

Policy: Sexual Harassment (Students)		
Date Adopted:	Date of last review:	To be reviewed next before/on:
24th August 2026	25 th May 2025	September 2027

A) INTRODUCTION

Phoenix AcroDance Academy is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all children and young people. Every student has the right to learn, train, rehearse, and perform free from sexual harassment, intimidation, or any behaviour that compromises their dignity or emotional wellbeing.

Sexual harassment is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010, and harmful under Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), Working Together to Safeguard Children, and national child protection guidance. PADA maintains a zero-tolerance stance toward sexual harassment between students, or between students and any adult associated with the academy.

All concerns relating to sexual harassment involving students will be treated as safeguarding matters, not disciplinary issues alone. They will be managed in accordance with PADA's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy, and may involve external agencies such as Children's Social Care or the Police where appropriate.

B) SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- All PADA students
- Students participating in classes, workshops, rehearsals, performances, trips, competitions, and international events
- Interactions between students on PADA premises, during PADA activities, or online where behaviour impacts a student's safety or wellbeing
- Any adult who witnesses, receives a disclosure, or becomes aware of sexual harassment involving students

This policy covers conduct occurring:

- In classes, rehearsals, workshops, and performances
 - During travel, trips, external events, or social activities connected to PADA
 - Online, including social media, messaging apps, group chats, and digital platforms
 - Outside PADA where behaviour affects a student's safety, dignity, or ability to participate safely in academy activities
-

C) DEFINITIONS

1. Sexual Harassment (Student Context)

Sexual harassment refers to unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that violates a student's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment may be:

- Verbal
- Non-verbal
- Physical
- Online/digital
- Peer-to-peer
- Between students of any age or gender

Sexual harassment can occur even if the behaviour is not directed at a specific student.

2. Examples of Sexual Harassment (Students)

- a) Sexual jokes, comments, or "banter"
- b) Sharing or showing sexual images, videos, memes, or explicit content
- c) Sexualised staring, leering, or suggestive looks
- d) Pressuring someone for sexual activity or sexualised behaviour
- e) Offering attention, popularity, or rewards in exchange for sexual behaviour
- f) Sexual gestures or mimicking sexual acts
- g) Asking intrusive questions about someone's body, sexual life, or private matters
- h) Sending sexual messages, images, or videos (including via Snapchat, Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok)
- i) Spreading sexual rumours about a student
- j) Unwanted physical contact such as touching, grabbing, hugging, or kissing
- k) Sexualised behaviour during acrobatics, partner work, or choreography
- l) Any behaviour that makes another student feel unsafe, embarrassed, or uncomfortable

3. Child-on-Child Abuse

Sexual harassment between students is a form of child-on-child abuse. It may include:

- Sexual comments
- Sexualised behaviour
- Sexual bullying
- Sexual assault
- Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

All incidents will be treated as safeguarding concerns.

4. Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when a student is treated unfairly because they:

- Reported sexual harassment
- Supported another student in reporting
- Were believed to be involved in reporting

Examples include:

- Excluding a student from groups or activities
- Mocking or intimidating a student for reporting
- Pressuring a student to withdraw a complaint

D) HOW STUDENTS CAN REPORT SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Students can report concerns to:

- The Principal Teacher
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Any trusted PADA teacher or assistant
- A parent or guardian, who may report on the student's behalf

Reports may be made:

- In person
- By email
- Through a parent
- In writing
- Via a safeguarding form (provided in the PADA Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy)

Students will never be punished for reporting sexual harassment.

E) HOW PADA RESPONDS TO REPORTS

1. Immediate Safety Measures

Upon receiving a report, PADA will:

- Ensure the student is safe
- Separate students involved if necessary
- Provide emotional support
- Inform parents/carers where appropriate
- Decide whether external agencies must be contacted

2. Informal Response (Where Appropriate)

For lower-level incidents, and only where safe and appropriate:

- Staff may speak to the students involved
- Behaviour expectations will be reinforced
- Parents may be informed
- Support and education may be provided

3. Formal Safeguarding Response

For serious or repeated incidents:

- A formal safeguarding investigation will begin
- The DSL will gather information, including witness accounts
- Parents/carers will be informed
- External agencies may be contacted (Children's Social Care, Police)

4. Outcomes May Include:

- Behaviour contracts
- Supervision plans
- Restrictions on contact between students
- Temporary removal from certain activities
- Permanent removal from PADA (in severe cases)
- Referral to external safeguarding agencies
- Support plans for affected students

F) IF A STUDENT WITNESSES SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Students who witness sexual harassment should:

- Tell a teacher or the DSL immediately
- Support the affected student by encouraging them to report
- Avoid intervening physically or putting themselves at risk
- Never share, forward, or repost sexual content

Witnesses will be treated sensitively and will not face consequences for reporting.

G) ONLINE SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Includes:

- Sharing sexual images
- Sending sexual messages
- Pressuring someone online
- Sexualised comments on posts or photos
- Creating fake accounts to harass or embarrass someone

All online sexual harassment will be treated as a safeguarding concern.

H) THIRD-PARTY SEXUAL HARASSMENT (Students)

This includes harassment from:

- Members of the public
- Audience members
- External performers
- Individuals at events, venues, or competitions
- Online strangers contacting students through PADA-related platforms

PADA will:

- Act immediately to protect the student
- Report criminal behaviour to the police
- Inform parents/carers
- Restrict contact with the third party
- Notify event organisers or venue management

I) DISCIPLINARY ACTION (Student Context)

Where allegations are substantiated:

- Behaviour sanctions will be applied
- Parents/carers will be informed
- Students may be removed from classes, teams, or events
- Serious cases may result in permanent exclusion from PADA
- External agencies may be involved

False allegations made maliciously will be addressed, but PADA recognises that children may misinterpret situations and will respond proportionately and sensitively.

J) SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

PADA will provide:

- Emotional support
- Pastoral conversations
- Adjustments to class participation
- Mediation (where appropriate and safe)
- Safety plans
- Referral to external support services

No student will be blamed, shamed, or penalised for experiencing sexual harassment.

K) TRAINING & PREVENTION

PADA will ensure:

- Staff receive training on recognising and responding to sexual harassment
- Students receive age-appropriate guidance on respectful behaviour, boundaries, and online safety
- Parents are provided with information where relevant
- Policies are reviewed annually
- Safeguarding standards remain central to all academy activities

L) POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
 - Safeguarding guidance updates
 - A serious incident requires policy revision
 - PADA expands its programmes or international activities
-

Phoenix AcroDance Academy staff are responsible for the implementation of this policy and for ensuring that it is reviewed annually and updated as required. ***Next Review: September 2027***

Signed R. Walker Date 24/08/26

Print Name Robert Walker Position Principal