



Child Safeguarding Statement

Service Provider: The Academy of Dance, Co. Kerry

Nature of Service

Provision of recreational and performance-based dance tuition, including ballet, tap, modern jazz, commercial/street, acro, workshops, rehearsals, examinations, competitions, performances, off-site performances, and related administrative and support services.

- Owner and Principal Teacher: Clarissa Michaux
- Employees: Teachers: Ciara Comerford and Nadiia Sichevska
- Children's Officer: Annie Doogan – childrens.officer@theacademyofdance.ie
- Designated Liaison Person (DLP): Clarissa Michaux – theacademyofdance@live.ie

The Academy of Dance provides after-school and weekend dance education to children and young people in County Kerry. We are fully committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of all students in our care in line with the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017), and Tusla Child Safeguarding requirements.

Dance School Locations:

- The Clubrooms, Tailor's Row, Castlegregory, Co. Kerry, V92 FH32
- Loreto Primary School, Scartlea, Muckross, Killarney, Co Kerry, V93AY90
- The Comhaltas Building (Duchas) in Kerry Sports Academy MTU Tralee North Campus, Dromtacker, Tralee, Co. Kerry, V92 HD4V

Relevant Persons regarding this Child Safeguarding Statement:

The Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015 for The Academy of Dance is Clarissa Michaux (Owner/Director Principal Teacher & Designated Liaison Person). She is the first point of contact for any queries regarding this Child Safeguarding Statement.

Contact: theacademyofdance@live.ie



The Academy also appoints a Children's Officer who is available to support students, parents, guardians, teachers, teachers in training, staff, chaperones and volunteers with safeguarding concerns.

Contact: childrens.officer@theacademyofdance.ie

Mandated Persons:

The Academy of Dance maintains a list of all Mandated Persons within the service in line with Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015. Mandated Persons within the Academy of Dance are the designated liaison person, the children's officer and all qualified dance teachers employed by the school. This list is reviewed and updated annually and is available to Tusla on request.

** Procedure to recruit and select mandated persons within The Academy of Dance follows The Academy of Dance's Recruitment and Selection Policy*

1.1 Statement of Commitment

The Academy of Dance is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of all children, young people and vulnerable adults who engage in our services. Our paramount consideration is the safety, welfare, and protection of our participants from any form of harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

We adhere to the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, The Child Care Act 1991, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (including the 2023 Addendum on Online Safety), and all relevant legislation. We are also guided by Tusla's Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit and the International Dance Teachers Association (IDTA) code of professional practice.

1.2 Principles

This Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) has been developed in line with Tusla requirements and reflects our commitment to protecting children. Key principles include:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, regardless of age, ability, gender, or background, have equal rights to protection.
- Teachers, teaching assistants, teachers in training, staff, chaperones and volunteers must maintain professional boundaries at all times.



- Parents and guardians are valued partners in safeguarding.
- All concerns about child protection will be taken seriously and acted upon in line with legal requirements. Following The Academy of Dance's procedure for managing allegations of harm.

2. Risk Assessment

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015, The Academy of Dance has carried out a risk assessment of potential harm to children while availing of our services.

Risk of Harm Identified	Procedures / Controls to Manage the Risk
Inadequate supervision during classes or rehearsals	Minimum adult-to-child ratios observed; staff trained in safeguarding; open-door policy
Risks associated with classes taking place in a multi-use building	Supervision procedures in place for reception areas, external monitoring of use of individual toilet facilities, monitoring of hallways, access areas and changing of studios
Risks associated with changing rooms or costume fittings	Supervision procedures in place; no unsupervised adults; privacy respected
Physical injury due to dance activities	Qualified teachers; adherence to IDTA safe practice standards; Employed teachers have first aid training
Risks during off-site events, travel, or competitions	Parental consent forms; supervision ratios maintained; clear travel protocols *(Off-site risk assessment will be undertaken)
Inappropriate online or social media activity	Online safety policy; parental consent for images; restricted social media use *(<i>School social media policy in place</i>)
One-to-one teaching or physical correction of posture	Conducted in open spaces or within view; safeguarding training for teachers
Volunteers or staff without adequate vetting	Mandatory Garda vetting, reference checks, induction before commencing roles
Bullying or peer-to-peer harm	Anti-bullying procedures in place; code of conduct for students *(<i>School anti-bullying policy in place</i>)
Mishandling of sensitive child records	GDPR-compliant data storage; restricted access; retention and destruction schedule
Risk of harm to a child by a teacher, teaching assistant, staff member, teacher in training, chaperone or volunteer.	All personnel Garda vetted; safeguarding induction and training required; adherence to Code of Conduct; supervision and

	reporting procedures in place
Risk of harm to a child by a visitor to the premises.	Visitors required to sign in/out; supervised at all times; no unsupervised access to children
Risk of bullying children or peer-to-peer harm.	Zero tolerance bullying policy; clear reporting and response procedures; staff vigilance; ongoing awareness with students and parents
Risk of harm to a child while on outings, workshops, or performances off-site.	Off-site risk assessments completed; consent forms required; supervision ratios maintained; clear travel and emergency protocols; designated safeguarding lead present
Risk of harm to a child from unauthorised photography, filming, or sharing of images.	Photography/filming only permitted with prior parental consent, by appointed personnel; clear policies for staff, parents, and visitors; restricted use of devices; monitoring at events
Risk of harm to a child through inappropriate use of social media, internet, or online communication.	Online communication restricted to official channels; parental oversight for under-18s; staff prohibited from private messaging students; clear e-safety guidelines shared, through social media policy in place
Risk of harm to a child through lack of adequate supervision.	Supervision ratios maintained at all times; cover arrangements in case of staff absence; open-door policy; registers taken at every class and event
Risk of harm to a child if teachers, teaching assistants, teachers in training, staff, chaperones or volunteers are not appropriately Garda vetted or trained.	Mandatory Garda vetting; safeguarding training prior to commencement; induction covering child protection policies; ongoing refresher training



3. Procedures to Manage Identified Risks

To address and reduce risks of harm, The Academy of Dance has implemented the following policies and procedures:

The Academy has the following policies and procedures in place to manage and reduce the identified risks:

- **Recruitment, selection & vetting:** All teachers, teaching assistants, teachers in training, staff, children's officer, chaperones and volunteers are appropriately Garda vetted, reference-checked, and recruited in line with our recruitment & selection policy.
- **Supervision:** Children are supervised at all times during classes, rehearsals, and events. Students are not permitted to leave until collected by a parent/guardian, unless written consent is provided.
- **Training:** All teachers, teaching assistants, teachers in training, staff, children's officer, chaperones and volunteers complete Tusla Children First e-learning and safeguarding induction. Lead teachers must hold First Aid, CPR, and EpiPen training.
- **Reporting Procedures:** All concerns and disclosures are reported to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) or Children's Officer, in line with the child and vulnerable adult protection & safeguarding policy and procedure for managing allegations of harm within the Academy of Dance.
- **Anti-Bullying:** Our Anti-Bullying Policy ensures bullying and peer harm is addressed promptly, with clear reporting mechanisms for students and parents.
- **Photography & Media:** The Photography, Filming & Media Policy ensures images are only taken/used with parental consent and stored securely.
- **Online Safety:** Our Social Media Policy sets strict rules for staff communication, prevents private online contact with students, and ensures safe handling of digital content.
- **Risk Assessment Reviews:** Pre-class safety checklists and regular risk assessments are carried out to ensure risks are identified and mitigated.

3.1 Declaration of Specified Safeguarding Procedures

The Academy of Dance confirms that it has in place the six specified safeguarding procedures as required under Section 11(3) of the Children First Act 2015 and in accordance with Tusla's Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement (2024).



These procedures are formally documented, reviewed annually, and support the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement.

The six procedures are:

1. Procedure for maintaining a list of mandated persons.
2. Procedure for appointing a relevant person.
3. Procedure for managing allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers or volunteers.
4. Procedure for reporting child protection and welfare concerns to Tusla.
5. Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.
6. Procedure for maintaining child safeguarding records.

Each procedure is fully implemented within The Academy of Dance's supporting safeguarding policies.

3.2 Specified Safeguarding Procedures in Place

In accordance with Section 11(3) of the Children First Act 2015, The Academy of Dance confirms that the following six specified safeguarding procedures are in place to support the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement:

Procedure for Maintaining a List of Mandated Persons – A current list of all mandated persons within the service (teachers, DLP, Children's Officer) is maintained, reviewed annually, and available to Tusla on request.

Procedure for Appointing a Relevant Person – As described below, ensuring the individual is trained, vetted, and publicly identifiable.

Procedure for Managing Allegations of Abuse or Misconduct Against Workers/Volunteers – Set out in the Academy's Procedure for Managing Allegations of Harm document.

Procedure for Reporting Child Protection or Welfare Concerns to Tusla – Detailed in the Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection and Safeguarding Policy, in accordance with Children First National Guidance (2017).

Procedure for the Safe Recruitment and Selection of Staff and Volunteers – Outlined in the Recruitment and Selection Policy, ensuring all personnel are appropriately vetted and trained.



Procedure for Maintaining Child Safeguarding Records – Ensures all safeguarding and welfare records are stored securely in line with GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, accessible only to the DLP and Children’s Officer.

These procedures collectively ensure that The Academy of Dance maintains the highest possible safeguarding standards and full compliance with Irish legislation and Tusla’s Child Safeguarding Statement requirements.

3.3 Procedure for Appointing a Relevant Person

In compliance with Section 8 of the Children First Act 2015 and Tusla’s Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement, The Academy of Dance has a formal procedure for the appointment of a Relevant Person.

The Relevant Person is appointed by the Service Provider (The Academy of Dances Director) and is responsible for being the first point of contact in relation to the Child Safeguarding Statement.

The Relevant Person must hold current Tusla Children First training, have up-to-date Garda vetting, and demonstrate a full understanding of child protection procedures.

The appointment is reviewed annually or whenever a change in personnel occurs.

The Relevant Person’s name, role, and contact information are clearly displayed within this Child Safeguarding Statement and on the Academy of Dance’s website.

The current Relevant Person for The Academy of Dance is:
Clarissa Michaux (Owner/Director and Designated Liaison Person)
Email: theacademyofdance@live.ie

This procedure ensures continuity in safeguarding leadership and compliance with Section 8 of the Children First Act 2015 and Section 2.3.2 of Tusla’s Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.



4. Confidentiality & GDPR Compliance

The Academy of Dance ensures compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR:

- Child safeguarding records are maintained confidentially, securely stored, and accessible only to the DLP and Children's Officer.
- Records are retained for a minimum of seven (7) years following a concern, unless otherwise required by law.
- After retention, records are securely destroyed.
- Information is shared on a "need to know" basis only, in line with statutory reporting obligations.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- Designated Liaison Person (DLP): Clarissa Michaux – Responsible for receiving and managing reports of child welfare concerns, making reports to Tusla, maintaining safeguarding records, and liaising with statutory authorities.

- Children's Officer: Annie Doogan Jones – Acts as an advocate for children and young people, ensures their voices are heard, and provides a confidential point of contact for students, parents and guardians.

- All Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Teachers in Training, Staff, Chaperones and Volunteers – Share responsibility for safeguarding children by following this statement, attending training, and reporting concerns immediately without delay.

- The Academy of Dance maintains a written and securely stored list of all mandated persons in the service (Teachers, Designated Liaison Person, Children's Officer). This list is reviewed annually, updated following any staffing changes, and made available to Tusla upon request.



6. Implementation & Review

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if there is a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Date of Adoption: 10th of October 2025

Next Review Date: 09th of October 2027

7. Legislative and Policy Framework

This Child Safeguarding Statement is prepared in accordance with:

- Children First Act 2015
- The Child Care Act 1991
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (and Addendum on Online Safety, 2023)
- National Vetting Bureau Acts 2012–2016
- Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
- Criminal Justice (Reckless Endangerment of Children) Act 2006
- Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012
- Data Protection Act 2018 / GDPR
- IDTA Professional Conduct and Safeguarding Standards

8. Availability of Statement

This Child Safeguarding Statement is:

- Available publicly on The Academy of Dance website for all parents, guardians, students and is available upon request.
- Circulated to all employed staff, teachers, teaching assistants, teachers in training, chaperones and volunteers.
- Included in staff, chaperone and volunteer induction and training.

9. Contact Details

Designated Liaison Person (DLP): Clarissa Michaux

Email: theacademyofdance@live.ie



Children's Officer: Annie Doogan
Email: childrens.officer@theacademyofdance.ie

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Rathass, Tralee, Co. Kerry
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