

Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness – Safeguarding Policy

Policy Owner: Samantha Dene Boden

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): Samantha Dene Boden

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1. Introduction

Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness is a for-profit organisation run by Miss Samantha Dene Boden. Classes are delivered by Samantha and her self-employed teaching team, all of whom share responsibility for safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk.

This policy applies to all staff, teachers, assistants, volunteers, chaperones, students and anyone working on behalf of Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness.

Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness provides dance, fitness, performing arts, holiday clubs, parties and other activities for children, young people and adults, including dedicated classes and activities for participants with additional needs and disabilities.

We recognise that some participants may have additional needs, disabilities, communication differences, sensory needs, medical needs or other circumstances which may increase vulnerability or affect their ability to recognise, communicate or report concerns.

We are committed to ensuring that all participants are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm, and that reasonable adjustments are made wherever possible to enable participants to take part safely, with dignity and respect.

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2. Mission Statement

We believe that no child, young person or adult should experience abuse, neglect, exploitation or harm.

This policy outlines the principles guiding our safeguarding approach and ensures all team members understand their responsibilities in protecting participants.

We recognise that children and adults with additional needs or disabilities may face additional barriers to communication or disclosure and may be at increased risk of abuse or neglect. Their individual needs must never be used to dismiss, explain away or overlook a safeguarding concern.

We will always listen to, value and support those in our care and work in an open, transparent and safe environment.

We aim to provide an inclusive environment in which every participant, regardless of ability, disability, additional needs, communication style, background or circumstances, can participate safely and with dignity.

3. Legal Framework & Commitment

Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness recognises its duty of care under:

- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard People (Wales), Volumes 1–6
- Wales Safeguarding Procedures
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (Wales) Regulations 2015, where applicable
- Relevant current Welsh safeguarding guidance and legislation

We promote safeguarding as everyone's responsibility and log all safeguarding training undertaken by team members.

We are committed to creating a safe, enjoyable, inclusive and respectful environment for all participants.

Safeguarding procedures will be applied consistently to all participants, while recognising that some individuals may require additional support, reasonable adjustments or alternative communication methods to enable them to participate safely and communicate concerns.

4. Safeguarding and Door Security

Main entrance and drama room doors remain unlocked for the first 5 minutes of class.

After this, doors are locked to ensure only authorised adults can enter.

Fire exits remain accessible at all times.

Where venues have no alternative fire exits, the main doors will remain unlocked.

Parents and carers must collect children promptly.

If doors are locked, parents and carers should follow venue instructions, knock, call 07598 430454, or signal through a window where appropriate.

Only authorised adults may collect a child. Any changes to collection arrangements must be communicated to Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness in advance wherever possible.

Where a participant has additional needs which affect communication, independence or collection arrangements, appropriate information should be provided by the parent or carer before the session.

4.1 Supervision of Children

Children not participating in a session remain the responsibility of their parent or guardian.

Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness cannot accept liability for children in public or communal areas.

Participants attending unaccompanied children's sessions remain under the supervision of the designated teaching team during the session.

For additional-needs sessions, the level of supervision and support will be considered according to the needs of the group and individual participants. Parents and carers should provide relevant information about any support requirements before attendance.

Where a participant requires a parent, carer or support worker to remain present as part of an agreed support arrangement, this should be discussed with Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness before the session.

5. Recognising Risks to Children

Children may require protection from:

- Sexual, physical or emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Grooming
- Bullying or cyberbullying
- Domestic abuse
- Financial exploitation
- Unsafe environments

- Self-harm
- Criminal exploitation
- Inappropriate supervision
- Discrimination
- Abuse linked to disability or additional needs
- Exploitation or inappropriate use of a child's dependency on adults
- Online abuse or exploitation

Team members are trained to look for indicators of abuse.

A non-exhaustive list of possible signs is included in the full internal safeguarding guidance.

Additional care should be taken where a child has limited verbal communication, uses alternative communication methods, has difficulty expressing emotions or experiences, or may communicate distress through changes in behaviour.

Changes in behaviour, communication, presentation or emotional state must not automatically be attributed to a child's disability or additional needs. Any unexplained or concerning change should be considered appropriately and reported where necessary.

Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

6. Recognising Risks to Adults at Risk

An adult at risk is someone aged 18+ who:

- is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect,
- has care and support needs, and
- is unable to protect themselves as a result.

Signs may include unexplained injuries, behavioural changes, withdrawal, inappropriate sexual behaviour, significant weight change, isolation, fearfulness or changes in communication.

Adults with disabilities or additional needs may experience barriers to reporting abuse or may depend on others for communication, care, transport or support.

Any concern must be taken seriously and acted upon immediately.

7. Universality of Protection

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All participants, regardless of identity, background, disability, additional needs or ability, deserve equal protection.
- Some individuals are more vulnerable due to their circumstances, age, disability, communication needs or other factors.
- Allegations and concerns will be taken seriously and responded to promptly.
- Everyone must be treated with dignity and respect.
- All concerns will be logged appropriately.
- A participant's disability or additional needs must never be assumed to be the cause of a concerning change in behaviour or presentation.
- Participants should be given appropriate opportunities and methods to communicate concerns.
- Reasonable adjustments should be considered to support participation, communication and safety.
- Safeguarding concerns involving participants with additional needs will be treated with the same seriousness as concerns involving any other participant.

We have a legal duty to report reasonable suspicions of abuse or neglect to the appropriate safeguarding authority.

8. Additional Needs, Disability and Inclusion

Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for participants with additional needs and disabilities.

Before attending an additional-needs class, parents or carers may be asked to provide relevant information to help the teaching team understand the participant's needs and support them appropriately.

This may include information regarding:

- Communication preferences
- Sensory needs
- Mobility requirements
- Medical conditions or relevant health information
- Allergies

- Medication or emergency arrangements
- Behavioural or emotional indicators of distress
- Known triggers
- Strategies that help the participant feel safe and regulated
- Any relevant support requirements
- Collection arrangements
- Whether a parent, carer or support worker needs to remain present

Only information necessary to support the participant's safety, wellbeing and participation should be requested and it will be handled confidentially.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- Visual prompts or demonstrations
- Additional processing time
- Adapted movements
- Sensory breaks
- Reduced noise or stimulation where reasonably possible
- Alternative ways of participating in an activity
- Repetition or simplified instructions
- Appropriate use of sensory or supportive equipment
- Additional reassurance or encouragement
- Adjustments to the physical environment where reasonably practicable

The aim is to enable participation wherever safely possible rather than unnecessarily excluding an individual because of their needs.

However, where a participant's needs cannot safely be accommodated within the available staffing, venue or session structure, this will be discussed sensitively with the parent or carer and alternative arrangements may be considered.

Parents and carers remain responsible for providing accurate and relevant information about their child's needs and informing the organisation of any significant changes.

9. Safeguarding at Events and Activities

There are three categories:

Events open to all ages – children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult unless specific arrangements have been agreed.

Events for accompanied children – adult supervision is required throughout.

Events for unaccompanied children – children must be enrolled by a responsible adult and collected promptly.

Young people aged 16–17 may attend unaccompanied with written parental consent where appropriate.

For participants with additional needs, the appropriate level of supervision and support will be considered before attendance.

Where a parent, carer or support worker is required to support a participant during an event or activity, this should be agreed in advance.

10. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Activities offered include:

Children:

- Ballet
- Tap
- Street Dance
- Strength & Stretch
- Acrobatics
- Additional-needs dance and movement sessions
- Holiday Clubs
- Shows
- Parties

Adults:

- Shake Fitness
- Abdominal Strength

Roles involving regulated activity will involve appropriate DBS checks.

Where staff or volunteers work with children or adults at risk, their suitability will be considered in accordance with the role and relevant legal requirements.

Any allegation of inappropriate behaviour will be taken seriously, reviewed promptly and, where appropriate, may result in suspension or referral to the DBS, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or relevant safeguarding authority.

It is illegal to knowingly employ a barred individual in regulated activity.

11. Health & Safety in Children's Sessions

All events for unaccompanied children will be risk assessed.

Teachers will ask about existing injuries and relevant physical limitations at the start of class where appropriate.

Injuries occurring during class are logged.

Parents and carers must record relevant medical requirements and additional needs via ClassForKids or the relevant registration process.

For additional-needs sessions, risk assessments will consider the needs of the group and any known individual requirements, including mobility, sensory needs, communication, medical needs, equipment and the physical environment.

We follow our Health & Safety Policy at all times.

12. Health & Safety in Adult Classes

Areas are risk assessed before sessions.

Participants must register online, including relevant injuries and medical needs.

Injuries arising during class are logged.

Where adults with additional needs or disabilities attend, reasonable adjustments will be considered to support safe participation.

We follow the Health & Safety Policy consistently.

13. Anti-Bullying Policy

We do not tolerate bullying of any kind.

Child-on-child: Children will be separated where necessary, supported appropriately and parents/carers contacted.

Adult-on-child: Dealt with as a safeguarding concern.

Adult-on-adult: Logged and addressed. Individuals may be removed or banned from sessions where appropriate.

Bullying, harassment or discriminatory behaviour relating to disability, additional needs, communication differences or any other protected or personal characteristic will not be tolerated.

All incidents are recorded.

14. Confidentiality

Personal information is stored securely and only shared when legally required or where necessary to protect a participant's safety and wellbeing.

Information relating to additional needs, medical requirements or support arrangements will be treated sensitively and confidentially.

Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to support the participant safely, subject to safeguarding and legal requirements.

Information is deleted when no longer needed in accordance with applicable data protection requirements.

All digital platforms are password protected.

Passwords are updated when staff leave.

15. Photography

Parents may only photograph their own children unless specific permission has been given.

Group photographs are taken only by authorised staff and only where appropriate consent has been provided.

Consent is obtained via ClassForKids and may be withdrawn at any time.

No names are used in promotional material.

Additional consideration will be given to participants with additional needs where photography, filming or sensory sensitivities may cause distress.

Adults may opt out of photographs in adult sessions.

16. Behaviour, Discipline and Acceptable Restraint

Corporal punishment is strictly prohibited.

Physical restraint is not used as a method of discipline or behaviour management.

Physical intervention may only be used where necessary and proportionate to prevent immediate harm to the participant or another person.

Where physical intervention occurs, the circumstances must be recorded and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer and, where appropriate, the parent or carer.

Staff should use appropriate de-escalation, reassurance, space, communication and other preventative strategies wherever possible.

A participant's disability or additional needs must not be treated as misconduct simply because their behaviour or communication differs from that of other participants.

Unacceptable behaviour may result in removal from a session and/or temporary or permanent suspension where necessary to protect the safety and wellbeing of participants and staff.

Appeals can be made to Samantha Dene Boden, whose decision is final.

17. Safer Recruitment

Recruitment includes:

- Interviewing with consistent questions
- Assessing values as well as skills
- DBS checks where eligible and appropriate
- Clear role expectations and code of conduct
- Induction into safeguarding and health & safety procedures
- Consideration of experience working with children, young people and adults at risk
- Where relevant, consideration of experience supporting people with disabilities or additional needs

All team members are expected to understand and follow this safeguarding policy.

18. Volunteers

Volunteers receive clear guidance on expectations and are supervised appropriately.

Chaperones undertaking roles requiring regulated activity will require the appropriate DBS checks, including barring list checks where legally applicable.

Parents helping only their own children do not require DBS checks solely for providing support to their own child, but they remain subject to the expectations and safeguarding arrangements of the session.

Volunteers must report any safeguarding concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Volunteers must not undertake responsibilities beyond their agreed role or provide personal care unless this has been specifically agreed, appropriately assessed and is legally and practically appropriate.

19. Responding to a Safeguarding Concern

Any member of staff, volunteer or other person working on behalf of Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness who has a safeguarding concern must report it to the Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.

Where a child, young person or adult discloses a concern:

- Listen calmly.
- Take the concern seriously.
- Allow the person to speak without unnecessary interruption.
- Do not promise confidentiality.
- Do not investigate the allegation yourself.
- Do not ask leading or suggestive questions.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing by speaking up.
- Record the concern accurately, using the person's own words wherever possible.
- Report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Where there is an immediate risk of serious harm, appropriate emergency or safeguarding services should be contacted without delay.

Additional consideration should be given to communication needs when responding to a disclosure. Participants should be supported to communicate in the way that is most appropriate for them, without putting pressure on them to communicate in a particular way.

20. Record Keeping and Reporting

Safeguarding concerns, allegations and relevant incidents will be recorded securely.

Records should include:

- Date and time
- Names of those involved
- Factual description of the concern or incident
- Any disclosure, using the person's own words where possible
- Actions taken
- Who the concern was reported to
- Date and time of reporting
- Any follow-up action required

Records must be factual and should avoid assumptions, diagnoses or personal opinions.

Safeguarding records will be stored securely and only accessed by authorised individuals.

21. Relevant Legislation & Guidance

This policy aligns with relevant legislation and guidance including:

- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard People – Welsh Government
- Wales Safeguarding Procedures
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (Wales) Regulations 2015, where applicable
- Keep Young Performers Safe guidance
- Relevant equality, disability, health and safety and data protection legislation and guidance

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated where legislation, guidance, safeguarding procedures or the activities provided by Samantha Dene's Dance and Fitness change.

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