

Complaints Procedure – Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness

1. Introduction

At Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness, we are committed to providing a safe, welcoming, inclusive and positive environment for all children, young people and adults who attend our classes.

We value our partnership with parents, guardians, participants and staff, and recognise that open communication is an important part of maintaining a high standard of service.

While we hope that concerns will rarely arise, we recognise that problems can occasionally occur. When they do, we are committed to listening carefully, taking concerns seriously and dealing with them fairly, respectfully and as promptly as possible.

We encourage parents, guardians and participants to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity so that we can work together towards a positive resolution.

We recognise that parents or participants may sometimes feel nervous about raising a concern. We therefore assure you that:

- If something is important to you, it is important to us.
- All concerns will be treated seriously and respectfully.
- Raising a concern or complaint will not result in a child or participant being treated unfairly, disadvantaged or discriminated against.
- We will seek to resolve concerns constructively wherever possible.
- We will use complaints and feedback as an opportunity to learn and improve our service.

2. Scope of This Policy

This complaints procedure applies to concerns or complaints relating to Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness, including matters concerning:

- The quality or organisation of classes
- Teaching and staff conduct
- Behaviour or inappropriate conduct
- Bullying, harassment or discrimination
- Student wellbeing
- Safeguarding concerns
- Communication with parents, guardians or participants
- Class facilities or the learning environment
- Inclusion and accessibility
- Additional needs and the support provided within classes
- Reasonable adjustments
- Concerns relating to our Additional Needs class
- Any other matter which a parent, guardian or participant feels requires attention

Safeguarding concerns will always be taken seriously and dealt with in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy and relevant safeguarding procedures.

Where a concern relates to a matter covered by another specific policy or procedure, we may refer to that policy when determining the appropriate course of action.

3. Inclusion and Additional Needs

Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness is committed to providing an inclusive environment where children and participants are welcomed, respected and encouraged to take part to the best of their ability.

We recognise that children and participants may have additional needs, disabilities, medical requirements, communication differences, sensory needs or other individual circumstances which may affect their experience within a class.

Our Additional Needs class is designed to provide a supportive and welcoming environment for participants who may benefit from a more adapted class setting.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to communicate relevant information about their child's needs with us before attending, so that we can consider appropriate support and adjustments.

Where a participant has additional needs, we will:

- Listen to information provided by parents or guardians.
- Consider reasonable adjustments where appropriate and practicable.
- Work with families to understand how we can best support participation.
- Consider the individual needs of the child when planning and delivering classes.
- Treat all participants with dignity, respect and fairness.
- Review arrangements where a child's needs or circumstances change.

We will always aim to support inclusion; however, we must also consider the safety and wellbeing of the individual participant, other participants and staff, as well as the resources and level of support available within a particular class.

Where we believe that additional support, specialist provision or an alternative arrangement may be necessary, we will discuss this with the parent or guardian wherever possible and seek an appropriate way forward.

4. Our Commitment When Handling Complaints

We will:

- Take all concerns and complaints seriously.
- Listen to all relevant parties fairly and without prejudice.
- Respond politely, professionally and respectfully.
- Keep information confidential wherever reasonably possible.
- Investigate matters appropriately and proportionately.
- Provide an explanation of the outcome where appropriate.
- Apologise and take corrective action where an error has been identified.
- Keep parents, guardians or participants updated where an investigation takes additional time.
- Seek to resolve matters constructively.
- Use appropriate feedback to improve our policies, procedures and services.

We ask that anyone raising a concern communicates respectfully with Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness staff.

Abusive, threatening, discriminatory or intimidating behaviour towards staff will not be tolerated. Where this occurs, we may take appropriate steps to protect the wellbeing and safety of staff, participants and other families.

5. Raising a Concern Informally

We hope that most concerns can be resolved informally and at an early stage.

Parents, guardians or participants are encouraged to speak to Samantha Boden as soon as possible if they have a concern.

Concerns may be raised:

- In person, outside class times
- By telephone
- By email
- In writing

Where appropriate, we may be able to resolve a concern through an informal conversation without the need for a formal investigation.

Parents and guardians are asked, wherever possible, to raise concerns directly with Samantha rather than discussing individual concerns with other parents, children or participants.

6. When to Make a Formal Complaint

A formal complaint may be made where:

- An informal concern has not been resolved satisfactorily.
- You feel your concern has not been handled appropriately.
- The matter has not been resolved within a reasonable timeframe.
- You remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal stage.
- The nature of the matter is sufficiently serious that formal consideration is appropriate.

Formal complaints should be submitted in writing by email or letter.

Please provide as much relevant information as possible, including:

- The nature of the complaint.

- What happened and when.
 - Who was involved, where known.
 - Any relevant information or evidence.
 - Details of any previous discussions regarding the matter.
 - What outcome or resolution you are seeking.
 - Your contact details.
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7. Contact Details

Formal Written Complaints

Formal complaints should be sent to:

Samantha Boden

Principal

Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness

Email:

samanthadenes@outlook.com

Postal Address:

East View

Village Road

Rhosesmor

CH7 6PJ

Verbal Concerns

Telephone: **07598 430454**

Alternatively, you may speak to Samantha in person outside of class hours.

8. Acknowledgement and Response Times

We aim to acknowledge formal complaints within **five working days** of receiving them.

We will then consider the nature and complexity of the complaint and determine the appropriate course of action.

Where a complaint can be resolved quickly, we will aim to do so as soon as reasonably practicable.

Where a fuller investigation is required, we will explain this and keep the complainant informed of progress.

We aim to provide a substantive written response as soon as reasonably practicable and normally within **10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged**, where the circumstances allow.

During school holidays or particularly busy periods, additional time may occasionally be required. If this is the case, the complainant will be informed and given an expected timescale.

9. Investigation and Course of Action

Once a formal complaint has been received, Samantha will:

1. Review the complaint and the information provided.
2. Determine whether further information is required.
3. Consider whether another policy or procedure also applies.
4. Speak to relevant staff members or other individuals where appropriate.
5. Review relevant records or information where necessary.
6. Consider the views of the child or participant where appropriate and suitable.
7. Consider any relevant additional needs, accessibility requirements or reasonable adjustments.
8. Determine appropriate action based on the findings.
9. Communicate the outcome to the complainant in writing.

Where a meeting would assist in resolving or investigating the complaint, the complainant may be invited to attend a meeting, normally within **10 working days**, where reasonably practicable.

The purpose of a meeting may be to clarify the concerns, establish the facts, discuss possible solutions and work towards a resolution.

10. Complex Complaints

Some complaints may require additional investigation due to their nature or complexity.

Examples may include complaints involving:

- Multiple members of staff or participants.
- Safeguarding considerations.
- Additional needs or complex support arrangements.
- Allegations requiring information from several individuals.
- Matters where relevant information is not immediately available.

Where additional time is required, the complainant will be informed of the reason and provided with an updated timescale.

Where possible, a written decision will be provided within a further **14 working days** following the initial investigation or meeting.

If the investigation is likely to take longer than this, the complainant will be kept informed.

11. Outcome of a Complaint

Following an investigation, the complaint may be:

- **Upheld** – where the evidence supports the complaint.
- **Partially upheld** – where some aspects of the complaint are supported.
- **Not upheld** – where the evidence does not support the complaint.
- **Unable to be determined** – where there is insufficient evidence to reach a clear conclusion.

The written response will explain, where appropriate:

- What was considered.
- The findings of the investigation.
- The reasons for the outcome.
- Any action being taken as a result.
- Any relevant improvements or changes to procedures.

Due to confidentiality and data protection requirements, we may not always be able to provide details about actions taken in relation to another individual.

12. Review of a Complaint

If you remain dissatisfied following the outcome of a formal complaint, you may request a review.

A request for review should be made in writing and should explain:

- Why you believe the complaint was not handled appropriately.
- Any relevant information that you believe was not considered.
- Why you remain dissatisfied with the outcome.

The review will consider whether the complaints procedure was followed appropriately and whether relevant information was properly considered.

Where reasonably practicable, an independent person may be involved in reviewing a complaint where this would be appropriate.

A request for review should normally be made within **10 working days of receiving the written outcome**.

13. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All concerns and complaints will be treated sensitively and confidentially.

Information will only be shared where it is necessary and appropriate to investigate or respond to the complaint, to safeguard a child or participant, or where we are legally required to do so.

Complaints will be recorded and may include:

- The details of the complaint.
- Relevant correspondence.
- Notes of meetings or conversations.
- Information gathered during an investigation.
- The outcome of the complaint.
- Any actions or improvements identified.

Complaint records will be handled in accordance with our Privacy Policy and applicable data protection requirements.

Records may be referred to in the future where this is necessary and appropriate.

14. Safeguarding Concerns

If a complaint or concern raises a safeguarding issue, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy and relevant safeguarding procedures.

Safeguarding concerns will be prioritised according to the level of risk and may require immediate action.

Where necessary, information may be shared with the appropriate safeguarding professionals or authorities.

Our normal complaints timescales may not apply where safeguarding action or external advice is required.

15. Anonymous Complaints

We will consider anonymous complaints where sufficient information has been provided to allow the matter to be investigated.

However, it may not always be possible to investigate an anonymous complaint fully or provide feedback about the outcome.

Where contact details are provided, we will communicate with the complainant wherever reasonably possible.

16. Learning and Continuous Improvement

We view complaints and feedback as an important opportunity to improve Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness.

Where a complaint identifies an area for improvement, we may:

- Review our policies or procedures.
- Provide additional guidance or training to staff.
- Make changes to class arrangements.
- Improve communication with families.
- Review accessibility or inclusion arrangements.
- Make changes to the way information is provided to parents or participants.

The purpose of the complaints procedure is not simply to resolve individual concerns, but also to help us maintain and improve the quality of the service we provide.

17. Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation rests with:

Samantha Boden

Principal

Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness

This policy will be reviewed periodically and updated where necessary to reflect changes to our services, policies, procedures or legal requirements.

Policy owner: Samantha Boden

Organisation: Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness

Contact: samanthadenes@outlook.com

Telephone: 07598 430454