

AVANT BALLET STUDIO

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY and

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. PURPOSE

Avant Ballet Studio is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and their right to live free of harm and risk of harm.

We are committed to providing a safe environment to all children and young people. Our policy complies with the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 and aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

We value and respect children and young people and welcome them regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, or social economic or cultural background. Bullying and harassment won't be tolerated.

2. SCOPE

Avant Ballet Studio teachers, staff, students, volunteers, contractors, parents / guardians may work with children in situations where other organisation's and its staff have primary responsibility for the children involved.

All Avant Ballet Studio staff, teachers, volunteers and student supervisors must at all times observe protocols for child protection.

All workers are required to agree to accept and act in accordance with the policy.

3. COMMUNICATION

This child safe policy and related documents are available on our website and on request. Information on how to access the policy is stated in the information pack to new enrolments.

This child safe policy and related documents are provided to all workers as part of their induction following recruitment.

We encourage and respect the views of children and young people and involve them in decision making as appropriate. We provide clear age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate explanations to children and young people including their right to safety, their right to be listened to and that they can provide feedback or make a complaint if they have a concern, to any worker or ask their parent/guardian to do this on their behalf. We will listen to and act upon any complaints or concerns that a child or young person raises with us.

4. CODE OF CONDUCT

Caring for children and young people brings additional responsibilities for myself, staff workers and volunteers. We are responsible for promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by:

- sticking to the organisation's child safe policy at all times and taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people
- treating everyone including those of different race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes and religious beliefs with respect and honesty and ensure equity is upheld
- being a positive role model to children and young people in all conduct with them
- setting clear boundaries about appropriate behaviour between yourself and children and young people – boundaries help everyone to understand their roles
- listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people
- being alert to bullying behaviours and responding promptly and appropriately
- being alert to children and young people who have been harmed, or may be at risk of harm and reporting this quickly to the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78)
- responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian
- encouraging children and young people to 'have a say' on issues that are important to them.

We must not:

- engage in rough physical games
- develop any 'special' relationships with children and young people that could be seen as favouritism such as the offering of gifts or special treatment

- do things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability or sexuality.

Breaches or suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct should be reported as soon as practicable to management either in person, by telephone on 0412956328, or via email at avantdance25@gmail.com. Breaches or suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and dealt with quickly, fairly and transparently.

Any worker who breaches the Code of Conduct will face disciplinary action and depending on severity of the breach, the worker may have their employment terminated.

5. RECRUITMENT

To ensure we engage the most suitable people to work with children and young people we have the following recruitment practices in place:

- our commitment to child safety is included in all job interviews
- clear position descriptions that include our commitment to child safety and wellbeing
- face-to-face interviews that use behavioural questions to determine the applicant's knowledge of child safeguarding
- referee checks and qualification checks.

In accordance with the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016, our organisation is registered with the DHS Screening Unit and we link all Working with Children Checks (WWCC). All workers, staff and volunteers who will be working in a role with children and young people must hold a current, not prohibited WWCC issued by the Screening Unit of the Department of Human Services, provide evidence of this prior to employment and renew these every 5 years. We will verify the accuracy of all WWCCs in the DHS Screening Unit portal as required by law.

We will immediately contact the Department of Human Services Screening Unit when we become aware of certain information regarding any person involved with our organisation, including any serious criminal offence, child protection information, or disciplinary or misconduct information.

6. TRAINING SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT WORKERS

We have strategies in place to supervise, train and support workers to understand our organisation's child safe policy, their mandatory reporting obligations, how to build culturally safe environments and their responsibilities to create a child safe and friendly environment. Our strategies include:

- Training:
 - ensure all workers read and understand the Mandatory Notification Information Booklet available at: https://dhs.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/103179/CSE-Mandatory-notification-information-booklet.PDF during induction
 - include child safety as a standing item on meeting agendas
- Supervision:
 - regular supervision sessions that include a focus on child safety and wellbeing
- Support:
 - an induction process for all new workers including a copy of this policy document
 - regular performance appraisals that discuss child safeguarding

7. REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO HARM OR RISK OF HARM

We aim to ensure that children and young people are safe from harm and risk of harm. Section 17 of the Safety Act defines 'harm' to mean physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.

Mandated notifiers in our organisation are workers who:

- provide services to children and young people
- hold a management position in the organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children and young people.

Mandated notifiers have a legal obligation to notify the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable belief that a child or young person is or may be at risk of harm. If the child or young person is at immediate risk, report to South Australia Police (SAPOL) on 000. In cases involving Aboriginal children and young people, support is provided by Yaitya Tirramangkotti - an Aboriginal team, via the CARL number.

Even if not a mandated reporter, any person can report harm or risk of harm to a child or young person. The individual who identifies the harm or risk of harm is encouraged to make the report to authorities and can request the support from another worker to do so if required.

Information about making appropriate reports of harm or risk of harm is available from the South Australian Department of Child Protection website:

<https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse>.

All adult workers (even if not a mandated notifier) have a legal obligation to report child sexual abuse to the police and to protect a child from sexual abuse. Failure to meet these obligations may be considered a criminal offence.

Following a report being made to CARL or SAPOL workers must make an internal report to management.

We will be guided by the Department for Child Protection and/or SAPOL after a report has been made as to whether we can conduct an internal investigation.

If a worker is reported to CARL or SAPOL for causing harm or risk of harm to a child or young person, they will be removed from any role that involves working with any child or young person until authorities have concluded their investigation.

Following a report to CARL or SAPOL we will support the child or young person by:

- referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services
- continuing to provide a service to the child, young person and their family and monitor their circumstances.

We will document all information received regarding the report and store this securely in a separate file.

8. REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO GENERAL COMPLAINTS OR FEEDBACK

Providing opportunities for complaints and feedback ensures that children, young people and their families feel valued and respected and enables us to improve the quality of our service.

Compliments, complaints or feedback can be provided verbally or in writing to any worker or direct to management either by telephone on 0412956328 via email at avantdance25@gmail.com or by post addressed to PO box 766 St Agnes 5097

We will deal with all complaints and feedback received from children, young people or their families promptly, sensitively and fairly. We will:

- listen to the complaint/feedback
- the person receiving the complaint will make a record of it if received verbally
- advise of the time expected for an outcome
- if a worker receives a complaint, they must forward it to me as soon as possible
- I will respond to the complainant with an outcome within a short time frame
- make sure that procedural fairness is followed at all times.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

Identified risk	Actions to minimise risk
Culture of organisation is not child-safe focussed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child focused Code of Conduct is in place that sets the behavioural standards expected including what happens when a breach occurs • culture of management reflects our strong commitment to the safety of children and young people • the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations are embedded in policies and procedures • we meet the requirements of the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i> (which mandates child safe environments) and the <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i> (which mandates Working with Children Checks)
Organisational workers harm children/young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruitment processes checks to ensure the suitability of persons before they are employed/volunteer with our organisation • interview questions (no prior preparation) should gauge an applicant's understanding of child safe principles and actions that would be taken to prevent harm to children and young people • all workers/volunteers have WWCC with 'not prohibited' result prior to working with children and young people • WWCCs updated every 5 years and status remains as not prohibited • children and young people and their families have access to a copy of our Child Safe Environments policy
Organisational workers don't understand their obligations to report harm and risk of harm to the Child Abuse Report Line (or SA Police if child/young person is at immediate risk)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all workers trained in Responding to Risk of Harm and Neglect – Education and Care on commencement and refresher training every 3 years after • all workers must abide by the child safe environments policy and Code of Conduct (latter is signed on commencement with organisation)
Physical contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any physical contact must be appropriate to the delivery of services being provided • where physical contact is required, this is undertaken in a safe way by explaining why contact is required and what will happen, and asking the child/young person for their permission (or their family if this is more appropriate) before proceeding

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> unnecessary physical contact is not allowed
Transport of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> workers/volunteers must not transport a child or young person unless specifically approved parents/guardians must provide consent before transporting a child or young person the worker /volunteer must have a valid, unrestricted driver's licence the vehicle must be registered, insured and in roadworthy condition
Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> if child/young person not collected by parent/guardian at end of class/training, one adult is to stay with child/young person until they are collected
Taking images of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consent of child young person and their parent/guardian required disclosure will be made as to how the image is to be used and consent must be provided by the child, young person and parent/guardian images must be presented in a way that de-identifies the child or young person
Physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure all equipment is in good working order
Privacy and confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all documents containing confidential information will be stored privately in a locked filing cabinet (or similar place with restricted access) digital files containing confidential information shall be protected electronically by restricting the access to only those requiring it to perform their duties workers must not disclose information regarding any child or young person without written consent of the child, young person and their parent/guardian
Overnight and/or off-site activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consent of parent or guardian must be given children and young people must be supervised by a minimum of 2 adults of the same gender as the children attending privacy when children or young people are bathing, toileting and dressing must be provided children and young people will not be left under the supervision of unauthorised persons
Change room requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a minimum of two adults of the same gender as the children or young people must be present

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• supervision will be provided ensuring the child or young person's right to privacy
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10. POLICY REVIEW

We will, at a minimum, review this policy and the related procedures once every 5 years as required by the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017. We will also review this policy when:

- new or added risks are identified for children or young people, which may require a change in the policy or procedures
- a critical incident where a child or young person has experienced harm through involvement in the organisation
- concerns are raised by anyone involved in your organisation about child safety or welfare in the organisation
- awareness or compliance to the child safe policy and/or procedures is low
- legislative changes/requirements.

11. PROCEDURE

Where the Principal, teacher, staff member, volunteer, student teacher or relevant manager believes that a duty of care and the requirements of these procedures are not being met, the activity should be terminated or any children involved in the activity should be withdrawn from that activity.

All Avant Ballet Studio teachers and staff that are engaged in activities to which these procedures apply must have a current DHS check.

Avant ballet Studio staff, teachers, volunteers and student supervisors must at all times observe protocols for child protection, and in particular:

- a. must not transport children to and from places other than as detailed in a signed off consent form.
 - b. must avoid any situation, which may give rise to suspicion or complaint such as the unnecessary touching or showing favoritism of children.
 - c. Contact should only occur between the parent, teachers and staff members must represent the Avant Ballet Studio school in a respectful manner through social media platforms and including families associated with the school.
 - d. must not make or use audio, photographic or visual representations of children not directly related to the purpose of the activity or which may be deemed as inappropriate interest
- all proposed activities involving children must be approved by the Principal or a registered teacher prior to the activity.
 - approval is also necessary for any informal continuation of Avant Ballet Studio activity or any related activity which may be construed by the public as an Avant Ballet Studio activity and which falls within the scope of this policy.
 - in approving such an activity the Principal or registered teacher should have an understanding of this policy and it's procedures, and in particular to the level of training for staff or students in a supervisory role that is necessary for the activity to be conducted safely.
 - all activities covered by this policy and it's procedures should be clearly described to all participants as a Avant Ballet Studio activity.
 - In order for a child to be involved in an Avant Ballet Studio activity that falls within the scope of this policy, before the event Avant Ballet Studio must provide the child's parent(s) or guardian with an information sheet describing the nature of the activity, the measures to be taken to ensure children's health, safety and wellbeing, contact details for the staff or students responsible for the child in the course of the activity and information on whom to contact if they have any concerns.

- whilst parents of children involved in events may also participate, they must not be placed in a supervisory role in relation to other children unless they meet all the requirements for staff or student supervisors specified in this policy and its procedures, or are in turn under direct supervision.
- Notes of consent or other authorities must give details of the proposed activity and the activity must be conducted as described in the consent note.
- The ratio of adults to children in any Avant Ballet Studio activity must be adequate to ensure the proper supervision of children at all times and to be in accordance with State, Federal and Territory Licensing regulations, requirements and in keeping with Early Childhood Good Practice
- any activity that may involve children using a toilet or washing supervision must be provided in accordance with State, Federal and Territory Licensing regulations and requirements and in keeping with Early Childhood Good Practice
- In all Avant Ballet Studio activities involving children the staff member or student supervisor must be mindful of the safety of the children at all times, and must not conduct any activity for which they do not have the appropriate training.
- One or more Avant Ballet Studio supervisors must have appropriate first aid training including asthma and anaphylaxis or ready access to a First Aid Officer at all times
- An appropriate First Aid Kit should be readily accessible
- Avant Ballet studio staff involved in activities with children must comply with mandatory reporting legislation which requires that suspicions of child abuse be reported directly to a person who holds a management position in the relevant organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78).
- Concerns about the behaviour or intent of any person involved in the activity must be reported to the management of the activity or a senior member of Avant Ballet Studio staff whose contact details are given in the information sheet.
- Young children (under 12 years) must be accompanied to class by an authorised parent or guardian and will remain with the child until class

commences and collected by an authorised parent or guardian when class finishes.

- A relevant body to approve and accept a national police check includes: -

The Principal Robbyn Garrett-Doyle

12. EVALUATION

This Policy and its Procedures are subject to change depending on changes to State, Federal or Territory Legislation.