inappropriately sexually explicit drawings or stories Enuresis or soiling, especially at the end of the School day Frequent non-attendance Avoidance of School medical examination

Emotional Abuse (includes silencing children or making fun of them as well as serious bullying & cyberbullying)		Neglect (includes excluding a child from home or abandonment as well as failing to ensure adequate supervision)	
<i>Physical indicators</i>	<i>Behavioural indicators</i>	<i>Physical indicators</i>	<i>Behavioural indicators</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to thrive • Delays in physical development or progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sucking, biting, rocking • Anti-social, destructive • Sleep disorders, inhibition of play • Compliant, passive, aggressive, demanding • Inappropriately adult or infant • Impairment of intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent hunger • Poor hygiene • Inappropriate dress • Consistent lack of supervision, especially in dangerous activities for long periods. • Unattended physical problems or medical needs • Abandonment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begging • Stealing food • Constant fatigue, listlessness • Poor relationships with care-giver • Frequent delays in picking child up from playground or School

SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Staff should always be aware that behaviour linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting (as well as sharing of nude and semi-nude images even when consensual) can put children in danger. The following sections also represent relevant safeguarding issues:

Online Safety – including filtering and monitoring

The School recognises the dangers posed to our students in the online environment and the additional risks represented by students making use of 3G/4G/5G capability on mobile devices. The school, therefore, seeks to educate students, staff and parents in avoiding these dangers as well as creating an appropriate ICT environment to support the implementation of these responsibilities.

Education and guidance on online safety for students

All students are taken through the Student ICT Acceptable Use Policy by House staff as part of the annual induction process paying particular attention to the issues of online safety including sexual exploitation, child-on-child abuse, mental health concerns and the dangers of radicalisation and extremism in an age-appropriate manner.

Ongoing student education is included in the assembly and PSHRE programme at both sites on a regular basis. Students are regularly reminded to report any face-to-face or online bullying or other inappropriate behaviour to staff.

Guidance on where to seek support for any online safety concerns is included in the 'Worried about' notices provided to all students and posted on noticeboards in boarding houses.

Students are made aware of the additional dangers posed by going online using 3G/4G/5G on their mobile devices as opposed to using the filtered environment provided through the school network and Wi-Fi.

Filtering and monitoring

The school network and Wi-Fi channels are subject to filtering and monitoring using *Smoothwall eSAFE*, a specialised software tool designed for keeping children safe in the educational environment. This tool filters and monitors the online activity of all users of the school's network and Wi-Fi channels. This includes students, staff and visitors.

The intention of this filtering and monitoring software is twofold:

- To alert the school to inappropriate or worrying use of the network that may either suggest that a student is at risk or is engaging in risky behavior online, or that a member of staff has engaged in concerning online behavior or accessed concerning online content. This is referred to as monitoring.
- To block users of the school network from accessing harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning. This is referred to as filtering.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Assistant Principal for Pastoral and Welfare (APPW) have lead responsibility for safeguarding and online safety, including oversight of the effective use of *Smoothwall*, which includes overseeing and acting on:

- filtering and monitoring reports
- safeguarding concerns that arise from reports
- checks to filtering and monitoring systems

The IT Manager will have technical responsibility for:

- maintaining the effective technical functioning of *Smoothwall*
- ensuring filtering and monitoring reports are delivered to the DSL and APPW on a daily basis
- completing actions following concerns or checks to systems, for example following up on an alert where the user name is not clear

Daily notifications are sent automatically via email, by *Smoothwall*, to the DSL and the APPW that indicate breaches. A breach occurs when a user of the school's network accesses, or attempts to access, online content, including websites and smart phone apps, or conducts a Google search that is related to content in the following four categories:

1. adult content
2. suicide
3. radicalization
4. drug use

It should be noted that even if content is blocked by the filtering system, the monitoring system will still register the breach and include it in the notification.

The daily notifications are reviewed by both the DSL and APPW. The following guidelines determine the follow up action taken based on daily notifications:

Students:

- Discussion with the student to query their online activity: this would take place in cases where a student has accessed, or attempted to access material that suggests their wellbeing could be at risk, including searches related to mental illness, eating disorders, suicidality, drug use or radicalization. This discussion would take place between the student and the APPW or a member of the pastoral or house staff, as determined by the APPW. Should concerns emerge from this discussion, these will be logged

on MyConcern and appropriate referrals for support will be made. It is necessary to discuss alerts regarding students first, as they may be related to academic research.

- Caution issued to student: in cases where a student's online activity is inappropriate due to them accessing, or attempting to access age restricted material, such as pornography, or accessing or attempting to access an age restricted smart phone apps, such as dating or companion apps, which contain set age restrictions – the student will be issued with a caution and asked to desist from accessing such content. Support will be offered should the student disclose that they have developed difficulty controlling their online activity, or if they believe they have done something unwise or unsafe on a dating or companionship app, such as shared personal information.

Staff:

- Should online activity by a member of staff that indicate that they may pose a risk of harm to children. the procedures and protocols outlined in the 'Dealing with Allegations against staff' section of this policy should be followed

Checks of filtering and monitoring systems

The DSL will perform a check of the school's filtering system at the start of each school term, using the South West Grid for Learning's (SWGfL) testing tool. This will check that the filtering system is blocking access to:

- illegal child sexual abuse material
- unlawful terrorist content
- adult content

The report will be shared with the APPW and the IT manager and kept on record. Should any breaches be found, the IT Manger will be requested investigate and report back on findings and action taken.

Children Absent or Missing Education

Supporting children who are absent from education helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation.

The school will take special note of pupils who are unexplainably or persistently absent from school, and seek to identify potential safeguarding risks, with the view of preventing such pupils from becoming a child missing education in the future. This is particularly important if a persistently absent child is already known to local authority children's social care, where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community. Staff should be aware that children persistently absent or missing School may be an indicator of child abuse or neglect. All absences must be recorded and regular absence (10 days or more without the School's permission) must be reported to the relevant Local Authority. The School complies with the requirements of Children Missing Education (September 2016) – see *Children Missing Education Policy* on the U drive of the school's IT network.

Domestic Abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Children may witness domestic abuse, as well as be exposed to it directly. Either situation can not only have a significant impact at the time, but can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. A helpline to call if you have concerns is:

Freephone 24-Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline on 0808 2000 247

'Honour' Based Abuse

So-called 'Honour based' Abuse (HBA; formerly Honour based violence, HBV, but changed to account for non-violent forms of abuse) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing.

Staff should be aware that all forms of so-called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and they should be handled and reported as such to the DSL. **The only exception of reporting to the DSL first is where FGM has taken place and there is a MANDATORY REPORTING DUTY placed on teachers to report this type of abuse personally to the Police - see the School policy on Female Genital Mutilation which can be found in the Red Button folder on the U: Drive.**

There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBA. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found in the *Multi- Agency Statutory Guidance on FGM* and the *Multi-agency guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage* – both of these documents can be found in the Red Button folder on the U: Drive of the school's IT network.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) are forms of abuse where an individual or group take advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The power imbalance may be not just be due to age, but also due to other factors, such as: gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the

use of technology; and it:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year olds who can legally consent to have sex;
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Staff should be aware of the following signs and indicators for CSE:

Children who:

- Associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- Suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Misuse drugs and alcohol
- Go missing for periods of time
- Miss School or education or do not take part in education
- Appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), including County Lines:

Criminal exploitation of children is another example of abuse that occurs where there is an imbalance of power. The power imbalance may be not just be due to age, but also due to other factors, such as: gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. It is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, child criminal exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation.

It should be noted that CCE experiences may be different for girls compared with boys, although both are at

risk of it. It is also important to note that both boys and girls who are criminally exploited are also more at risk of sexual exploitation as well.

Radicalisation and Extremism

The School's procedures for preventing students being drawn into radicalisation or extremism can be found in the *Prevent Policy* and the *Online Safety Strategy Policy* which can be found in the Red Button folder of the RBS U drive. The preventing of radicalisation includes addressing terrorism. Terrorism refers to: "an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause." (KCSIE, 2024).

In the case of terrorism, schools can refer students and staff to the Channel Programme. This is a voluntary programme run by the government to provide support for those people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The Channel programme is part of the Prevent Strategy and further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

Mental Health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. There is a Mental Health policy at the school which describes the support and processes involved in addressing students' mental health, and it also contains useful public guidance and information. If a member of staff has concerns about a child's mental health and that it is also a safeguarding concern then they need to raise it with the DSL using the normal safeguarding reporting procedures described in this safeguarding policy.

Use of School Premises and Safeguarding

The KCSIE 2024 states that when school premises/facilities are hired or rented to external organisations then the school needs to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe. If the activity is being run by the school then this safeguarding policy applies. If the activity is run by an external organization then the Royal Ballet School DSL or SLT will liaise with the organization and can ask to inspect their relevant safeguarding policies as well.

Should the Royal Ballet School become aware of an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using the school premises for the purposes of running activities for children, the school will follow the standard safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION (KCSIE)

This Statutory Guidance is updated yearly and the 2023 version comes into force on 1st September 2023. Prior to then, the 2022 version remained the active guidance. The summary of this Guidance is provided to all staff on the Safeguarding & Child Protection Induction webpage and is also published in the Red Button folder of the U drive. All staff are required to have read and understood at least Part 1 and Annex A 'Further information', of KCSIE, September 2024. They are also required to have signed to confirm that they have read and understood it.

The key messages that staff should pay particular attention to (in addition to the key information already outlined in this policy) are:

- specific safeguarding issues that might not have been explicit in the past. These topics include Child-on-Child Abuse, Honour-based Violence and Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
- understanding the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities of learners with SEN and disabilities, and how these barriers can be overcome
- the importance of early help assessment and that staff need to be able to identify and monitor learners who need this level of support
- the role of the DSL and deputies
- the importance of implementing a robust system of filtering and monitoring of the School network to protect against online dangers
- that Governors should ensure that children are being taught about safeguarding as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

VULNERABLE STUDENTS

It is of key importance that staff recognise that children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disabilities are more likely to be abused or neglected and that they can face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff should be sensitive to indicators of possible abuse such as changes in behaviour and mood. Such indicators should never be dismissed because of the child's disability without further exploration. Likewise, it is important to recognise that students with SEN can be disproportionately impacted by bullying, without showing any signs of it.

Staff should support individual children 'in need' such as those with learning difficulties (SEN), family problems and medical or health problems etc. through the use of the School's pastoral system, Individual Welfare Plans and so on. Staff should report any concerns regarding a child to the relevant member of the pastoral or healthcare team as soon as possible, e.g. House staff, Nurse, Physiotherapist, APPW etc.

Staff should familiarise themselves with the SEN and EAL registers (and updates) and raise any specific concerns that they have with the pastoral staff. All Staff should be alert to flagging any concerns relating to families and medical and health problems.

RAISING AWARENESS OF SAFEGUARDING ISSUES WITH STUDENTS

The School takes a preventative approach to safeguarding as expected from KCSIE 2024 guidance. The school provides age appropriate training for all students in safeguarding & child protection issues at the start of each School year. This includes the discussion of the key policies such as the Online Safety Strategy, ICT Acceptable Use Policy for Students, the Anti-bullying Policy and building resilience to extremism and radicalisation. See also the *Prevent Policy* and the '*Worried About*' notices.

The PSHE Programmes and Tutor Programmes ensure that students are taught about safeguarding, and

general welfare topics such as healthy and respectful relationships, how to stay safe online and other wider safeguarding issues. It is also an integral part of the Student induction process as well as ongoing education throughout the year which includes the assembly programme.

The School's PSHE and tutoring programmes encourage students to engage in discussion and an opportunity to talk issues through. It ensures that students are aware of how to raise concerns about themselves or their friends. One method which they can use is the online anonymous system, called **Whisper** and students are taught how to use this programme. The safeguarding topics may be covered in the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) or Health Education sections of PSHE, which are compulsory from 2020 in all secondary schools and all state-funded schools, respectively. The methods by which students can report concerns are made clear to them at the start of each year, as well as through visible posters around the school, including the boarding environment.

The KCSIE 2024 provides additional information on how schools can help keep children safe online and offline, and deliver effective safeguarding training.

The school allows students to access the internet for educational and social purposes. There is an ICT acceptable use policy that they students must follow. The school network utilises a monitoring and filtering system (Smoothwall) which restricts the use of the internet to appropriate sites only. The system is operational 24 hours each day. If there is an attempt to access a site deemed to be inappropriate, a report is sent to the DSL (and to the Assistant Principal, Pastoral and Welfare) which will then be followed up with the relevant student. The internet is shut down at 11:00 pm every night to avoid any overnight use.

The school has strict guidelines on the use of mobile technology. These can be found in the Student IT Acceptable Use Policy. Section 5 outlines the use of personal devices:

5. Personal Devices

- *Students should not use mobile phones or similar devices in academic lessons or in the studios unless they have been asked to do so by a member of staff. This includes sending texts, making calls, taking photographs, videos, recordings and any other similar activities.*
- *House Staff will request student mobile numbers at the start of the year and these will be recorded in the House files and used to ensure the students' health and safety. If you get a new mobile phone number, please let house staff know immediately.*
- *Contact with House Staff will always be through the House mobile or School landline.*

In Years 7-9 all personal devices are handed to house staff before the students go to bed each evening. In Year 10-11 students are allowed to keep their devices on Friday and Saturday.

SAFEGUARDING ISSUES SPECIFIC TO THE ROYAL BALLET SCHOOL

The Royal Ballet School is aware of specific risks faced by our students in respect to Safeguarding, many of which arise from the high-profile nature of the School, the students' participation in public performances and the physical nature of the artistic training. Staff and students are aware of specific guidance contained in the *Appropriate Physical Contact in Dance Policy*. Where students are engaged in one to one teaching staff must be mindful of this and ensure that they follow the practices outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct. Staff are required to be vigilant in all aspects of School life and to raise any concerns with the DSL immediately.

The student induction process is age-appropriate and specifically focused on ensuring our students are aware of potential safeguarding issues and these are reinforced by staff. At Upper School additional concerns such as

the need to travel in and around London in groups and the risks attached to living in a large capital city are also included. Further details are provided in the Boarding Handbooks. Students of all ages are required to comply with the ICT Acceptable Use Policy for Students.

Working at External Dance Organisations

Across the whole school, students are often asked to attend rehearsals and performances (or other dance project work) at professional dance companies. The School takes extremely seriously the need for adequate supervision by School Staff and Licensed Chaperones during such rehearsals, performances and whilst travelling. The most common request is by the Royal Ballet Company, with whom the students rehearse and perform for throughout the year. The safeguarding processes in place for students whilst they are attending rehearsals and/or performances at the Royal Opera House (ROH; i.e. for the Royal Ballet Company) primarily comprise a designated safeguarding/welfare officer onsite at the ROH whenever a student is also on site working. Students are introduced to the designated welfare officer (this may be a named team of officers who act on a duty system rather than one individual) at the start of each year and their relevant contact details are provided and students reminded of them regularly. This arrangement is primarily for Upper School students, as White Lodge students in a similar situation of working at the ROH will have a chaperone provided for them. In these instances, the chaperone is the primary safeguarding person for the visiting student, although the ROH designated safeguarding officer may be of assistance if required. The safeguarding measures and processes for when students work at either the ROH, or at Birmingham Royal Ballet (BRB) are outlined in more detail in the ROH and BRB safeguarding protocols, which can be viewed in the RED Button folder on the U: drive of the staff shared ICT network.

The Boarding Environment

Whilst the School accepts that students may develop peer relationships whilst at School they are required to abide by the *Relationship Policy*. Boarding Staff are required to be alert to any signs of child-on-child abuse and to report it immediately following the procedures listed above.

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

All staff must ensure that they are familiar with the Staff Code of Conduct (summarised on the Red Card) and abide by the expectations of the School in regard to acceptable professional behaviour and their relationship with students. Staff with any concerns about the behaviour of students towards them should make use of the self-referral form in the Red Button folder of the RBS Compliance U: Drive. *See also section on Allegations against Staff above*, or they can discuss the matter with the DSL directly if unsure.

VISITING SPEAKERS

Any member of staff who invites an external speaker or guest teacher to the School must vet the speaker by means of Google and other relevant internet searches to check for any possible concerns about radical or extremist views. The checks are recorded with HR who keep a log of these checks.

All speakers must be supervised at all times. Should a speaker raise topics that support or espouse radical, extremist or other unsuitable views then the member of staff should ask the speaker to stop and escort them from the premises. In such cases appropriate follow-up discussions should be held with students to help them understand the concerns about the spread of radicalisation and extremism.

Any visiting speaker invited by a student would first be vetted by a member of staff and subject to the same supervision as outlined above – See the *Prevent Policy* for further details relating to radicalisation and extremism.

APPROPRIATE ADULT

The DSL must liaise with the Academic & Pastoral Principal, or Artistic Director, to inform him or her of issues such as ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. In particular, this liaison should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pace-code-c-2019/pace-code-c-2019-accessible>,

which contains the Statutory guidance.

APPENDIX 1

ANNEX A: TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All School and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Please note that "Upskirting" (the practice of taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing) is now classified as a criminal offence. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's 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 shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

ANNEX B: ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

Governing bodies, proprietors and management committees should appoint an appropriate senior member of staff, from the School or college leadership team, to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. This should be explicit in the role holder's job description. This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the School to carry out the duties of the post. They should be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and interagency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children.

Deputy designated safeguarding leads

It is a matter for individual Schools and colleges as to whether they choose to have one or more deputy designated safeguarding lead(s). Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead (i.e. completed Level 3 Children Safeguarding training).

Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate **lead responsibility** for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead; this **lead responsibility** should not be delegated.

Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- Refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's services as required;
- Support staff who make referrals to local authority children's services;
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- Ensure that the Disclosure and Barring Service are informed of any cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child.
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.

Work with others

- Liaise with the Artistic Director, Principal or APPW to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- As required, liaise with the "case manager" and the LADO at the local authority for child protection concerns (cases which concern a staff member); and
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

Undertake training

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years.

The designated safeguarding lead should undertake Prevent awareness training.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help assessments and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the School's or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;¹
- Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- Understand and support the School or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the School or college may put in place to protect them.

Raise Awareness

¹ Section 17(10) Children Act 1989: those unlikely to achieve a reasonable standard of health and development without local authority services, those whose health and development is likely to be significantly impaired without the provision of such services, or disabled children.

- The designated safeguarding lead should ensure the School or college's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- Ensure the School or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;
- Ensure the child safeguarding policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the School or college in this; and
- Link with the local LSCP to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.

Child protection file

- Where children leave the School or college ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new School or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Availability

- During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during School hours) for staff in the School to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, this may not always be possible given that the DSL works across both sites of the Royal Ballet School. Therefore, at times where face to face communication is not possible, then the DSL should still be available via phone, email or other such format that allows for necessary communication in a timely fashion.
- During School holiday's safeguarding concerns should be raised with the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) where the students reside. Concerns raised during the holidays will only be actioned in the week preceding the start of term by the DSL if informed during the holidays.

The DSL will generally only be on leave during holiday periods. However, even during these times, or during any other exceptional circumstances where the DSL is absent, then the DSL deputies, including the APPW will provide appropriate cover arrangements for any safeguarding matters.