Amy Thake Dance Studio – Safeguarding Policy

Last updated: November 2026 · Next review: November 2027

1. Policy statement

Amy Thake Dance Studio (ATDS) believes every child has the right to dance safely, and that their welfare comes first in every decision we make.

This policy covers all ATDS classes, rehearsals and performances, and everyone who works with ATDS: teachers, accompanists, assistants and volunteers. It applies to children and young people under 18, and to adults at risk.

ATDS will:

- provide a safe, welcoming environment where children feel able to speak up
- check that every adult working with children is suitable, including an enhanced DBS check
- make sure every adult knows how to recognise a concern and what to do about it
- act quickly on any concern, working with parents, Aldwickbury School and Hertfordshire's safeguarding services
- review this policy every year and after any significant incident

On Aldwickbury School premises, ATDS also follows the school's own safeguarding policy and procedures. Where the two differ, ATDS follows whichever is stricter, and tells the school's DSL about any concern involving an Aldwickbury pupil. Amy and Ashleigh have both completed Aldwickbury's safeguarding briefing.

This policy follows the government's statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children and the Department for Education's safeguarding guidance for out-of-school settings, which covers after-school clubs and activities.

2. Key contacts

If a child is in immediate danger, call **999**.

Who	Contact	When
ATDS Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Amy Thake	07817 011051 or amy@amythake.com	Any concern about a child at an ATDS class

Who	Contact	When
Aldwickbury School DSL: Mr Chris Schanschieff, Deputy Head	01582 713022	Concerns involving Aldwickbury pupils, or on school premises
Hertfordshire Children's Services	0300 123 4043 (24 hours)	Reporting a concern about a child
Hertfordshire LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)	Via Children's Services, 0300 123 4043	A concern about an adult who works with children
Police (non-emergency)	101	Possible crimes that are not an emergency
NSPCC helpline	0808 800 5000	Advice for adults worried about a child

If Amy cannot be reached: for now Amy is ATDS's only safeguarding contact. If she is unavailable, go straight to Hertfordshire Children's Services (999 in an emergency). At classes where Ashleigh assists, she will be trained in safeguarding and can be the first point of contact on site, passing concerns to Amy the same day.

Hertfordshire numbers are from Hertfordshire County Council and the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, checked 15 November 2026. Professionals can also report online through the council's referral form.

3. Safer recruitment and DBS checks

Every adult who teaches, plays for or helps at ATDS children's classes must:

- hold an enhanced DBS check with a check of the children's barred list, seen by Amy before they start
- give two references, at least one from previous work with children
- show photo ID that matches their DBS certificate
- read this policy and sign to say they will follow it

Where an adult is on the DBS Update Service, ATDS will check their certificate online with their permission, and again each year. Otherwise a new check is needed every three years.

ATDS keeps a record of each check (certificate number, date and who saw it), but not copies of the certificate.

Until all checks are complete, a new adult is never left alone with children.

Any adult working with ATDS must tell Amy straight away about anything that could affect their suitability to work with children.

4. Code of conduct for adults

All ATDS adults will:

- treat every child with respect, and never use language or behaviour that humiliates, frightens or singles a child out
- avoid being alone with one child out of sight of others; if it cannot be avoided, keep the door open and tell another adult
- never give a child a lift, or arrange to see a child outside class, without the parent's written agreement
- never give gifts or special treatment to one child

Touch in dance teaching

Hands-on correction is a normal part of dance teaching, but it is always:

- explained first ("I'm going to put my hand on your shoulder to help you stand tall")
- light, brief and on the arms, shoulders, back, legs or feet only
- given in view of the class, never in private
- stopped if the child seems uncomfortable, and replaced with spoken or demonstrated corrections for any child whose parent asks

Communication and social media

- All messages about a child go to the parent or guardian, never to the child directly.
- ATDS adults do not follow, friend or message children on social media or personal phones.
- Group messages to parents are sent from ATDS accounts, not personal ones.

5. Safe practice in class

- **Two adults:** wherever possible, two adults are present at children's classes (for example, Amy and the accompanist).
- **Registers:** a register is taken at the start of every class and at the 5:00 pm handover from the school's Creative Dance club, and kept with emergency contacts and medical details. The register is password protected and only ATDS adults running the class can open it.
- **Supervision:** children are supervised at all times, including during the 5:00 to 5:10 pm break, and stay in the Chidell Hall.

- **Toilets:** children go on their own or in pairs. Adults wait nearby and never go into the toilets with a child. If a child needs help, the parent is contacted.
- **Changing:** children arrive dressed for class. If a child must change, they do so in the toilets, not in front of adults.
- **Collection:** children are only released to an adult named on the booking form, or one the parent has named in writing. If someone other than the usual parent or carer is collecting, the parent must tell ATDS before the class begins. The child must recognise the adult, and the adult must know the child's full name; if not, the child stays with ATDS while the parent is called. No child in Junior Ballet leaves alone.
- **Late collection:** a child waits in the hall with an ATDS adult while parents and emergency contacts are called. If no one can be reached, the DSL follows section 7.
- **First aid:** a stocked first aid kit is in the hall at every class, and accidents are recorded and reported to parents the same day.

6. Recognising abuse and neglect

Abuse can be physical, emotional or sexual, or take the form of neglect. It can happen in person or online, and can come from adults or other children. Dance teachers often notice things others miss, because they see how children move and how they respond to touch, music and each other.

Signs that may need a closer look include:

- unexplained bruises or injuries, or reluctance to explain them
- a change in behaviour: withdrawn, anxious, aggressive or unusually clingy
- fear of going home, or of a particular adult
- poor hygiene, hunger, or clothes unsuitable for the weather, again and again
- sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond the child's age
- extreme worry about weight, food or body shape
- a child saying something that suggests harm, even indirectly

One sign on its own does not prove abuse. The job of ATDS adults is not to investigate, but to notice, write it down and pass it on.

7. Responding to a concern or disclosure

If a child tells you something, or you are worried:

1. **Stay calm and listen.** Let the child speak in their own words. Do not ask leading questions or push for details.
2. **Reassure them.** Tell them they were right to tell you, and that it is not their fault.

3. **Never promise to keep a secret.** Explain that you will need to tell someone whose job is to help keep them safe.
4. **If a child is in immediate danger, call 999.**
5. **Tell the DSL (Amy) straight away,** the same day. If the concern is about Amy, go to Hertfordshire Children's Services or the LADO directly (section 2).
6. **Write it down** as soon as possible: the date, time, the child's exact words, what you saw, and what you did. Sign and date it. Stick to facts.
7. **The DSL decides the next step** within 24 hours: a referral to Hertfordshire Children's Services on 0300 123 4043 or online, advice from the NSPCC, or monitoring and recording. If unsure, the DSL calls Children's Services for advice.
8. **If the child is an Aldwickbury pupil, the DSL also tells the school's DSL** the same day.
9. **Parents:** the DSL usually speaks to the parent, unless doing so could put the child at greater risk. Children's Services will advise.

Anyone, including parents, can contact Children's Services or the police directly. You do not need permission from ATDS.

8. Recording, confidentiality and information sharing

- Safeguarding records are kept separately from other ATDS records, in a locked place or a password-protected file only the DSL can open.
- Each record shows what was seen or said, what was done, who was told and when.
- Information is shared only with people who need it to keep a child safe. Data protection law does not stop ATDS sharing information to protect a child.
- Records are kept securely for as long as the law and local guidance require, then destroyed securely.
- Adults must never discuss a concern with other parents, children or on social media.

9. Allegations against ATDS staff or volunteers

If anyone is worried that an ATDS adult has harmed a child, or behaved in a way that suggests they could, it must be reported, even if it seems minor.

- **About a member of ATDS staff or a volunteer:** tell Amy, who will contact the Hertfordshire LADO through Children's Services (0300 123 4043) within one working day. Amy will not investigate herself or speak to the adult concerned until the LADO has advised.
- **About Amy:** contact the LADO through Children's Services directly, or the Aldwickbury School DSL.

- The adult concerned may be asked to step back from classes while the LADO's process runs. This is a neutral act, not a finding of guilt.
- If an adult is dismissed or leaves because they may have harmed a child, ATDS must refer them to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Whistleblowing: anyone working with ATDS can raise a concern about practice without fear of blame. The NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is 0800 028 0285.

10. Photography, filming and online safety

- Children are only photographed or filmed with the written consent of a parent or guardian, given on the booking form, for the uses they agreed to.
- Photos and videos are taken on ATDS devices where possible. If a personal phone is used, files are moved to secure ATDS storage and deleted from the phone the same day.
- Children's names are never published with their images, and no image shows a child in a way that could embarrass them or be misused (for example, mid-stretch or in a changing area).
- Teaching videos shared with families go only to the parents of that class, by a private link.
- Parents and visitors are asked not to film or photograph other people's children.
- If a child raises a worry about something online, it is treated like any other concern (section 7).

11. Training, review and sign-off

- The DSL holds current safeguarding training and refreshes it every two years.
- Every adult working with ATDS children completes basic safeguarding training before starting, and refreshes it every three years.
- This policy is shared with every adult who works with ATDS, with Aldwickbury School, and is published for parents on the ATDS website, amythake.com.
- It is reviewed every year, and after any serious incident or change in the law. Next review: November 2027.

Useful links

- Hertfordshire County Council: professionals report a concern
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership: contacts and referrals
- DfE: keeping children safe in out-of-school settings

- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line