



# Safeguarding Policy

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**About this copy.** This is ISTA's Safeguarding Policy as published on [istaglobal.org](https://istaglobal.org) when it was downloaded or printed, on the date shown at the top of this copy. We review and update our policies from time to time, so this copy may since have been replaced. The current version, which is the one that applies, is always at [istaglobal.org/legal/safeguarding-policy](https://istaglobal.org/legal/safeguarding-policy).

## How ISTA keeps every child and young person safe at our events, and who is responsible for what.

ISTA Global Arts Learning Ltd. is an international arts education charity committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child and young person participating in our programmes.

## Purpose

We recognise our duty of care under UK safeguarding legislation and Charity Commission guidance and apply these standards across all international activity, regardless of local legal variation.

The welfare of the child is paramount and underpins all decisions and actions taken by ISTA.

This policy does not replace school safeguarding procedures. It operates alongside them and applies to all participants during ISTA events. A child is defined as any person under the age of 18 participating in an ISTA event in a student capacity, including student performers, workshop participants, and student leaders.

## Principles

ISTA Global Arts Learning Ltd will ensure that:

- All students have the right to be safe and feel safe
- Safeguarding concerns are acted on immediately
- All adults understand their safeguarding responsibilities
- Decisions prioritise the best interests of the child
- Discrimination, harassment, and abuse are never tolerated
- UK safeguarding standards are applied internationally

This includes protection from physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying, and harmful behaviour, including within digital and online environments.

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## Aims

We safeguard students by:

- Providing safe environments at all events
  - Ensuring adults understand acceptable behaviour
  - Ensuring artists have appropriate background checks and ID verification
  - Providing clear reporting routes
  - Supporting informed decision-making
  - Working in partnership with schools, hosts, and artists
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## Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

### ISTA Global Arts Learning Ltd. (ISTA)

ISTA is responsible for:

- Holding overall safeguarding accountability for all artists engaged in ISTA programmes
- Making final safeguarding decisions where required
- Providing safeguarding procedures, guidance, and reporting structures
- Ensuring safer recruitment processes, including vetting and checks
- Liaising with relevant authorities where required

### Host School / Venue

ISTA works in partnership with host schools and venues, which are responsible for:

- Providing and maintaining a safe physical environment for all activities
- Ensuring appropriate safeguarding and suitability checks for their staff
- Overseeing accommodation arrangements, including appropriate hotel provision where applicable
- Maintaining their own safeguarding policies and procedures in line with local requirements

## Visiting Teachers

- Retain primary duty of care for their own students at all times
- Maintain overall responsibility for their students' wellbeing
- Supervise students outside of structured sessions and support supervision during activities
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately

## Artists

ISTA ensures that all artists engaged in its programmes:

- Hold safeguarding checks appropriate to their country of residence and role, aligned as closely as possible to UK DBS standards, including ID verification and reference checks, and undertake ISTA safeguarding training
- Maintain professional boundaries at all times
- Deliver sessions in a manner that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of students
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately

## Students

Students participating in ISTA events are expected to:

- Follow the ISTA [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- Treat others with respect and consideration
- Take responsibility for their own behaviour and safety
- Act in ways that do not endanger themselves or others
- Refrain from bullying, harassment, or discriminatory behaviour

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## Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

**Tom Scott**  
Director of Operations  
[tom@istaglobal.org](mailto:tom@istaglobal.org)

Tom Scott is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for ISTA.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Receiving and managing safeguarding concerns
- Maintaining safeguarding records
- Assessing risk and coordinating appropriate action
- Escalating concerns where necessary

For each event, the appointed ISTA Rep will act as the on-site safeguarding contact, supporting the implementation of this policy and serving as the first point of contact for concerns.

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## Supervision and Duty of Care

All children must be under the supervision of a responsible adult designated for that activity at all times.

ISTA operates a shared supervision model with clear lines of responsibility:

- Visiting teachers retain primary duty of care and overall responsibility for their own students at all times
- Artists supervise students within the context of assigned sessions and activities
- Host organisations are responsible for the safety of facilities, staffing, and the physical environment

Supervision responsibilities are clearly communicated and understood by all adults involved.

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## Safer Recruitment

ISTA ensures that all staff and artists are engaged subject to appropriate safeguarding checks relevant to their country of residence and role, aligned as closely as possible to UK DBS standards.

This includes:

- Identity verification
- Reference checks
- Assessment of experience, conduct, and safeguarding suitability

All artists are required to undertake ISTA safeguarding training in line with organisational requirements.

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## Behaviour and Inclusion

ISTA Global Arts Learning Ltd. is committed to creating safe, inclusive environments where all participants are respected and valued. Discrimination, harassment, or exclusion based on age, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, or culture is not tolerated.

Local cultural contexts are respected while maintaining consistent safeguarding standards.

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## Allocation of Responsibility During Events

ISTA events involve multiple organisations working in partnership. Responsibilities are clearly defined for each context to ensure continuous safeguarding oversight.

- **Travel arranged by host:** The host school is responsible for transport safety; visiting teachers retain responsibility for their students
- **On host school premises:** The host provides a safe environment and appropriate staffing; visiting teachers supervise students; artists supervise sessions only
- **Workshops and ensemble sessions:** Artists lead and supervise the learning activity; teachers retain overall duty of care
- **Off-site activities:** Responsibility is shared between host, teachers, and participating artists; visiting teachers retain overall responsibility for their students
- **Non-student participants (adults):** Individuals or their organisations are responsible for their own welfare unless supervision is formally assigned by ISTA

Responsibility is always explicitly assigned and communicated.

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## Safeguarding Procedures at Events

ISTA ensures that all events operate within a clear safeguarding framework, including:

- A student code of conduct
- Daily wellbeing check-ins
- Clear and accessible reporting routes
- Appropriate risk assessments
- Prompt, proportionate, and transparent decision-making

All safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the named on-site safeguarding contact.

ISTA encourages the reporting of low-level or boundary concerns to support early intervention and prevent escalation.

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## Reporting Concerns

Anyone who has a concern about a child's safety or wellbeing must report it immediately.

ISTA will:

- Record all concerns in an incident report
- Assess risk and determine appropriate action
- Take timely and proportionate safeguarding measures

Concerns will be escalated as follows:

- **Immediate risk:** Action taken on site and emergency services contacted where required
- **Non-immediate concerns:** Reviewed by the DSL and ISTA leadership
- **Where appropriate:** Concerns shared with the student's school and/or relevant local authorities

Confidentiality must never override the safety and welfare of a child. Concerns about the conduct of adults working with young people can be raised without fear of reprisal.

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## Record Keeping

Safeguarding records are maintained securely and handled in accordance with data protection legislation. Access is restricted to those with appropriate safeguarding responsibility.

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## Review

This policy is reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with UK safeguarding legislation, Charity Commission guidance, and international best practice.

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## Adult Code of Conduct (Professional Boundaries)

ISTA requires all adults working or volunteering within its programmes to uphold the highest standards of professional conduct.

All adults must:

- Maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries at all times
- Avoid being alone with a child wherever possible; where unavoidable, remain visible and accountable
- Never engage in personal, romantic, or sexual relationships with student participants
- Use appropriate language and behaviour at all times
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact; any contact must be appropriate to the activity and age of the participant
- Not exchange personal contact details or social media with students
- Not communicate privately with students outside official channels
- Not photograph or record children using personal devices
- Not transport students alone unless agreed safeguarding arrangements are in place
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour and report concerns immediately

Breaches of this code may result in removal from the event and further action.

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## Student Code of Conduct

The latest version of the student code of conduct can be found here: [Student Code of Conduct](#).

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