



British Dance Council
Procedure for Managing Allegations of harm against children

This procedure should be read alongside the British Dance Council Safeguarding Children Policy.

There are also policies available for managing allegations against at risk adults and safeguarding adults.

1. Purpose and Principles

It is vital that any allegation of abuse involving individuals who work with children and young people—whether in a paid or voluntary role—is handled promptly, consistently, and fairly. The process must ensure effective protection for the child while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

This procedure aims to:

- Ensure all allegations are addressed efficiently and fairly
- Prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children and young people
- Promote safe practice and address poor or unsafe conduct
- Support effective partnership working with relevant agencies

2. Scope

This guidance applies to all individuals associated with the British Dance Council, including (but not limited to):

- Staff and office holders
- Members and licence holders
- The President, Vice President, and Board of Directors
- The designated safeguarding lead
- Volunteers, assistants, and those working on behalf of the organisation
- contractors

This document applies to anyone working with, representing, or acting on behalf of the British Dance Council in a position of trust.

3. When This Procedure Applies

This procedure must be followed where there are concerns that an individual may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- Potentially committed a criminal offence against or involving a child
- Acted in a way that suggests they may pose a risk of harm to children

Examples include:

- Concerns about behaviour in professional or personal life indicating unsuitability to work with children
- Safeguarding concerns that have been raised relating to an individual's own children
- Issues arising from the conduct of family or household members, for example concerns about suitability through association
- Concerns relating to inappropriate or unsafe associations or professional boundaries

4. Sources of Allegations

Allegations or concerns may arise from a range of sources, including:

- A child or young person
- A parent, guardian, or other adult
- Police or children's social care services
- Members of the public
- Professional colleagues (e.g. a dance teacher)
- Anonymous disclosures

5. Reporting Concerns

All safeguarding concerns should be raised to children's social care or the police in the local authority area where the incident of harm occurred.

Everyone has a duty to report safeguarding concerns.

All safeguarding concerns should also be reported promptly via the designated safeguarding contact Safeguarding-Officer@britishdancecouncil.com.

General complaints should be submitted through the appropriate organisational contact route. Details on complaints and the form to complete can be downloaded from the BDC website.

All complaints will be assessed to determine whether safeguarding concerns are present. Any safeguarding matters will be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The DSL will conduct an initial review and, where appropriate, share information with the President/ Vice president or relevant members of the Board of Directors. If the

concern involves these individuals, the matter must be referred to an alternative, impartial board member.

All members are required, as a condition of membership, to cooperate fully with requests for information and to comply with any actions or recommendations made by the DSL, President, Vice president or Board of Directors where allegations have been made or complaints raised.

6. External Reporting and Immediate Risk

Where the BDC is made aware there is reason to believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the British Dance Council will refer the matter to the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The BDC will act alongside awarding organisations to ensure all necessary concerns are reported and all key organisations are aware and involved as necessary.

If an allegation is sent to LADO and the BDC is made aware, on liaising with LADO the BDC will make them aware of the individuals awarding organisation and that they should be involved in process.

It is usual to expect that where the BDC is made aware of concerns or allegations, that individuals awarding organisation (for teaching) will also be aware. The BDC may choose to liaise with awarding organisations, to share appropriate information, to work in partnership with them and to support action they may take to ensure an individual's teaching practice is safe.

If there is an immediate risk to a child, especially outside normal working hours, the police or social care out of hours teams must be contacted without delay.

7. Record Keeping

Accurate and detailed records must be maintained for all allegations, including:

- The nature and context of the concern
- Events leading up to the allegation
- Actions taken and decisions made
- The final outcome

These records will be securely retained by the British Dance Council.

8. Managing the Process

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise with external agencies such as the LADO, police and the individuals awarding organisation/s as required.

Where appropriate the BDC will support the individuals awarding organisation to lead on all work regarding safeguarding concerns and any investigation required by local authorities and will assist in all ways practical and possible. This positioning is due to the fact that awarding organisations usually have more regulatory oversight than the BDC.

The BDC can take the lead on matters where it is not appropriate for the individuals awarding body or the event organiser where the alleged incident took place to take the lead. For example, due to lack of information or conflict of interest.

Where advised by relevant authorities, an individual's membership may be temporarily suspended while investigations are ongoing.

Suspension:

- Is a precautionary measure
- Is implemented to safeguard children and protect all involved parties
- Will only be used where there is a clear justification, such as risk of harm or ongoing investigation
- May be used to mitigate reputational risk to the BDC

The BDC may choose to suspend a member to support and reflect the actions of an awarding organisation or if it is agreed in a strategy or position of trust meeting that this is the safest course of action.

It is important to recognise suspension is not a neutral act and it changes the nature of the relationship between the organisation and the individual. Suspension should be used only where absolutely necessary to protect, prevent the risk of further harm or to prevent reputational damage.

9. Communication and Support

Decisions regarding informing parents, guardians, or carers will be made in consultation with relevant agencies. Efforts will be made to ensure families understand the process and are supported appropriately.

The individual subject to the allegation will:

- Be treated fairly and with transparency
- Be informed of the nature of the concerns and process (where possible)
- Receive support and guidance throughout
- Be kept updated on progress and outcomes

A named contact—typically the DSL—will be provided.

10. Multi-Agency and Strategy Meetings

Where required, the British Dance Council will participate in strategy or position-of-trust meetings, usually represented by the DSL. Where considered necessary the DSL may be accompanied by the president or vice president.

These meetings focus on assessing risk and determining suitability to work with children.

Where the BDC is aware of the individuals awarding organisation the BDC will ensure the LADO is made aware.

Where allegations occur at any event the BDC will ensure the correct event organisers and promoters are also known to LADO.

The BDC will not act alone but work in partnership with the organisations with a need to know unless advised by the police or local authority that to share information would be unsafe.

11. Decision-Making and Outcomes

Following the conclusion of investigations:

- The President and the Board of Directors, supported by information from the DSL, will determine appropriate outcomes, actions or recommendations regarding membership
- Decisions will align with the organisation's code of conduct and safeguarding policy, safeguarding guidance, best practice and the law.

Possible outcomes may include:

- Reinstatement where allegations are false, or malicious
- Termination of membership where allegations are substantiated/ significant risk remains
- Termination of membership due to prosecution
- Recommendations such as access to further training or resources or specific pieces of mentoring work or support where an allegation is, for example unsubstantiated and additional protective measures could support stronger practice

The organisation reserves the right to act in the best interests of children, families, and its wider membership.

12. External Notifications

Safeguarding authorities and disclosure bodies may be informed of decisions, particularly where an individual is deemed unsuitable to work with children.

13. Safeguarding Concerns

Where concerns do not meet the threshold for external referral:

- The DSL will assess and address the matter internally
- Will share concerns with the individuals awarding organisation
- All actions will align with safeguarding policy and expected standards of conduct
- Failure to meet safeguarding expectations may result in disciplinary action where behaviour does not align with expected conduct

14. Conduct and Conflict of Interest

All disciplinary processes must be conducted fairly and without conflict of interest. Individuals, such as a director, the president, vice president or the DSL, with personal connections to the subject of an allegation must not be involved in decision-

making and must be granted the right to uninvolved themselves from all information and decision making. Alternative solutions and independent arrangements should be sought.

Where concerns involve members of the Board and neutrality becomes challenging to achieve a panel of selected directors without personal conflict can be appointed to oversee and address concerns.

15. Membership Responsibilities

All members must adhere to safeguarding policies and procedures. Failure to do so may constitute misconduct and result in disciplinary action.

16. Resignation During Investigation

If a member resigns membership while an allegation is under investigation:

- The safeguarding process must still be completed
- Relevant information must be shared with appropriate authorities

17. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the process. Information should only be shared with those who need to know in order to:

- Protect children
- Support investigations
- Manage organisational responsibilities

Consent should be sought before sharing information where it is safe and appropriate to do so, in line with safeguarding policy. All information shall be shared in accordance with law and guidance.