**Pips Dance Academy Social Media and Online Teaching Safeguarding Policy**

The internet can present many risks for children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable to harm by virtue of their care and support needs. Technology has many benefits but here at Pips Dance Academy we recognise the use of technology can also become a platform for online bullying, sexual exploitation, sexual predation, radicalisation and other types of harm and abuse. We recognise our duty to safeguard against this by identifying this and sharing information with the relevant services where this becomes necessary to protect children, young people and adults who may be unable to protect themselves due to their care and support

needs.

This policy explains how we use social media and online teaching within Pips Dance Academy. It details our duty to safeguard in the online environment and our expectations regarding the behaviour of teachers, staff, volunteers, adults and the children, young people and adults who use our organisation. At Pips Dance Academy we will do everything we can to limit children’s exposure to online risk. We will do this by ensuring clear guidelines and procedure for all teachers, staff, volunteers and adults within Pips Dance Academy and will do so in line with our Safeguarding Policies.

It is important that all staff members, volunteers and adults are aware that their safeguarding duty extends to the safeguarding of students online, regardless of the type of online device or the type of platform used.

The Designated Safeguarding Person at Pips Dance Academy is Pippa Fisher-Coldwell.

The designated safeguarding person will advise teachers, guest teachers, volunteers, students and parents/ guardians where appropriate on best practice and expectations regarding the use of online classes and Pips Dance Academy social media platforms. They will be responsible for the monitoring and recording of any safeguarding concerns and for ensuring that all concerns are shared with the appropriate statutory authorities, online concerns are not an exception to this. Everyone at Pips Dance Academy will be made aware of this policy and should be able to demonstrate their roles and responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults whose care and support needs leave them unable to protect themselves when online. This must include how to raise concerns with children’s social care, adult social care and/or the police.

It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers and adults at Pips Dance Academy to take steps to protect children, to keep them safe from online hazards and to take appropriate action where needed. It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers and adults to take reasonable steps to protect children and young people from harm and abuse while in contact with Pips Dance Academy including through online activity and our staff are to report any incident of or

suspicion of abuse to the designated safeguarding led or in their absence to the appropriate statutory authority.

It is essential that this policy is read in conjunction with our safeguarding policies and that all recording and information sharing procedures laid out within these are followed regarding any cause for concern that arises from online interaction. This includes any online disclosures of harm or any disclosed or witnessed examples of online or cyber bullying.

A ‘child’ is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently, in further education, or working does not change his/ her entitlement to services or protection as a child. Our guidelines apply to all children and young people until their 18th birthday. After this age a person becomes an adult and should therefore adhere to the term ‘adult’ within the policies.

At Pips Dance Academy we will safeguard students (both adults and children) using online services by:

• ensuring all social media accounts are password protected.

• ensuring more than one member of staff will have access to every social media account and will be able to see what happens within all groups. If any member of staff or volunteer has concerns about the behaviour or conduct of another individual within the organisation the nature of the concern should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead who will report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if necessary.

• the designated safeguarding officer shall have access to view sites and groups as necessary and there will be a designated member of staff who is responsible for checking and monitoring the quality and appropriateness of all posts on social media sites / groups. The member of staff with monitoring responsibility also has the right to remove inappropriate posts with immediate effect but will be asked to provide a reason for this decision where appropriate

• all social media posts will align with the work of Pips Dance Academy, be fit for purpose and align with our organisational code of conduct

• all pages, channels and groups should be set to private

• all account names and email addresses shall be appropriate and fitting for a professional organisation.

Teaching staff and parent and guardians need to know:

• parents / carers shall be advised to be present during online taught sessions for children

• no identifiers shall be posted on any online forum or page for example date of birth, address or phone number and full names should only be used with consent from a parent / guardian and only if necessary

• all photos and videos used must be with full consent from a parent or guardian

• groups will not be created by adults on platforms that are not age appropriate for the intended members.

• all communication directly with children will be approved by parents in advance and children shall not be contacted on platforms or sites that are not age appropriate

• we will make children, young people and adults aware of who they can speak to should they come across social media or online content they find distressing or should they be exposed to bullying / cyber bullying while accessing online services.

At Pips Dance Academy we expect all staff, volunteers and adults to safeguard children and to cause them no harm as outlined in our safeguarding policies. This also extends to the online environment:

Staff, Volunteers and Adults:

• have a duty to bring to the safeguarding lead’s attention anything they find to be inappropriate or potentially unsafe including online content or any concerns they have about what they have seen during live sessions either regarding a child /adult, the behaviour of others around them or their home circumstances

• will ensure on any videos they create or live sessions they generate that their background

environment is clear, professional and appropriate

• will always try to consider children’s understanding of the internet and their safety when making decisions about the online platforms they choose to use.

• will abide by Pips Dance Acadmey’s safeguarding policies and data protection policy.

• must not ‘friend’ or ‘follow’ children, young people or their families on their personal social media accounts.

• must always choose the most formal and professional channel of communication and will ensure messages have an appropriate professional tone.

The Community:

All parents, carers, children, young people and adults using Pips Dance Academy must also be aware of their duty towards others and be aware that the guidelines for behaviour set out in our code of conduct apply also to all online interaction. All involved with Pips Dance Academy have a duty to uphold the code of conduct and have a right to be able to share any concerns and to be supported.

If any user of Pips Dance Academy has a concern they should be listened to and this information should be recorded and passed to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible.

We recognise that many parents/carers do not feel confident in using the internet and are unsure how or where to report concerns. The designated safeguarding lead will maintain communication with parents who share concerns and ensure they are supported to act on their concerns in the most appropriate way.

Any concerns of significant harm will be raised with Children’s/Adults Social Care or the Police as outlined in our safeguarding policy and in line with the Children Act 1989 & 2004, Care Act 2014 and Sexual Offences Act 2003.