



CHILD PROTECTION / SAFEGUARDING POLICY

We believe that no child or young person should be the subject of neglectful or abusive behaviour.

We will promote and maintain the welfare and well-being of every child in our care and seek to protect them from harm regardless of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief or any other form of identity or creed.

We will create a safe and welcoming environment for all.

This policy applies to all our staff, volunteers and chaperones and covers children under the age of 18 and/or vulnerable adults under the age of 24.

To protect children and young people in our care, we will:

- Value and respect children and listen to what they have to say
- Work with children, parents and relevant organisations
- Share our policy with all staff, parents and students
- Ensure all required checks are made when hiring staff and that those in regular contact with children hold a current DBS check
- Provide appropriate training and support to all staff
- Take responsibility for children and young people's safety when in our care
- Seek permission from parents before taking images (photographs or film) of students and inform them how and where the images will be used
- Report suspected neglect or abuse swiftly to the nominated member of staff (the Principal) who will then contact the local safeguarding team
- Ensure that this policy is regularly updated

Additional guidance can be found in the following documents at the end of this policy:

- Reporting Suspected Neglect or Abuse
- Appropriate Physical Contact in Dance (incorporating Drama & Musical Theatre)
- Chaperoning Students to and from Dance Events
- Use of Photographs and Film of Children

Penelope Lambert
Principal

Date last Revised: 1st September 2021 Date for Review: 1st September 2022

Additional Guidance A: Reporting Suspected Neglect or Abuse

Concerns regarding a child's welfare can be reported by:

- Parents
- Teachers
- Friends
- The child or young person

All allegations of neglect or abuse will be taken seriously. If a concern is reported directly by the child or young person we will not seek to disagree, ask probing or leading questions, or do anything else which may discourage them. We will make it clear that reported concerns cannot be kept confidential but will need to be shared with a nominated member of staff or external organisation. Parents or guardians will also be involved if appropriate.

We recognise that early action is vital. Any concerns will be reported immediately. If the child or young person is in immediate danger of harm, we will contact the police on 999.

In all other cases, we will report concerns to the local Protection Team

Contact: Children and Young People's Team

Address: Customer Contact, PO Box 618, Taunton, TA1 3WF

Email: childrens@somerset.gov.uk

Phone: 0300 123 2224

OR to the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

Phone: 0808 800 5000

Additional Guidance B: Appropriate Physical Contact in Drama, Musical Theatre & Dance

Teaching drama, dance, singing and musical theatre is a physical activity and a teacher will sometimes need to make physical contact with a student to show an idea or to correct the student's position. This can include:

- Lifting
- Adjusting arms, legs, rib cage, hips, feet, hands
- Moving one student in relation to another

Where contact is needed, we will remain sensitive to the student's wishes and put their welfare first. In all cases, we will say why and how we will be correcting the student's position before making any contact. We encourage students to report any concerns.

During the course of some **WATA** classes students may need to touch each other for example as part of their acting out of scenes and during partner dances. Staff will keep this to a minimum and ensure that all students involved feel comfortable with any touch involved.

Staff may when necessary give a distressed child comfort and reassurance which may include physical comfort such as a caring parent would give. Staff will use their discretion in such cases to ensure that this does not become unnecessary and unjustified and will inform the parents of the pupil if appropriate.

Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek the advice of Penelope Lambert – Principal or Beth Hancock – Wellbeing Officer.

Additional Guidance C: Chaperoning Children at Shows & During Theatre Trips

When chaperoning students on a Theatre Trip or Theatre Event, we will:

- Provide parents and students with information about what the event is for
- Provide parents and students with the full address of the event
- Supply the planned journey route with parents and students upon request
- Make sure that students are aware of what they should do if they get lost
- Ask parents and students for their contact details in case of emergency
- Have a clear idea of how students will be cared for while at the event and ensure students know who is responsible for their wellbeing and safety at all times

We will ensure that chaperones hold all required checks and licences and are aware of our Child Protection Policy.

Parents of children under 6 years old will be asked to accompany their children to any show dressing areas until just before the show when a senior member of staff will take over care of the children.

Additional Guidance D: Use of Photographs and Film of Children

We recognise that taking images of students in our care may not always be appropriate and that some children and parents may not want images taken at any time. Therefore, before taking images of a child or young person, we will:

- Make clear to the child and parent where and when the image will be taken
- Clearly identify the person who will be taking the image
- Explain how the image will be used, e.g. whether it will be posted on social media or printed to be displayed at the school
- Seek written agreement from parents that images can be taken of their child

Where we have publicly displayed images at our school or on social media, parents and students may withdraw their permission at any time. In such cases, the images will be removed as soon as is reasonable and without question. We ask that any parent wanting to take photos or film at our events only do so with our prior permission. Permission will only be granted on the agreement of all present.