

Policy Statement Regarding Management of Allegations for Freesoles Dance

Mandate:

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a person who works with children and young people in any role, including those who work in a voluntary capacity, is dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way which provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

This policy:

This policy is applicable to all who work with or for Freesoles Dance including for example, staff members, guest teachers, volunteers, chaperones and is in a position of trust as a result of the role they undertake.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Freesoles Dance safeguarding children policy and is written in line with the guidance Working Together to Safeguarding Children.

This policy exists to ensure we:

- Deal with all allegations in a fair and swift manner
- Prevent unsuitable people from working with children and young people
- Promote safe practice
- Challenge poor / unsafe practice effectively
- Share information about any concerns we may have in a timely fashion with the correct organisations
- To ensure that where concerns or allegations are raised all parties are kept up to date with how enquiries proceed
- To ensure children who have experienced harm and bystander parties are appropriately supported.

This policy is applicable in circumstances where it is believed that an individual may have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

If an allegation or concern arises about a Freesoles Dance staff member, contractor or volunteer outside of their work with children and this may present

a risk of harm to children for whom the individual is responsible, the general principles outlined in this policy will still apply. If the individual lives in a different authority area to that which covers their workplace, liaison should take place between the relevant agencies in both areas.

Concerns:

Examples of the type of concerns raised could be:

- there are concerns about a person's behaviour or conduct in their personal or professional life that might indicate their unsuitability to work with children
- concerns arise about a person's behaviour with regard to his/her own children and if they or their child have been subject to a child protection investigation
- concerns arise about the behaviour in the private or community life of an individual, their partner, member of their family or other household member
- or where there are concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between those who work with children or young people as outlined in the Sexual Offences Act 2003

There are a number of sources from which a complaint or an allegation might arise:

- directly from a child
- from a parent or other adult
- from Police or local authority children's social care
- from a member of the public
- from concerns generated through a professional relationship for example another dance teacher raises a concern
- disclosed anonymously or disclosed online

Whoever raises a concern should be treated seriously and with respect. All concerns must be followed up and the information must be recorded and shared as soon as possible and always within 24 hours with Victoria Race designated safeguarding lead or in their absence, or if the concern is regarding them to Fern Hussey and Danielle Cusworth.

Procedure for managing an allegation:

When a concern is raised, we will:

Share immediately with the designated safeguarding lead

Keep a clear and comprehensive record of any allegations made including:

- events leading to the allegation or concern;
- circumstances and context of the allegation;

They will then share the information with the relevant LADO (the local authority designated officer in the area from which the concern has originated) The DLS will liaise with LADO as required

Outside of working hours the appropriate area emergency duty team/ front door social care team or the police should be informed immediately.

Where the designated safeguarding lead / LADO and or police feel it is appropriate, the individual who has been accused will be temporarily suspended from their role pending further exploration / investigation.

This is for the safety and welfare of both the children in the care of that individual and also the individual. Suspension is a neutral, no accusatory act and will be made on the advice of the LADO/ Police or by Victoria Race where they deem it appropriate. Suspension will be made where:

- there is cause to suspect a child/children is at risk of significant harm
- the allegation warrants investigation by the Police
- Or there are other circumstances relating to the particular case that warrant suspension.

If the parents/carers of the child are not already aware of the allegation the LADO, in consultation with colleagues in the Police and Social Care, will advise when and how to do this.

Parents / Guardians and children should be supported to understand the process. Freesoles Dance will always seek advice on what information should be shared.



Subject to the restrictions imposed by the police or LADO on the information that can be shared, we will as soon as possible inform the referred person about:

- the nature of the allegation,
- how enquiries will be conducted
- the possible outcomes



The referred individual should:

- be treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved
- be provided with support by the DSL throughout the investigative process and be advised to seek appropriate support
- be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications by the DSL



As part of the process a position of trust meeting may be held. If position of trust / strategy meetings are required a representative, usually the designated safeguarding lead will attend where requested to by the local authority to ensure we are fully aware of any issues that may affect our school. The purpose of such meeting is not to prove innocence of guilt but to establish an individual's suitability to work with children and to consider appropriate safeguards.



In all cases the designated safeguarding lead will record:

- details of any actions taken;
- details of any decisions reached;
- final outcome

These records will be kept by Freesoles Dance

If an individual is removed from role because they pose a risk of harm there is a legal duty to inform DBS. FAILURE TO DO SO IS A CRIMINAL OFFENCE.

Guidance for decision making following a position of trust meeting / police investigation:

Following completed social care and police process a decision must be made by Freesoles Dance as to whether the individual should retain their role. We will be advised by the LADO / police regarding the decision made.

Where the decision is made by the LADO / position of trust meeting is that **no further action should be taken, or the allegation is considered by the relevant authorities to be false, malicious or unfounded:**

- the individual can return to work
- The individual should receive confirmation of this in writing with the LADO providing the rationale for this decision.

Where the allegation is investigated and the individual is **prosecuted and convicted and / or the allegation is substantiated and appropriate safety measures can not be put in place**

- The person should not be permitted to continue to work for Freesoles Dance
- The DBS company should be informed of this
- Any other relevant parties should be informed of this

In certain circumstances an individual may not be prosecuted or convicted however Freesoles Dance still reserves the right to terminate a contract or cancel employment:

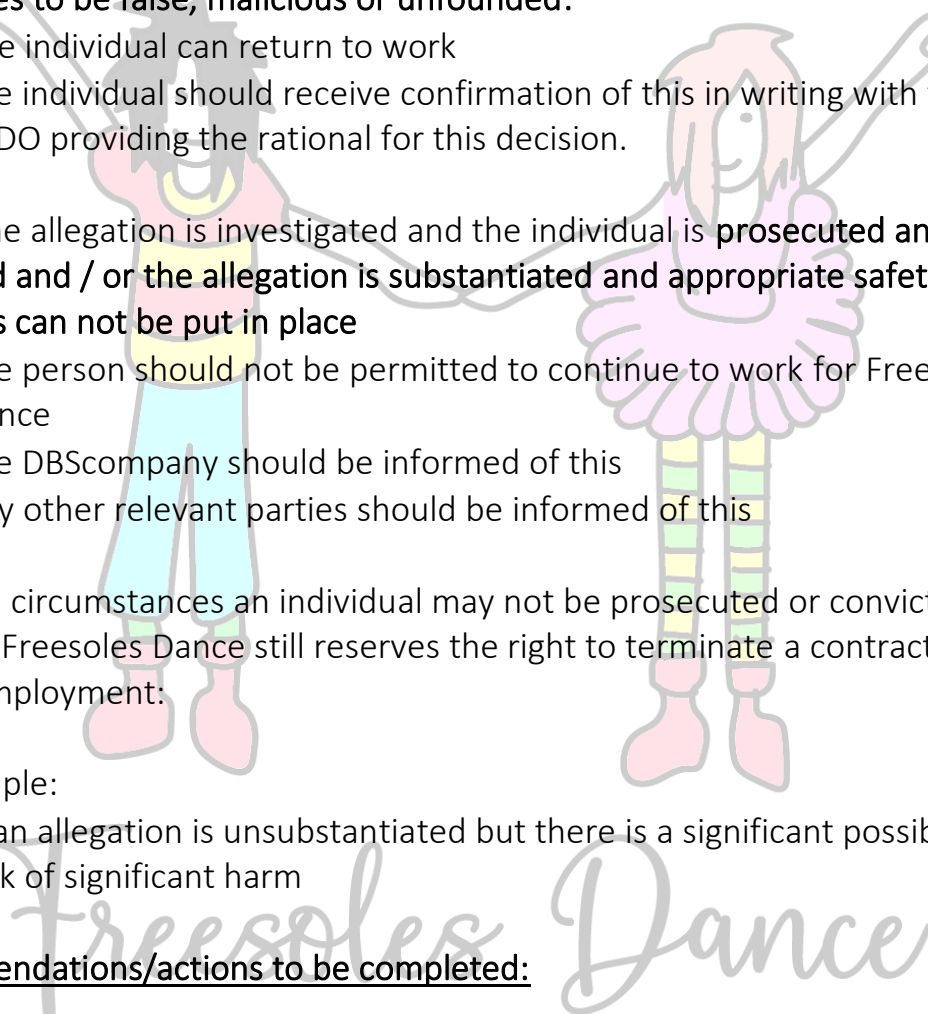
for example:

- if an allegation is unsubstantiated but there is a significant possibility of risk of significant harm

Recommendations/actions to be completed:

If a position of trust meeting makes recommendations, for example around additional training or additional safety measures Freesoles Dance will expect all recommendations to be met. We reserve the right to withhold work until these recommendations are met where appropriate.

Resignation from role: if an allegation is made against a member of staff and that individual voluntarily terminates their contract this does not mean the



Freesoles Dance

allegation should not be raised. Information must still be shared with the local authority designated officer (LADO).

Information sharing and consent:

Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity whilst an allegation is being investigated or considered. Information should be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to protect children, facilitate enquiries and manage disciplinary processes.

Consent should be sought for all information shared, in accordance with our safeguarding policy, where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Freesoles Dance may also choose to share information regarding the allegation, the outcome of the position of trust meeting and the decisions made as a result of these outcomes with other dance organisations / associations where we believe there is / may be a mutual concern, for example contacting that individuals membership organisation.

Learning lessons and planning reviews:

Following on from any allegation/investigation into harm and abuse Freesoles Dance will review their policies and practices to identify if there was anything that could be learned, or anything improved on to protect children and young people who use the organisation.

This policy was written by Victoria Race on 15th October 2023

Freesoles Dance