



Child Protection Policy

Aurora Dance is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children¹ and students. This includes ensuring that all child protection requirements are met and that the teaching environment always meets the requirements of a child safe environment.

Aurora Dance has a duty of care to ensure that all students are provided with a high level of safety and protection during the hours of the service's operation. It is understood by staff, children and families that there is a shared responsibility between the service and all stakeholders involved that the Child Protection Policy and procedures are accepted as a high priority and implemented successfully.

All dance classes are planned with the overall wellbeing of the students in mind, eliminating any possibilities of harm, including injury, sexual abuse, physical abuse or emotional abuse.

All staff members at Aurora Dance must obtain a current Working With Children Check in order to be employed and adhere to the *10 Child Safe Standards*, as outlined by the NSW Government, below:

1. "Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
2. Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
3. Families and communities are informed and involved
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account
5. People working with children are suitable and supported
6. Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child-focused
7. Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training
8. Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur
9. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe."²

The following policies and practices were outlined by *Ausdance National* on 23rd April 2013, and are also to be adhered to by all teaching staff at Aurora Dance:

"Teachers should always:

- work in an open environment
- avoid spending time alone with children away from others
- encourage open communication with no secrets
- treat every child equally and with respect and dignity
- put the welfare of each child first

¹ A child is any person aged from birth to eighteen years.

² NSW Government, 2nd March 2022, <https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/working-in-early-childhood-education/child-safety/standards>

- make sure you/your staff are aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect of children and young people
- make sure you/your staff are aware of an obligation to advise the employers or managers of any concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people that may arise
- make sure you/your staff are aware of mandatory obligations to report suspected risk of significant harm and of the procedures for doing so
- studio owner/teachers, school principals and company managers should maintain a register of staff employment and induction (including non-teaching staff, part-time and casual staff)
- keep records of any incidents or reports made to the state/territory child protection agency as confirmation that mandatory reporting requirements have been met (the report reference number should always be recorded)

Teachers should never:

- allow or engage in physical or sexually provocative games
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child or young person
- reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- fail to act on, and record, any allegations made by a child.”³

Mandatory Reporting

If any of the following occur during or in the context of a dance event or activity, it must be reported to the employer:

- “if you accidentally hurt a child
- if a child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- if a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done
- if a child is unusually distressed and you have any suspicions of or concerns about potential abuse.”⁴

Furthermore, according to the Australian Government’s *Australian Institute of Family Studies*, if a staff member within New South Wales “suspects on reasonable grounds that a child is at risk of significant harm”, it is their duty to report it to the relevant government authorities.⁵

³ *Ausdance National*, 23rd April 2013, <https://ausdance.org.au/articles/details/child-safe-dance>

⁴ *Ausdance National*, 23rd April 2013, <https://ausdance.org.au/articles/details/child-safe-dance>

⁵ *Australian Institute of Family Studies*, September 2017, <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect>