

Child Safe Policy 2024



CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

PURPOSE

The purpose of this statement is to demonstrate the commitment of Art Evolutions Dance School to the safety, protection and wellbeing of all children and young people in our care. Art Evolutions has zero tolerance for child abuse and is committed to acting in our student's best interests in keeping them safe. Children have the fundamental right to be safe from any form of abuse or neglect. Art Evolutions is committed to ensuring compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and in developing and maintaining a child safe culture.

SCOPE

This statement and subsequent Code of Conduct applies to and is binding on, all Art Evolutions Dance School employed workers, teachers, guest teachers and any third-party contractors and volunteers at Art Evolutions. It applies to any activities at Art Evolutions Dance School which involve, result in or relate to contact with children.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Principal at Art Evolutions Dance School, Jessica Gregor, is primarily responsible for the implementation and conduct surrounding child safety and wellbeing and all related procedures, which includes:

- Recruitment
- Staff inductions and training
- Receiving and responding to complaints
- Risk assessment and management process
- Reporting, record keeping and information sharing
- Code of conduct

All other employees and workers will support in the activation of this statement and Code of Conduct and the above procedures.

DEFINITIONS

- Child Any person under the age of 18
1. Any act committed against a child involving:
- a) A sexual offence
 - b) The offence of grooming
- Child Abuse 2. The infliction, on a child of:
- a) Physical violence
 - b) Serious emotional or psychological harm
3. Serious neglect of a child

Child Neglect	The failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child (where they are in the position to do so) with conditions that are culturally acceptable as being essential for the child's physical and emotional development and wellbeing.
Child Safety	All matters related to protecting children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Art Evolutions Dance School's commitment to child safety is based on the following Government mandated standards that guide the organisational culture to protect the children in our care.

1. Our Statement of Commitment to child safety details how we comply to the Child Safe Standards and our Code of Conduct provides behavioural standards that all our staff and volunteers must abide by.
2. Take child participation seriously: Art Evolutions empowers children and young people to enable them to communicate if they feel unsafe, express their views and raise concerns. This is implemented through supportive staff and the encouragement of friendships and peer support.
3. Involving families and communities: Open communication at Art Evolutions in relation to child safety is actively promoted within the community to families, ensuring everyone is kept informed and offered the opportunity to raise any views in relation to the wellbeing of their child.
4. Respecting equity and diversity: All children are treated equally at Art Evolutions and any diverse needs are respected. We understand the importance of providing additional support to the needs of children and young people with disability, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those unable to live at home and LGBTQI children and young people.
5. Ensuring staff are suitably supported: All employees, teachers, guest teachers, contractors and volunteers at Art Evolutions have current working with children checks and are provided with an appropriate induction to their responsibilities of keeping children and young people safe.
6. Child focused complaint system: Any complaints about child safety and wellbeing are handled directly with Jessica Gregor, the Principal. All concerns are welcomed to be raised with any of our teachers or other staff, however it will be escalated to Jessica to manage. All complaints will be taken seriously, and responded to promptly and thoroughly ensuring privacy and employment law obligations are met.
7. Staff knowledge, skills and awareness: All Art Evolutions staff and volunteers have the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education, this includes training on how to build culturally safe environments.
8. Safe online and physical environments: Art Evolutions recognises the importance of safety and mitigating risks within online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
9. Review of child safe policies and practices: At Art Evolutions we regularly review, evaluate and improve on all child safe practices and our Code of Conduct.
10. Establish a culturally safe environment: Art Evolutions has established a culturally safe environment in which diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued. We provide an environment where a child has the ability to express their culture and actively support their cultural rights. Racism is not tolerated.
11. Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership: Child safety and wellbeing is the foundation of the Art Evolutions environment, stemming from the leadership and modelled throughout the organisation. Art Evolutions provides a Code of Conduct to all staff and volunteers on behavioural standards that aims to prevent, identify and mitigate risk to children and young people.

CODE OF CONDUCT

BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Where an employee, teacher or guest teacher breaches the Code, Art Evolutions Dance School will take serious action that may lead to disciplinary measures or dismissal.

GENERAL COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING

When working with children and young people, all bound by this code must:

1. Understand and adhere to the Art Evolutions Statement of commitment to child safety and wellbeing
2. Be familiar with and adhere to all relevant state and federal legislation around child safety and wellbeing
3. Ensure they do everything they can to protect children from abuse and harm
4. Promote the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people
5. Be aware and proactive in terms of all child safety and wellbeing issues
6. Provide appropriate supervision for children and young people
7. Treat all children equally and with respect

ENVIRONMENTS

When working with children and young people, all bound by this code must:

1. Provide a physically safe environment for children and young people
2. Provide areas where children can change clothes and use toilet facilities in private
3. Help provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all children and young people to interact and socialise

GENERAL BEHAVIOURS

When working with children and young people, all bound by this code must:

1. Not behave in a prejudicial or oppressive manner
2. Not use inappropriate language with or in the presence of children and young people
3. Not express personal views on culture, race or sexuality in the presence of children
4. Not discriminate against any child based on culture, age, gender, vulnerability, sexuality, race, ethnicity or disability
5. Not engage in any form of sexual conduct with a child, including making sexually suggestive comments or sharing sexually suggestive material
6. Not engage in any form of physical violence towards a child, including inappropriately rough physical play
7. Not use physical or corporal punishment to discipline or control a child
8. Not engage in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a student serious emotional or psychological harm, such as isolating, yelling at, harassing or humiliating a child
9. Not develop 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism

CHILD INTERACTION

When working with children and young people, all bound by this code must:

1. Behave as a positive role model to all children and young people.
2. Impart knowledge and skill of dance in a respectful and encouraging manner
3. Use positive and affirming language towards children and young people

4. During teaching ensure physical touch boundaries are established and everyone in the studio is aware of these guidelines
5. Encourage children and young people to express their ideas and listen to them with respect
6. Intervene when children are behaving inappropriately towards others

CHILD PRIVACY AND COMMUNICATION

When working with children and young people, all bound by this code must:

1. Engage in appropriate behaviours with regards to physical contact with children
2. Not be alone or engage in undisclosed private meetings with children
3. Not engage in any inappropriate personal communication with a child through any medium, including online contact
4. Keep all personal information about students and families confidential and never post any identifying information about a child online
5. Always obtain written consent from parents / carers before taking or publishing photos or videos

DIVERSITY

When working with children and young people, all bound by this code must:

1. Treat all children equally, regardless of background, culture, religious beliefs, disability and political differences
2. Encourage participation from linguistically and culturally diverse children and young people as well as children and young people with any kind of disability and promote their safety
3. Proactively contact Traditional owner groups or Registered Aboriginal Party in the area to ensure the organisation is welcoming, inclusive and culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their children
4. Encourage input from parents and families, and use their advice to make your school welcoming and culturally empowering for students of diverse cultural backgrounds, and for students with disabilities

REPORTING CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS

1. Provide a comfortable environment to give the child or adult full attention so concerns can be expressed without interruption
2. Remain supportive and reassuring to comfort any distress, ask encouraging questions and let them know they've done the right thing
3. Let them know they will have to act on the information and let other people know
4. Create a detailed record of the interaction for investigation, including the date, time and location of disclosure, notes on the disclosure in the child's words and the child's demeanor
5. Report the disclosure to Joanne O'Kelly immediately so that action can be taken
6. If the child is in immediate danger contact 000 or the appropriate external authorities
7. Respect the privacy of the situation and do not involve any more people than are necessary in the situation

REFERENCES

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/child-safe-standards/policy>
- <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/child-wellbeing-and-safety-act-2005/041>
- <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/>
- <https://www.vic.gov.au/working-with-children-check>

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.