



CHILD SAFETY POLICY 2024

‘THE EDGE Performers School is committed to providing a safe space for all children - through detailed policy, ongoing staff education, and a transparent reporting process.’

NICOLE BUNNELL
DIRECTOR | CHILD SAFETY OFFICER

Dance is an unregulated industry, and anyone can open a dance school. That is why it's critical parents understand what happens at their studio and what the staff are doing to ensure the safety of their child.

In July 2022, the Victorian Government announced Australia's first mandatory guidelines for child safety standards for all organisations that supervise children. There are 11 Standards that every organisation is required to meet - these are outlined in this document, as well as our response and implementation plan.

THE EDGE Performers School's Child Safe Policy was developed through consultation with staff and parents. We are committed to continue this approach - in this update, we are extending this consultation to the students, as they are directly impacted and supported by this policy.

**FURTHER RESOURCES
for Parents and Students**

**[https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/resources/
child-safe-standards/#CSS_Guide](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/resources/child-safe-standards/#CSS_Guide)**

OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

All children attending THE EDGE Performers School have the right to be safe, respected and protected from harm. Children should be made aware of, and feel confident in, their rights and responsibility.

THE EDGE is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children that interact with our organisation, as students, siblings or friends of students, or audience members of performances. The welfare of children entrusted in our care is our first priority and we have zero tolerance for any form of child abuse. We will take all necessary steps to prevent and protect children from abuse and neglect, including:

- physical abuse: purposefully injuring or threatening to injure a child.
- emotional abuse: an attack on a child's self-esteem through bullying, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating, or isolating a child.
- neglect: harming a child by failing to provide basic physical or emotional necessities.
- sexual abuse: any sexual act or sexual threat.

WHO DOES THIS POLICY APPLY TO?

This policy protects all children and young people in attendance at THE EDGE. Any adult person (18 and over) that may work or interact with children at any time must comply with this policy, including:

- teachers
- administration staff
- parents on site at the studio or at an event
- volunteers at performances, or on site to help with concert/exam preparation.

Notes:

In this policy, the term 'staff member' relates to any person occupying the above role, regardless of their employment status with THE EDGE (ie: permanent, casual, or volunteer.)

The term 'parents' apply to parents, careers, and legal guardians of children at THE EDGE and where children are in the care of our staff, but in another venue (such as a theatre for a performance), they will also be protected by that venue's Child Safe Policy.

WHAT IS CONTAINED IN OUR CHILD SAFE POLICY

- Outline and response to Victorian mandatory Child Safe Standards
- Appendix 1 Code of Conduct
- Appendix 2 Studio Rules
- Appendix 3 Complaints and Grievances
- Appendix A Legal Obligations to reporting Child Abuse
- Appendix B Risk Management
- Appendix C Privacy and Confidentiality
- Appendix D Mobile Phones and Social Media
- Appendix E Safe Dance Practices
- Appendix F Inclusion and Diversity

RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

THE EDGE takes all reasonable steps to ensure we engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. This involves maintaining a rigorous and consistent recruitment screening and selection process.

It is our policy to:

- interview and conduct thorough reference checks on all staff.
- obtain and keep a record of Working with Children checks for all staff and volunteers.
- ensure all staff have current first aid certificates.
- develop clear duty statements and job descriptions for roles that involve work with children that state clearly our commitment to providing safe environments for children.
- ensure all volunteers at performances are suitably experienced and qualified to care for the safety and wellbeing of children in accordance with their age and needs. We will only accept volunteers who have children attending THE EDGE and with current Working with Children checks. These volunteers are also required to sign THE EDGE's Code of Conduct Agreement.

SUPPORT FOR STAFF

Before staff commence work at THE EDGE they are provided documentation that outline our Child Safe Policy. We ensure staff are informed of, and updated on our Child Safe Policy including:

- New staff will be inducted to our Child Safe Policy, and other relevant policies and procedures regarding the care and/or supervision of children and young people
- Ensure staff attend (either face to face or online) periodical information sessions as they become available, to remain up to date with knowledge of child protection, nature and signs of child abuse, cultural competency, regulation updates and other matters that affect children at our premises.
- Staff will be introduced to our Child Safety Officers (Nicole Bunnell and Jessica Hose) as they are to be the first point of contact to provide advice and support staff on the safety and wellbeing of children.
- Ensure staff feel encouraged and empowered to report any complaints, concerns, or perceived risks to child safety to the Child Safety Officer, other relevant management position, or the Victorian Police.
- Staff will be made aware of FURTHER RESOURCES,
https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/resources/child-safe-standards/#CSS_Guide

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

THE EDGE policies and procedures put children and young people at the centre of what we do - we are committed to the transparency, reporting and response for suspected or actual incidents of abuse.

We are committed to encouraging staff, children, and parents to raise any concerns or provide their views on the wellbeing of children involved with our organisation.

We keep staff, students, parents, and external stakeholders (eg: theatre staff) informed of our Child Safety Policy and relevant procedures by:

- ensuring staff have read, understood, and are committed to their obligations under our Child Safe Policy, Code of Conduct, and any other relevant policies and procedures before they commence work with our organisation.
- making relevant documents easily accessible by providing them on our website, distributing them to staff and having copies available upon request.
- providing children and parents with easy-to-understand information about our Child Safe Policy, through our website, Team App Notifications, Noticeboard and on social media.

We believe staff, parents and children should feel enabled, empowered, and supported to safely raise any concern or complaints about any perceived risk to a child's safety or signs of abuse. We have developed a procedure to respond to any complaint of abuse or conduct in not keeping with this policy and Code of Conduct, including to take disciplinary action or rectify issues when necessary.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

Nicole Bunnell and Jessica Hose are THE EDGE Child Safe Officers, responsible for being the first point of contact to provide advice and support to students, parents and staff regarding the safety and wellbeing of children engaged with the organisation. This includes being the first point of contact for dealing with any complaint of conduct not in keeping with this policy and the Code of Conduct.

Our Child Safety Policy is reviewed every 12 months with staff and students/parents - however we will update policy/procedures at any time as required. We commit to listening, and incorporating where possible, feedback from children, parents, and staff into the ongoing updates of this policy.

BREACHES OF THE CHILD SAFE POLICY

The following are examples of the different breaches of our Child Safe Policy and our process in response to these types of breaches.

| MINOR BREACH EXAMPLES | RESPONSE |
|---|--|
| Dancers Touching Each Other (eg: unwanted touching) | <p>In-class education with dancers reminding dancers about consent and discouraging personal contact.</p> <p>Discussions with Staff about appropriate and inappropriate touching between dancers. Teachers to be vigilant watching and observing all dancers in class and outside and in the waiting room.</p> <p>Ongoing incidents will be referred to THE EDGE Child Safe Officers, Administration Manager/Director and Parents contacted to discuss.</p> <p>Furthering investigations would result in Parent/Director/Teacher group meeting to discuss and implement strategies to ensure breaches stop and possible future consequences if breaches continue.</p> <p>Dancer apologies to the other Dancer if deemed appropriate and in the attempt of restorative practice a transparent plan would be made to monitor future behaviors.</p> |
| Dancers Taking Photos of other Dancers without their Consent | <p>Ask Student to delete any digital images immediately.</p> <p>Reminders given to students about Consent and appropriate behaviour inline with THE EDGE's code of conduct.</p> <p>In the attempt of transparency, but also aware of privacy policies, all involved students' parents/careers are contacted and notified of the situation.</p> <p>Ban/Limit Phones usage at The Studio.</p> <p>Team App post to all Dance Families about appropriate phone usage and a reminder of THE EDGE Phone use/Privacy policies.</p> <p>Furthering investigations would result in Parent/Director/Teacher group meeting to discuss and implement strategies to ensure breaches stop and possible future consequences if breaches continue.</p> <p>Dancer apologies to the other Dancer if deemed appropriate and in the attempt of restorative practice a transparent plan would be made to monitor future behaviors.</p> |
| Dancers misbehaving in class. Giggling, whispering and being silly and distracting other Dancers. (eg: hurtful comments) | <p>In-class education with dancers reminding them about appropriate and inappropriate studio behaviour and respect for teachers and others.</p> <p>Dancer asked to sit and watch (timeout) or leave the room for 5 minutes and sit with their parent if appropriate.</p> |

Ongoing incidents will be referred to Child safety Officers, Administration Manager/Director and Parents contacted to discuss.

Furthering investigations would result in Parent/Director/Teacher group meeting to discuss and implement strategies to ensure breaches stop and possible future consequences if breaches continue.

Dancer apologies to the other Dancer if deemed appropriate and in the attempt of restorative practice a transparent plan would be made to monitor future behaviors.

MAJOR BREACH EXAMPLES

RESPONSE

Dancer assaulted by another Dancer. (eg; kicked, slapped or punched) with malice.

Remove dancer from class immediately. Parents called immediately, if not onsite.

After removal of student, parents of both dancers are called and spoken to of the incident.

Parent/Director/Child Safety Officer/Teacher/involved Dancer/s meeting. Discussion of incident to fully understand who instigated the situation and why this situation occurred. Discussion facilitated by Child Safety Officers to implement strategies to ensure breaches stop and possible future consequences if breaches continue.

Dancer apologies to the other Dancer if deemed appropriate and in the attempt of restorative practice a transparent plan would be made to monitor future behaviors.

Police may be called depending on incident.

Dancer assaulted by Staff Member (eg: physical or sexual)

Immediate suspension of Staff member. Removed from interaction with any Dancers.

Investigation conducted so that incident is fully understood by Child Safety Officer/Director. Meeting with child's parents/career held promptly.

Police will be called, and staff member immediately removed from premises until police investigation complete.

YOUR RIGHTS

In the case of a suspected incident of child abuse, or a breach of our Child Safe Policy, you can report it to:

- **Any Staff member on site (which will be passed on to the Director)**
- **Child Safe Officer (Nicole Bunnell nicole@theedgeperformersschool.com.au 0412 053 936)**
- **The Victorian Police by Dialing 000**
- **FURTHER RESOURCES for Parents and Students**

https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/resources/child-safe-standards/#CSS_Guide

Mandatory Child Safe Standards

AS OUTLINED BY THE COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

STANDARD 1

Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children are respected and valued.

THE EDGE is committed to ensuring all children always feel welcome at our studios and places of performances. From a cultural perspective, our work to ensure Aboriginal children are respected and valued is done through consultation.

The Action Plan below has been developed after speaking with a Cultural Consultant: Samuel Gaskin (www.samualgaskin.net) and Robyn de la Motte (Dance Choreographer and Teacher)

This action plan will grow and develop as we find ways to ensure we honour and respect Aboriginal culture in our organisation in a way that is not tokenistic.

THE EDGE - ACTION PLAN

SHORT TERM (END OF 2023)

- Include Acknowledgement of Country at commencement of our end of year shows.
- Remove cultural appropriation from programming/events eg: concert dances.
- Create signage in front of facility with Acknowledgment of Country.

MEDIUM TERM (2024-2025)

- Engage cultural consultant to support program development and provide feedback/advice on concert plans if required.
- Upon enrolment at our school parents/carers are asked to indicate if they identify as an Aboriginal/Torres Straight Islander
- Discussion with dancers' parents/carers, that we are aware of their cultural identity, about how their child is integrating into the studio.

LONG TERM (2025+)

- Provide support for education pathway for Aboriginal students into full time training and/or company employment.
- Be aware of any other financial supports or programs that may be offered to assist culturally diverse students in our care.

STANDARD 2

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.

THE EDGE is committed to ensuring all staff and the internal culture is focused on the health and wellbeing of every dancer at the studio.

Children need to feel safe and secure when they enter the studio. They are always greeted, encouraged, respected, and included in appropriate decision-making processes at THE EDGE. Our approach is that the Director, Staff, Teachers, and Assistant Teachers all work together to set policies and procedures for the Dance School.

THE EDGE has a written 'Code of Conduct' which provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities of all our Staff and Dancers.

Our focus is on respect for teachers and other dancers in and out of the studio, we hold strong morals and values for equality to all, we practice equitable and inclusive values, we enforce accountability, transparency, fairness, and responsibility of our facility and our dancers. We always act in the best interest of the dancers as a team/class.

Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying, mitigating risks to children and young people. (APPENDIX B)

All Staff and Volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and record keeping.

THE EDGE - ACTION PLAN

SHORT TERM (END OF 2023)

- Update Staff on new 2024 Child Safety Policies.
- Share Updated Policies with all Parents and Students on Team App.
- Update Website.

MEDIUM TERM (2024)

- Review all Policies.
- Mid Year check in with staff, obtain feedback and consult with parents/students.
- Share any changes or amendments with Parents/Students and update written policies.
- Update Website and Send via our Social Media and TeamApp.
- Staff must Sign: Agreement/Acknowledgment of THE EDGE policies and procedures.

LONG TERM (2025+)

- Annual Review and Updates.
- Induction of New Staff, parents/careers and volunteers.

STANDARD 3

Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

All Children and young people are informed about all their rights, including safety, information and participation in accordance with THE EDGE code of conduct. This code is always available on TEAMAPP for parents and students, in our waiting room and on our website.

The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and young people feel safe and feel less isolated. We create a safe space at THE EDGE for dancers to bond with other students with a common interest. We have 3 communal spaces at our studios. A Junior age waiting and change room, a separate Senior age waiting and change room, as well as a spacious general waiting and viewing area where dancers and their family members can converse and form relationships with each other. In classes we always encourage, different partners and group work/activities to allow dancers the opportunity to make new friendships through the art of dance. Team work and working soundly with our peers is a basis of what we teach in dance classes of all ages.

Where relevant to the setting or context, children and young people are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age-appropriate way. Our Staff are approachable, friendly, and supportive to all dancers' emotional and physical needs.

Our Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children and young people to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise any concerns. We watch and observe physical signs, changes in behaviour and/or mood. We as an organisation generally care and communicate openly with our dancers on a regular basis.

THE EDGE encourages a culture that facilitates participation for all and is responsive to the needs of children and young people. We also provide opportunities for children and young people to participate and are respectful of their contributions, thereby strengthening confidence and engagement. We at THE EDGE have a strong student voice that is respected, heard and encouraged. We always ask our dancers for their opinions and empower them with choices in many aspects of dance. Examples: What style and colour do you think best fits our dance routine? What do you think today's skill focus should be? How can you improve your flexibility at home? What Song is your favourite to dance to today? THE EDGE gives dancers the opportunity to choreograph, be a leader, be creative, make decisions on music and costume, develop improvisational skills and confidence through many guided activities each term. We use dance to educate, self-discover and explore student feelings and emotions.

THE EDGE - ACTION PLAN

SHORT TERM (END OF 2023)

- Upload new standards and code of conduct on TEAMAPP and Website.
- Last class of each term is Dancer focused where they express what they would like to do, we encourage 'dance games' to develop children's confidence, friendship development, team work and independence.

MEDIUM TERM (2024-2025)

- Review all Policies.
- Mid-Year check in with staff, obtain feedback and consult with parents/students
- Update any policies and share any changes or amendments with Staff/Parents/Students
- Update Website and Send via our social media and TEAM APP correspondence means.

LONG TERM (2025+)

- Annual Review and Updates and Induction of New permanent Staff

STANDARD 4

Families and Communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

THE EDGE families are involved in relevant decisions affecting their child. The staff guide and assist parents in choosing the best choice of dance style, class, age and days for their child. THE EDGE also mentors, guides, and teaches the dancers about appropriate and inappropriate behaviours in a professional dance setting, interaction with older and younger dancers, communication with teachers, resilience, conflict negotiation, compromise, and safe and unsafe dance practices.

We have open communication with families and the community about our child safe approach and relevant information is accessible. Our focus is to make all children feel that THE EDGE is a safe space for them, like a second home. Dancers are fully aware of expectations whilst in the studios. This includes their behaviour before and after class, during class and at any competitions or performances.

THE EDGE promotes Dancers to: **'BE SAFE, BE RESPECTFUL, BE RESPONSIBLE and BE YOUR BEST'**.

'BE SAFE' – safe dance practices, safely warming up and preparing the body, safe execution of skills, safety in the dance studio when others are around, feeling safe at the studio in and outside of the class, feeling safe and supported by Teachers and Staff.

'BE RESPECTFUL' –to respect each other's similarities and differences, respect their Teachers, Coaches and Assistants teachers at all times, Dancers must also receive Respect from peers and staff at THE EDGE. We also teach dancers to respect THE EDGE property, spaces and equipment and also others dancers' belongings.

'BE RESPONSIBLE' – for your belongings, being in dance attire, dressed appropriately and organised, being on time and not late to class, responsible to you class and team, for your behaviours and reaction to a situation.

'BE YOUR BEST' – always try your best, give your best, set high standards for yourself, never give up, push beyond your limits in all classes.

THE EDGE allows feedback from families and communities in the development and review of all policies and practices. We chat to parents and dancers; we listen to their ideas and feedback. THE EDGE families, carers and the community are informed about the business's operations and governance via social media, TEAMAPP posts and documents, website, noticeboard in waiting room along with enrolment terms and conditions.

THE EDGE - ACTION PLAN

SHORT TERM (END OF 2023)

- Staff assist parents with questions and concerns parents have about their child.
- Working security cameras with 30 day memory, in all studios and open viewing windows for transparency for parents.
- Annual Review and Updates with Induction of New permanent Staff and volunteers
- Policies and Terms of Enrolment are all attached to Enrolment Form for parents/guardians/carers when they enrol their child.
- Create a POSTER; 'Be Safe, BE Respectful, Be Responsible and Be Your Best at THE EDGE' to display at the studio.

MEDIUM TERM (2024-2025)

- Review all policies
- Mid Year check in with staff, obtain feedback and consult with parents/students
- Share with any changes or amendments with Parents/Students
- Update Website and Send via our Social Media and Team App

LONG TERM (2025+)

- Annual Review and Updates and Induction of New permanent Staff

STANDARD 5

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

THE EDGE, including staff and volunteers, understand dancers' diverse circumstances, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.

Children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible, and easy to understand.

THE EDGE pays equal attention and support to the needs of dancers with disability, linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children, and young people. All individuals are treated equally and have the same rights and responsibilities as each other. We are inclusive, accepting, and respectful as a dance school.

We support the needs of Aboriginal children and young people and provide/promote a culturally safe environment for them.

THE EDGE - ACTION PLAN

SHORT TERM (END OF 2023)

- We offer part payment plans for struggling families, assistance with separated families when communication is non-existent. Support dancers and families when classified as vulnerable. (Berry Street Support Services)
- Encourage Dancers and Families to reach out to Staff when a situation arises. Either in person, email, phone, messenger, or text. All dancers have access to 3 or more of these options.
- Child Safety Officers are the first point of call for staff, students, and parents/guardians/carers.
- Complaints or Concerns are dealt with within 24-28 hours.
- All dancers are treated equally in class respective of age, gender, race, or religion.

MEDIUM TERM (2024-2025)

- Review all policies
- Mid-Year check in with staff, obtain feedback and consult with parents/students
- Share with our community about any changes or amendments.
- Update Website and Send via our social media and Team App

LONG TERM

- Annual Review and Updates and Induction of New permanent Staff & volunteers.

STANDARD 6

People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

THE EDGE hiring of Staff includes personal reference from current teachers, Edge dancers after years of training through our Assistant Training program, reference check through other professionals within the dance industry, pre-employment screening checks, phone or in person interview, focus on reliability and consistence, emphasise on child safety and wellbeing, staff who are passionate, hardworking and are willing to go the extra mile for their students.

Staff and Volunteers have current Working with Children checks (WWC) or equivalent background checks. They also acknowledge and accept our Code of Conduct policy at THE EDGE.

All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction with information that lists their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.

Ongoing supervision and management of staff are focused on child safety and wellbeing.

THE EDGE - ACTION PLAN

SHORT TERM (END OF 2023)

- Staff read and all volunteers sign Code of Conduct
- All WWCC are current and each staff/volunteer has a WWCC on file

MEDIUM TERM (2024-2025)

- Code of Conduct is reviewed and amended at the beginning of each calendar year
- Staff and all volunteers read and sign updated Code of Conduct relevant to the calendar year
- All WWCC of staff and volunteers are reviewed and ensure they are current and all are accounted for on file

LONG TERM

- Code of Conduct is reviewed and amended at the beginning of each calendar year
- Staff and all volunteers read and sign updated Code of Conduct relevant to the calendar year
- All WWCC of staff and volunteers are reviewed and ensure they are current and all are accounted for an on file

STANDARD 7

Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused.

THE EDGE has an accessible, student/child focused complaint handling system which clearly outlines its policy and procedures in the dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and obligations to act and respond.

Effective complaint handling processes are understood by children and young people, families, staff and volunteers, and are culturally inclusive.

All Complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly. Child Safety Officers are the first point of call for students, staff, parents/guardians/carers.

THE EDGE has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement. Reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met by all staff and volunteers at THE EDGE in accordance with the Complaints and Grievances policy.

THE EDGE - ACTION PLAN

SHORT TERM (END OF 2023)

- New Complaints and Grievance Policy uploaded on TEAMAPP, website for all parents and students to view.
- Maintain 'open door policy' so that grievances and complaints can be communicated promptly and dealt with efficiently.

MEDIUM TERM (2024-2025)

- Review Complaints and Grievance Policy each calendar year
- Share updated policy on TEAMAPP, website for all parents and students to view.
- Maintain 'open door policy' so that grievances and complaints can be communicated promptly and dealt with efficiently.

LONG TERM

- Review Complaints and Grievance Policy each calendar year
- Share updated policy on TEAMAPP, website for all parents and students to view.
- Maintain 'open door policy' so that grievances and complaints can be communicated promptly and dealt with efficiently.

STANDARD 8

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS ARE EQUIPPED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND AWARENESS TO KEEP CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE THROUGH ONGOING EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

Staff and Volunteers are educated and supported to effectively implement the organisation's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. The following websites are shared with Staff upon induction to increase their knowledge in this area.

Websites to assist Staff and Parents Volunteers:

https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/AG.DIBP.02.0033.001.0178_R.pdf

<https://www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au/recognising-signs-of-abuse-in-children>

<https://www.vic.gov.au/child-protection-early-childhood-protect/identify-signs-child-abuse>

Staff and Volunteers receive information to recognise indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and young people.

Staff and Volunteers receive information to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm.

Staff and Volunteers are equipped with skills to build culturally safe environments for children and young people in line with THE EDGE's Inclusion Policy.

THE EDGE - ACTION PLAN

SHORT TERM (END OF 2023)

- Post relevant links for Staff and Volunteer Parents

https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/AG.DIBP.02.0033.001.0178_R.pdf

<https://www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au/recognising-signs-of-abuse-in-children>

<https://www.vic.gov.au/child-protection-early-childhood-protect/identify-signs-child-abuse>

- Develop Inclusion policy
- Share inclusion policy with staff/parent community

MEDIUM TERM (2024-2025)

- Include links to information in staff induction information at the beginning of the year
- Include inclusion policy to staff induction information
- Include staff acceptance of policies in 2024 teacher agreement

LONG TERM

- Include links to information in staff induction information at the beginning of each year
- Ensure all policies are updated and amended then shared with staff at the beginning of each year
- Ensure all policies are up to date at the beginning of each year on TEAM APP documents and Website
- Include staff acceptance of policies in 2024 teacher agreement

STANDARD 9

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities. The online environment is used in accordance with THE EDGE's Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and practices. Any breaches to be reported to the Child Safety Officers/Director.

Risk Management plans completed by the director before conducting activities, consider risks posed by setting, activities, and the physical environment that may directly affect THE EDGE students and staff.

THE EDGE procure policies that ensure the safety of children and young people from external third-party contract facilities and services. (Competition venues and Theatre Venues for Performances)

THE EDGE - ACTION PLAN

SHORT TERM (END OF 2023)

- Child Safety Officers are the first point of call for staff, students, and parents/guardians/carers.
- Any concerns are dealt with within 24-28 hours by the Child Safety Officers/Director
- Risk Management is considered by the director for all activities onsite and offsite.

MEDIUM TERM (2024-2025)

- Review all policies in regards to Child Safety
- obtain feedback and consult with parents/students in order to review current policies
- Share with our community, any changes or amendments.
- Update Website and Send via our social media and Team App

LONG TERM

- Annual Review and Updates and Induction of New permanent Staff & volunteers.

STANDARD 10

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

THE EDGE regularly reviews, evaluates, and improves child safe practices. When and if a situation occurs at the studio and the business. Needs to amend, upgrade or change a policy we do immediately. All families are notified via TEAMAPP of any amends to our Policies sand Procedures.

All Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement. Changes are make if necessary.

THE EDGE reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families, and children and young people.

THE EDGE - ACTION PLAN

SHORT TERM (END OF 2023)

- Child Safety policies are shared with community on TEAM APP, website and studio noticeboards.
- Feedback is sought from staff/parents about child safety policies

MEDIUM TERM (2024-2025)

- Review all policies in regard to Child Safety
- obtain feedback and consult with parents/students in order to review current policies
- Share with our community, any changes or amendments.
- Update Website and Send via our social media and Team App
- Where to find policies are shared with students upon enrolment at the beginning of each new year
- Code of Conduct signed annually by staff and volunteers.

LONG TERM

- Annual Review and Updates and
- Induction of New permanent Staff & volunteers.
- Code of Conduct signed annually by staff and volunteers

STANDARD 11

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

THE EDGE Policies and Procedures address the required Child Safe Standards. THE EDGE Policies and Procedures are documented and easy to understand and located on TEAMAPP (Documents) for all families to download and read. The Policies and Procedures are accessible to external parties on THE EDGE website. THE EDGE Policies and Procedures are sent electronically to all staff upon induction to the organisation.

THE EDGE Policies and Procedures are developed with the guidance from Dance Arts Alliance, discussion with industry professionals and teachers, consultation with local school staff, discussions with parents and students at THE EDGE. Local Primary and Secondary Policies are used to also guide THE EDGE to set policies and procedures that are in line with the local guidelines and expectations.

It is an expectation of employment that all staff and volunteers understand and implement the policies and procedures stated by THE EDGE PERFORMERS SCHOOL.

THE EDGE - ACTION PLAN

SHORT TERM (END OF 2023)

- All new policies are shared with the community on TEAMAPP, website and studio noticeboards.
- Feedback is sought from staff/parents about all policies and procedures

MEDIUM TERM (2024-2025)

- Review all policies and procedure documents
- obtain feedback and consult with parents/students in order to review current policies
- Share with our community, any changes or amendments.
- Update Website and Send via our social media and TEAM APP
- Where to find policies are shared with students upon enrolment at the beginning of each new year
- Ensure all policies are aligned and are presented as a package to new staff and families.

LONG TERM

- Annual Review and Updates made to written policies.
- Policies presented as a package upon Induction of New permanent Staff & volunteers.

APPENDIX 1

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

THE EDGE puts the best interests of its students first in all policy development, hiring processes and ongoing training of staff. Staff at all levels as well as volunteers visiting onsite or at an event are committed to and bound by the following conduct.

All Staff are responsible for the safety, and protection of children by:

- Adhering to and advocating for our Child Safe Policy.
- Taking reasonable steps to ensure children and young people are always safe.
- Treating staff, parents, and students with respect always.
- Must act 'in loco parentis' which means being legally responsible of a young person like their parent. It is expected that our staff are looking after our student's best interests.
- Be kind, caring, thoughtful and a safe person for each child and be aware of those requiring extra support.
- Reach out for further support to our Child Safety Officers when a child confides in them about concerning issues and ensuring the child's privacy rights are being met.
- Have high expectations of behavior and lead by example always.
- Ensure that they uphold the policies and procedures of THE EDGE always, both on and off site at events.
- Reporting any allegations of misconduct or abuse immediately to the parent of the child as well as the Child Safe Officer, Directors of the organisation, or if required, the Victorian Police

All Staff must NOT:

- Discriminate against a child based on the protected classes (eg: race, disability, gender)
- Develop a personal relationship with a child or young person, other than being friendly and supportive within a group environment.
- Have any affectionate/sexual relationship with any student.
- Bring personal problems and stresses into the teaching environment.
- Have students on any personal social media that contains any inappropriate/adult content.
- Disregard anything that may cause harm to any child at THE EDGE.
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.
- Fail to adhere to the stated policies and procedures of THE EDGE.

FURTHER RESOURCES for Parents and Students

https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/resources/child-safe-standards/#CSS_Guide

THE EDGE Performers School Code of Conduct

Transparency, Confidentiality and Privacy

- Work with children in an open and transparent way – other adults should always know about the work you are doing with children.
- Do not engage in inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact or behaviours, including doing things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Never be alone or engage in undisclosed private meetings with a child that is not your own. If you offer private lessons, parents or caregivers should be allowed to watch, either in the room or through a viewing window or open door.
- Do not engage in inappropriate personal communications with a child through any medium, including any online contact or interactions with a student.
- Personal information about students and their families should be kept confidential. In particular, never post identifying information online about a child, such as their full name, age, e-mail address, telephone number, residence, school, or details of their membership in a club or group without parental consent.
- Always obtain written consent from parents/carers before taking or publishing photos or videos.

Communication and Social Interactions

- Behave as a positive role model to all children and young people.
- Impart knowledge and skill of dance in a respectful and encouraging manner.
- Use positive and affirming language towards children and young people.
- Encourage children and young people to express their ideas and listen to them with respect.
- Help provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all children and young people to interact and socialise.
- Intervene when children are behaving inappropriately towards others.
- Do not use Social Media platforms in a personal format with Students under the age of 18 years.
- Do not contact THE EDGE students past or present for any conflict of interest dance related matters.

Physical safety

- Provide a physically safe environment for children and young people.
- Provide areas where children can change clothes and use toilet facilities in private.
- If you use touch as part of your teaching or in your dance style, work with the children and young people in your studio make sure this is appropriate, age related and in the Studio Environment.

Cultural and Emotional Safety

- Respect all differences, especially (but not limited to) cultural, religious and political differences.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and culturally diverse children and young people.
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children and young people with special needs, mental health issues or any kind of disability.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- Actively seek 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 all disabilities.

Do not engage in or tolerate by others any form of inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people, including but not limited:

- Do not behave in a prejudicial or oppressive manner.
- Do not use inappropriate language with, or in the presence of, children and young people.
- Do not express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children.
- Do not discriminate against any child based on culture, age, gender, vulnerability, sexuality, race, ethnicity or disability.
- Do not engage in any form of sexual conduct with a child, including making sexually suggestive comments or sharing sexually suggestive material.
- Do not engage in conduct that exposes a child to sexually suggestive comments by others or by

creating sexually suggestive material to be presented by the child. This includes movement material, costumes and themes in class, rehearsal and performance.

- Do not engage in any form of physical violence towards a child, including inappropriately rough physical play.
- Do not use physical or corporal punishment to discipline or control a child.
- Do 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.
- Do not develop 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, offering gifts or special treatment for specific students).

How to respond when a child makes an allegation of abuse

Children and young people reporting abuse or safety concerns must be treated with sensitivity and provided with support:

- Provide a quiet, safe space and give your full attention to the child, so they can talk about their concerns in their own time and in their own words.
- Be supportive and reassuring, and comfort them if they are distressed.
- Ask open ended questions such as "what happened?"
- Reassure the child it was not their fault and that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Let them know you will act on this information and that to do so you need to let other people

Alert the relevant person in your school and follow your schools' procedure for reporting abuse, as documented in your schools' policy.

You will need to promptly report the child's disclosure. To avoid contamination of evidence:

- Record the child's disclosure in their own words
- Note the time, date and location of the disclosure
- Note their demeanour and appearance at the time
- Note any physical evidence
- Keep the record of disclosure confidential
- Give the record only to the person(s) or organisation(s) who are authorised to investigate the incident

Report concerns or breaches appropriately and immediately

- Report concerns about child safety - ensure that your legal obligations to report allegations to relevant external authorities are met.
- Where an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child involved is safe.
- Call the Police on 000 if you have concerns that a child is in immediate danger.
- Respect the privacy of children and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.

APPENDIX 2

OUR DANCE FAMILIES COMMITMENT TO OUR CHILD SAFE POLICY

While we can do all we can in our studio to protect children and young people, we also need commitment from parents and students on site to keep children safe from harm.

All Students MUST:

- Treat staff members, teachers, and all other students with respect.
- Not threaten, or abuse (verbally, emotionally, or physically) other students, or staff.
- Not bully another child. To understand **what is** and **what is not** bullying, please view this helpful resource from Kids Helpline: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/bullying>

All Students SHOULD:

- Read this document (where age appropriate) with a parent or guardian to ensure they understand the commitments of our organisation to protect all children and young people and their role in upholding this policy.
- Inform their parents or let a staff member know if there is something happening in the studio that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

All parents MUST NOT:

- Parents must not get involved in gossip, whispers, and dance drama outside of the studio.
- Parents must not encourage poor or inappropriate behaviour from their children.
- Parents must not discuss, analyze, critique, express their personal opinions about other dancers' ability, dancers' level or standards, technical execution, positions in routines. They must not make unnecessary comparisons between students and must not make their own judgements.
- Parents must not share any choreography, filming, or photos on any social media sites without consent from staff/director.
- Parents must not film or photograph or then use footage/photographs of other people's children without consent or confirmation from staff.
- Parents must not take it upon themselves to verbally or via any form of messaging contact another student about their concerns or grievances. All issues and concerns must be taken up with the Child Safety Officers or Director to make sure the incident or issue is dealt with in accordance with THE EDGE policies and procedures.

We always provide opportunities for parents to view costumes prior to performances and we provide viewing of classes. There are always high-quality videos and photography of our performances so there is no need to take any photos or videos onsite or at our events. Due to privacy, you must have parent consent to take photo/video of another student.

**Parents, please help THE EDGE uphold the Child Safe Policies and Codes of Conduct.
We greatly appreciate your continuous support.**

[FURTHER RESOURCES for Parents and Students](#)

https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/resources/child-safe-standards/#CSS_Guide

APPENDIX 3

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE POLICY

THE EDGE is committed to facilitating a positive dance learning environment that is both beneficial and enjoyable. If you have a concern or complaint that is affecting your ability to participate in your dance training effectively, it is important to let your teacher know. If you feel your concern has not been dealt with to your satisfaction, we encourage you to contact Miss Nicole in writing so we can rectify and discuss the issue.

PURPOSE

- provide an outline of the complaints process at THE EDGE Performers School so that students, parents, and members of the community are informed of how they can raise complaints or concerns about issues arising at the dance school.
- ensure that all complaints and concerns regarding The EDGE are managed in a timely, effective, fair, and respectful manner.

POLICY

THE EDGE Performers School welcomes feedback, both positive and negative, and is committed to continuous improvement. We encourage communication with our families and are committed to understanding concerns, complaints and addressing them appropriately. We recognise that the complaints process provides an important opportunity for reflection and learning.

We encourage open and positive relationships with our dance community. We understand that it is in the best interests of students when there is a trusting relationship between families and our dance school.

When addressing a complaint, it is expected that all parties will:

- Be considerate of each other's views and respect each other's role in the situation.
- Be focused on resolution of the complaint, with the interests of all students as the focus.
- Behave with respect and courtesy.
- Listen and respect all sides and interpretation of the situation.
- Be respectful of the teacher and their knowledge and expectations in class.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, when/if appropriate.
- Operate within and seek reasonable resolutions for all parties.

Complaints and Concerns Process for Students

THE EDGE Performers School acknowledges that issues or concerns can cause stress or worry for students and impact their wellbeing and learning. THE EDGE encourages our students to raise issues or concerns as they arise so that we can work together to resolve them.

A student can firstly reach out to a staff member at the studio whom they feel comfortable with discussing their issue. Students with a concern or complaint can raise them for example, with their class teacher or a member of the teaching team. This person will take the concern or complaint seriously and will explain to what steps can be taken to try to resolve the issue and provide support. Hopefully, minor issues and concerns can easily be dealt with through a third person (mediator) with an open conversation.

If a student comes home upset or concerned about an issue that occurred at the studio it is important that Parents/Carers discuss dancers concerns with Miss Nicole either via email, phone or in person. Many times, minor concerns or problems can be easily solved by a conversation. Our staff are responsible and understand that at times dancers can miss understand or might be sensitive to feedback given by their teacher.

Further information and resources to support students to raise issues or concerns are available at:

- **Report Racism Hotline 1800 722 476**
- **Lifeline 13 11 14**
- **1800RESPECT 1800 737 732**
- **Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800**
- **Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467**
- **Victorian Aboriginal Education Association 9481 0800**

Complaints and Concerns Process for Parents

THE EDGE encourages parents, carers or members of the community who may wish to submit a complaint to:

- Carefully consider the issues you would like to discuss.
- Be reasonable and fair ready to calmly resolve the issue.
- Remember you may not have all the facts relating to the issues that you want to raise.
- Be prepared to listen as well as state your issue and there may be an opposing view.
- Think about how the matter could be resolved.

PROCEDURE

Raising a Concern

THE EDGE is always happy to discuss with parents/carers and community members any concerns that they may have. Concerns in the first instance should be directed to the appropriate Dance Teacher. In most instances a quick email response, text or conversation can clear up a minor issue. It is important to consider the time of day that you contact our staff and be respectful of the timeliness of their reply.

Making a complaint

Where concerns cannot be resolved in the way stated above, parents or community members may wish to make a formal complaint to the Miss Nicole (Director and Owner of THE EDGE Performers School). If you would like to make a formal complaint, in most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint raised, our school will first seek to understand the issue and will then convene a resolution meeting with the aim of resolving the complaint together.

Parents are not to take on the responsibility to interfere and discipline other people's children. Grievances need to go through the class dance teacher or a staff member. It is important for children and young people to be supported in conflict resolution with a restorative nature with other dancers, with the focus of maintaining and strengthening relationships. This builds confidence, resilience, develops productive communication skills, and teaches young people skills on negotiation, learning to compromise, how to deal with challenging situations, working together to understand each dancer's thoughts and feelings over a situation.

The following process will apply:

Complaint received: Please either email, telephone or arrange a meeting with the Miss Nicole to outline your complaint so that we can fully understand what the issues are. We can discuss your complaint in a way that is convenient for you, whether in writing, in person or over the phone.

Information gathering: Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, Miss Nicole may need to gather further information to properly understand the situation. This process may also involve speaking to others to obtain details about the situation or the concerns raised.

Response: Where possible, a resolution meeting will be arranged with Miss Nicole to discuss the complaint with the objective of reaching a resolution satisfactory to all parties. If after the resolution meeting we are unable to resolve the complaint together, we will work with you to produce an outcome for all. (Unenrolment from a dance style or class, enrolment termination, and/or removal from the dance school). In some circumstances, Miss Nicole may determine that a resolution meeting would not be appropriate. In this situation, a response to the complaint will be provided in writing. If issues of concern are of a general nature, in a particular class or a specific age group, THE EDGE may post a general information note on TEAMAPP or have an open discussion in a class where all dancers need to be aware of the concerns or issues of concern. More concerning or continuous concerns may involve all parents of that age or class being involved in the discussion. The most appropriate approach will be determined by the teaching facility and THE EDGE Director.

Timelines: The EDGE will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible (usually within two days) and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, THE EDGE may need some time to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of your complaint. We will endeavour to complete any necessary information gathering and hold a resolution meeting where appropriate within 10 working days of the complaint being raised. In situations where further time is required, THE EDGE will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.

Please note that unreasonable conduct (eg: Vexatious complaints) may need to be managed differently to the procedures in this policy.

Resolution

Where appropriate, THE EDGE may seek to resolve a complaint by:

- an apology or expression of regret or acknowledgment of feelings hurt.
- understanding of both points of view and listen to each other's concerns and compromise to best support each other.
- a change or compromise of decision.
- a change of policy, procedure, or practice within THE EDGE.
- offering the opportunity for student counselling or other support for other staff or promote external assistance for dancer.
- other actions consistent with THE EDGE values that are intended to support the student, parent and school relationship, engagement, and participation in the school community.

In some circumstances, THE EDGE may also ask you to attend a meeting with an independent third party or participate in a mediation with another staff member to assist in the resolution of the dispute. EG: Dancer, Class Teacher, and/or Director of THE EDGE.

Escalation

We always do our very best to resolve all concerns and issues. If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been resolved by the school, or if your complaint is about the Director, it may be the best solution to unenrol from all classes and leave the dance school.

Our focus is to treat all dancers with equality and respect, we are happy to communicate and resolve concerns and problems with each dancer and their parents. However, THE EDGE will not tolerate rude, aggressive, jealous behaviours and we will not be influenced by, threatening words, defamation, or gossip.

Our decisions are based on feedback from all the dancers, teachers, students class behaviour in all styles, attendance, co-operation, participation in class, verbal feedback, supportive team behaviour, maturity, dance knowledge and technique, execution of choreography, emotional and facial expression, general attitude, and the ability to execute the required skills for each class. Our teaching decisions are always focused on the individual, the dancer's physical capabilities, emotional and social maturity, age and appropriateness.

We are sensitive to dancers' external and personal issues and their concerns; however, the health and well-being of the entire team or class always comes first and guides our ultimate decision. Our focus remains, and the overall outcome of complaints and grievances will be guided by, what is best for ALL students at THE EDGE.

RESPONDING AND REPORTING CHILD ABUSE POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures THE EDGE has in place to respond to complaints or concerns relating to child abuse and to ensure that all staff and members of our dance school community understand and follow the various legal obligations that apply to the reporting of child abuse to relevant authorities.

SCOPE

This policy applies to complaints and concerns relating to child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school (physical and online).

DEFINITIONS

Child abuse includes:

- Physical violence inflicted on a child.
- Sexual offences committed against a child.
- Grooming of a child by an adult.
- Family violence committed against or in the presence of a child.
- Serious emotional or psychological harm to a child.
- Serious neglect of a child.

The definition of child abuse is broad and can include student to student incidents and concerns, as well as behaviour committed by an adult.

Grooming

Grooming is a criminal offence under the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic) and is a form of child abuse and sexual misconduct. This offence targets predatory conduct undertaken by an adult to prepare a child, under the age of 16, to engage in sexual activity at a later time. Grooming can include communicating (including electronic communications) and/or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their parent or carer.

POLICY

THE EDGE Performers School understands the important role our dance school plays in protecting children from abuse.

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

All students should feel safe to speak to any staff member to raise any concerns about their safety or any other concerns that they have. If a student does not know who to approach at THE EDGE they should start with their regular dance teacher and/or Child Safe and Wellbeing Officers (Miss Nicole and Miss Jess)

IDENTIFYING CHILD ABUSE

To ensure we can respond in the best interests of students and children when complaints or concerns relating to child abuse are raised, all staff and relevant volunteers must:

- Understand how to identify signs of child abuse and behavioural indicators of perpetrators - for detailed information on identifying child abuse and behavioural indicators of perpetrators refer to:
https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/AG.DIBP.02.0033.001.0178_R.pdf
<https://www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au/recognising-signs-of-abuse-in-children>
<https://www.vic.gov.au/child-protection-early-childhood-protect/identify-signs-child-abuse>
- Understand their various legal obligations in relation to reporting child abuse to relevant authorities (Appendix A)
- Follow the below procedures for responding to complaints or concerns relating to child abuse, which ensure our school acts in the best interests of students and children and complies with both our legal and Department policy obligations.

At THE EDGE we recognise the diversity of the children, young people, and families at our school and take account of their individual needs and backgrounds when considering and responding to child safety incidents or concerns.

Procedures for responding to an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse:

In responding to a child safety incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion, THE EDGE will follow:

1. Immediate action

If a staff member or volunteer witnesses an incident of child abuse, or reasonably believes, suspects or receives a disclosure or allegation that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused, they must:

- If a child is at immediate risk of harm, separate alleged victims and others involved, administer first aid (appropriate to their level of training) and call 000 for urgent medical or police assistance where required to respond to immediate health or safety concerns.
- Notify Child Safety Officer or Miss Nicole (Director) as soon as possible.

NOTE for staff and volunteers:

- If you are uncertain if an incident, disclosure, allegation, or suspicion gives rise to a concern about child abuse you must always err on the side of caution and report the concern to the Child Safe Officer/Director.
- If the concerns relate to the conduct of a member of staff notify the Director. The Director must then take on responsibility for ensuring our school follows the above stated procedures.

Refer to Appendix B for guidance on how to respond to a disclosure of child abuse.

2. Reporting to authorities and referring to services

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant staff have been informed, the Child Safety Officer must report all incidents, suspicions, and disclosures of child abuse as soon as possible.

The Child Safe Officer/Director must ensure:

All relevant information is reported to the

- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection
Phone: 1300 475 170
- Victoria Police **000**

If you believe that a child is not subject to abuse, but you still hold significant concerns for their wellbeing you must still act. This may include making a referral or seeking advice from Child FIRST or The Orange Door (in circumstances where the family are open to receiving support) DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police.

3. Contacting Parents or Carers

- The Child Safety Officer/Director must ensure parents and carers are notified unless advised otherwise by DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police, or there are other safety and wellbeing concerns in relation to informing parents/carers.

4. Ongoing protection and support

- The Child Safety Officer/Director must ensure appropriate steps are taken by the dance school to protect the child and other children from any continued risk of abuse. These steps must be taken in consultation with DFFH Child Protection and Victoria Police.

5. Recordkeeping

The Child Safety Officer will be guided by the DFFH and Police ensure that:

- notes of the incident, disclosure, allegation or including, where possible, by the staff member or volunteer who reported the incident, disclosure, or suspicion to them.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our dance community in the following ways:

- Available publicly at in the studio waiting room.
- Included in staff induction processes.
- Posted on TEAMAPP for all Volunteers and Families.
- Discussed at annual staff briefings or meetings.
- Included in staff handbook or manual.
- Hard copy available from THE EDGE office.

APPENDIX A

LEGAL OBLIGATIONS RELATING TO REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

The following information outlines the various legal obligations relating to the reporting of child abuse to relevant authorities.

Mandatory reporting to Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection

The following individuals are mandatory reporters under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic):

- registered teachers and early childhood teachers (including principals and school staff who have been granted permission to teach by the VIT)
- school counsellors including staff who provide direct support to students for mental, emotional or psychological wellbeing, including (but not limited to) school health and wellbeing staff, primary welfare coordinators, student wellbeing coordinators, mental health practitioners, chaplains, and Student Support Services staff
- nurses
- registered psychologists
- police officers
- registered medical practitioners.
- out of home care workers (excluding voluntary foster and kinship carers)
- early childhood workers
- youth justice workers
- people in religious ministry
- midwives

All mandatory reporters must make a report to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection as soon as practicable if, during the course of carrying out their professional roles and responsibilities, they form a belief on reasonable grounds that:

- a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical abuse and/or sexual abuse; and
- the child's parents or carers have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type.

Reporting student wellbeing concerns to The Orange Door

At THE EDGE we encourage staff to make a referral to The Orange Door' when they have significant concern for a child's wellbeing.

North Eastern Melbourne

1800 319 355

9am to 5pm Monday to Friday (closed public holidays)

nema@orangedoor.vic.gov.au

56 Burgundy Street, Heidelberg 3084

Rear Quest Pacific Epping, Level 1, Corner of Miller and Cooper Streets, Epping 3076

Reportable Conduct

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is focussed on worker and volunteer conduct and how organisations investigate and respond to suspected child abuse. The scheme aims to improve organisational responses to suspected child abuse and to facilitate the identification of individuals who pose a risk of harm to children.

There are five types of 'reportable conduct' listed in the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*:

- sexual offences against, with or in the presence of, a child
- sexual misconduct (which includes grooming) against, with or in the presence of, a child.
- physical violence against, with or in the presence of, a child
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child
- significant neglect of a child.

A reportable conduct allegation is made where a person makes an allegation, based on a reasonable belief, that a worker or volunteer has committed reportable conduct or misconduct that **may** involve reportable conduct.

Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults (i.e., persons aged 18 years and over), not just professionals who work with children, have a legal obligation to report to Victoria Police, as soon as practicable, where they form a 'reasonable belief' that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16 in Victoria.

Failure to disclose information to Victoria Police (by calling 000, local police station or the Police Assistance Line 131 444) as soon as practicable may amount to a criminal offence unless a person has a 'reasonable excuse' or exemption from doing so.

"Reasonable belief" is not the same as having proof. A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds.

For example, a 'reasonable belief' might be formed when:

- a child states that they have been sexually abused.
- a child states that they know someone who has been sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves.)
- someone who knows a child states that the child has been sexually abused.
- professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a mandated professional to form a belief that the child has been sexually abused.
- signs of sexual abuse led to a belief that the child has been sexually abused.

"Reasonable excuse" is defined by law and includes:

- fear for the safety of any person including yourself or the potential victim (but not including the alleged perpetrator or an organisation)
- where the information has already been disclosed to Victoria Police and you have no further information to add (for example, through a mandatory report to DFFH Child Protection or a report to Victoria Police from another member of staff.)

Failure to Protect Offence

This reporting obligation applies to staff in a position of authority. This can include principals/directors. Any staff member in a position of authority who becomes aware that an adult associated with their workplace (such as an employee, contractor, volunteer or visitor) poses a risk of sexual abuse to a child under the age of 16 in their care, authority or supervision, must take all reasonable steps to remove or reduce that risk.

This may include removing the adult (ie persons aged 18 years and over) from working with children pending an investigation and reporting your concerns to Victoria Police.

If a staff member in a position of authority fails to take reasonable steps in these circumstances, this may amount to a criminal offence.

APPENDIX B

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Edge Risk Management Plan is to: Identify, Analyse, Evaluate, Control, Monitor and Review

RISKS: IDENTIFY, ANALYSE and EVALUATE RISKS

Accidental Harm Risks:

Poor physical environment leading to injury- water of floor, floor surface, equipment left in Studio. **3: MEDIUM**

Poor supervision of children at The Edge- either by parent or staff, or if a teacher is working with another student. **3: MEDIUM**

High-risk activity-partner lifts and partner work, running type games as warm up activities **4: HIGH**

Physical Abuse Risks:

Physical punishment- holding a plank or stretch for too long, giving a dancer a task to complete **3: MEDIUM**

Pushing, shoving- students interacting or whilst teacher isn't watching **3: MEDIUM**

Punching, slapping, biting, kicking – student to student in class or in the waiting room **2: LOW**

Psychological / Emotional Abuse:

Bullying- student to student either outside the class or whispering in class continually targeting the same dancer. **2: LOW**

Threatening language – inappropriate strong language to underage dancers, Teachers joking that might be taken as serious insult. **2: LOW**

Shaming- body shaming, physical shame, making a dancer feel useless or not good enough **2: LOW**

Intentional ignoring and isolating – leaving a dancer out of group activities, choosing not to hold hands with a dancer, not inviting a dancer to outside activities with all other dancers invited. **2: LOW**

Spiritual abuse- picking on or making fun of someone's beliefs. **2: LOW**

Neglect Risks

Lack of supervision- In class, In waiting room/change rooms, at concerts and performances **3: MEDIUM**

Not providing adequate nourishment- dancers haven't eaten or had water during long practices or rehearsals **2: LOW**

Not providing adequate clothing or shelter- dancers don't have appropriate clothing or are wearing inappropriate clothing for the environment. **3: MEDIUM**

Not meeting the specific physical or cognitive needs of children- not correctly warming up dancers, not educating them about safe dance practices, not allowing them to think, focus and develop their concentrating and thought processes **2: LOW**

Sexual Abuse Risks

Sexual abuse, assault and exploitation – in appropriate touching, taking photos without consent, physical hitting or pushing a student. **2: LOW**

Grooming- inappropriate conversations with children, contacting student outside dance hours, having a student in your car or home without parental consent. **2: LOW**

Inappropriate touching- teachers touching a dancer in inappropriate areas, dancers not comfortable with touching of skin to skin. **2: LOW**

Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature – teachers discuss dancers personal sexual experiences, asking personal intimate details of a students. **2: LOW**

Crossing professional boundaries- personal friendships outside the studio beyond the normal accepted level. Making special girls for only that particular student, having favourites in class, having a friendship beyond and teacher/student relationship. Connecting on a personal level outside dance hours and dance functions. performances **3: MEDIUM**

Cultural/Spiritual Abuse Risks

Lack of cultural respect, racial or cultural vilification or discrimination- hurtful or inappropriate language, discrimination in dance activities **2: LOW**

Lack of support to enable a child to be aware of and express their cultural identity -feeling unsupported, excluded, culturally vilified. **2: LOW**

Use of positional power and control and using prayer/scripture as a means of manipulation -other students and teachers using and expressing their personal religious or cultural beliefs on others. **2: LOW**

Online Abuse Risks

Abusive texts and emails- Inappropriate conversations between students or students and staff member. **3: MEDIUM**

Hurtful messages, images or videos-inappropriate or unauthorised use of images, photos by students or staff members without verbal or written consent. **3: MEDIUM**

Intimidated others online- Inappropriate conversations between students or students and staff member where a dancer feels intimidated. or pressured **3: MEDIUM**

Grooming - Sending a child offensive, confronting or obscene content (or asking for inappropriate photos)- **2: LOW**

Singling a child out for a 'special' relationship.- **2: LOW**

EVALUATE RISKS

1: NIL

2: LOW

3: MEDIUM

4: HIGH

5: EXTREME

RISKS: CONTROL, MONITOR and REVIEW

Safe Recruitment and Management of Staff

| RISK | Date |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Reference/Referral checks | New teacher |
| WWCC | Annually |
| Interview/Inductions | New teacher |
| Adequate ratios teacher to student | As per directed and discussed with staff |
| Child Safety Education | Annually |
| Child Protection/Child Safe Policy | Annually |
| Code of Conduct signed | Annually |
| Teachers Agreement signed | Annually |

Consent / Permission

| RISK | Date |
|---|--|
| Relevant consent forms completed by a parent/guardian | Enrolment Form date of enrolment, annually |
| Video/photography consent form been given | Enrolment Form date of enrolment, annually |
| Emergency contacts made available to studio managers | Enrolment Form date of enrolment, annually |
| Dietary requirements and allergies noted | Enrolment Form date of enrolment, annually |

Safe Environment

| RISKS | Date |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Staff Current First Aid Level 2/CPR | 3 years |
| Safe Dance Practice Guidelines | Annually |
| Record keeping/privacy policies | Laptop with Password Protected |
| First Aid Kit and Injury Report Forms | Staff room |

Electronic communications to children and young people

| RISKS | Date |
|---|---|
| Electronic Communications | Teamapp, Email, Messenger, Text message and phone |
| Social Media guidelines | Policy, enrolment form |
| Privacy Confidentiality policies | Terms and conditions |
| Teacher Code of Conduct Signed | Annually |
| Students Terms and Conditions of Enrolment Signed by Parent | Annually |

Responding to abuse disclosures/allegations of misconduct

| RISKS | Date |
|--|--|
| Child Protection and Safety Information and Guidelines | Teamapp (form of communication with parents and staff) |
| Child Safe Policy | Teamapp |
| Responding to disclosures guidelines | Privacy Policy |
| Identified Risks managed | Annually |
| Record keeping/privacy policies | Laptop and password protected |
| Teachers Code of Conduct | Annually |
| Written Complaints and Grievance to Director | As per policy |

APPENDIX C

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

All staff of THE EDGE are required by law to protect the personal and health information the dance school collects and holds. The Victorian privacy laws, the *Information Privacy Act 2000* and the *Health Records Act 2001*, provide for the protection of personal and health information.

Personal information is information or opinion, whether true or not, about a person whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion – that is recorded in any form. For example, a person's name, address, phone number and date of birth (age). De-identified information about students can also be personal information.

Health information is information or opinion about a person's physical, mental or psychological health or disability, that is also personal information – whether in writing or not. This includes information or opinion about a person's health status and medical history, immunisation status and allergies, as well as counselling records.

Sensitive information is information or opinion about a set of specific characteristics, including a person's racial or ethnic origin, political opinions or affiliations, religious beliefs or affiliations, philosophical beliefs, sexual preferences or practices, or criminal record. It also includes health information.

What information do we collect?

Our organisation collects the following type of information:

- Information about students on our annually Enrolment Form. Name, Date of Birth, Address, Email Contact, Parents email, Emergency Contact, Pre-Existing Medical Conditions and Allergies.
- Information about the Dancers goals
- Information about Staff. WWCC, Address, Contact details, Bank details, Superannuation details.

How do we collect this information?

Our organisation collects information in a number of ways, including:

- In person and over the phone: from students and their family, staff, volunteers, and others
- From electronic and paper documentation: including emails, invoices, medical notes, Allied Health professionals, enrolment forms, letters to our school, and social media
- Through online tools: such as Teamapp
- Through any CCTV cameras located at THE EDGE studios.

Collection notices

When our organisation collects personal information, the dance school takes reasonable steps to advise clients of certain matters. This includes the purpose of the collection, and how to access, update and correct information held about you. Our enrolment system is on a laptop that is password protected. Personal information is not shared with any other student or parent.

Why do we collect this information?

Primary purposes of collecting information about students and their families

Our organisation collects information about students and their families when necessary to:

- Enrol and invoice families for the dance classes.
- Ability to contact parents and students when necessary outside class time.
- Support students' social and emotional wellbeing, and health concerns
- Know the students' goals and focus.
- fulfil legal requirements, including to:
 - take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm to students, staff and volunteers (duty of care)
 - make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities (anti-discrimination law)
 - provide a safe and secure workplace (occupational health and safety law)
- Enable the dance school to:
 - communicate with parents about students' dance matters, behaviour, problems and concerns. Also to celebrate the efforts and achievements of dancers.
 - give feedback to parents.
 - maintain good management protocol.

When do we use or disclose information?

Our school uses or discloses information consistent with Victorian privacy law, as follows:

- for the purpose of Enrolment into Dance Classes at THE EDGE for that current year.
- for the purpose of Administration staff using that information for classes, absentees, fees, costume, insurance, competitions (if applicable) and general correspondence.
- with notice and/or consent – including consent provided on enrolment and other forms.
- when necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to:
 - a person's life, health, safety or welfare
 - the public's health, safety or welfare
- when required or authorised by law – including because of our duty of care, anti-discrimination law, occupational health and safety law, reporting obligations to agencies such as Department of Health and Human Services and complying with tribunal or court orders, subpoenas or Victoria Police warrants.
- to investigate or report unlawful activity, or when reasonably necessary for a specified law enforcement purpose, including the prevention or investigation of a criminal offence or seriously improper conduct, by or on behalf of a law enforcement agency.
- to establish or respond to a legal claim.

Accessing your information

All individuals, or their authorised representative(s), have a right to access, update and correct information that our dance school holds about them.

Access to student information

THE EDGE only provides information and communications to parents who have a legal right to that information. In some circumstances, a 'parent' may not be entitled to information about the student. These circumstances include when granting access would not be in the student's best interests or would breach our duty of care to the student. Information will not be shared with a 'parent' that has not enrolled the student or listed as the Parent or Emergency contact information. In this situation we encourage the 'parent' to personally contact the named parent for the information regarding their child's dance enrolment and information. Examples of this may include but are not limited to Separated families, Divorced parents or AVO paperwork on student file.

Access to Staff Information

Dance School Staff may have access to a Students Contact information for dance related purposes.

Storing and Securing Information

THE EDGE takes reasonable steps to protect information from misuse and loss, and from unauthorised access, modification, and disclosure. THE EDGE stores all paper and electronic records securely. Information is kept on a Laptop that is password protected. Paper copies are kept as back up and shredded at the end of each year.

Updating your information

We endeavour to ensure that information about students, their families and staff is accurate, complete, and up to date. To update your information, please contact admin@theedgeperformersschool.com.au

APPENDIX D

MOBILE PHONES AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Dance students are required to store their phones in their lockers, bags or handed to their dance teacher to be placed with them. Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at THE EDGE will be asked to put them away and, in some cases, not to bring them to the studios at all.

Misuse of mobile phones includes the following:

- using them in any way that disrupts the learning of others.
- sending inappropriate, harassing, or threatening messages or phone calls
- to engage in inappropriate social media use including cyber bullying
- to capture video or images of people, including students, teachers, and members of the school community without their permission
- to capture video or images in the toilets, changing rooms, or waiting areas.
- to capture video or images during class without consent.

Exceptions

1. Health and wellbeing-related of a dancer (medical concern, illness, emotional stress)
2. Usage has been granted by the teacher to use of a mobile phone to film or record a skill, routine, or take a class photo.
3. Competitions, Costumes and External Dance Performances.

If parents are concerned about safety- all teachers have phones with them as well as an accessible land line at reception. We never leave dancers unattended at THE EDGE.

Nicole's Mobile 0412 05 39 36

Social Media Posts

We highly recommend and encourage parents to be on their child's social media accounts or regularly viewing and checking their activity. This is a particularly hard area to supervise and control as parents. THE EDGE ask that parents be aware of footage and photos posted by students, as content needs to be appropriate and all involved dancers (and dependent on age- their parents) need to consent to the content being posted publicly on social media.

APPENDIX E

Safe Dance Principles

To approach dance technique training, dance learning, dance-making and performance safely, students need to build a fundamental understanding of their physiology in relation to both skeletal and musculo- skeletal systems and body maintenance of building strength and endurance are vital to the young dancer, as well as knowledge of body maintenance, injury prevention and management and training methods to maintain a healthy, efficiently working body.

Dance classes should be structured around safe dance principles, for example classes should always commence with a warm-up and conclude with a cool-down.



THE EDGE has a responsibility to ensure that the spaces provided Dancers are safe dance spaces. The space should be suitable for the styles of dance being practised. Carpet, concrete, polished floorboards or uneven surfaces are not appropriate for many dance styles. Appropriate sprung floor is required for professional dance classes to run safely.

It's important for students to develop an understanding of alignment principles; for example, the integrated engagement of the muscles of the abdomen to create the core stability needed to facilitate safe placement of the pelvis and spine, thus enabling ease of movement and efficient use of energy through the torso. Students also learn methods of developing technical and physical skills which incorporate safe dance practices. Knowledge and skills from this area of study should be integrated into all other areas of study.

DANCERS will learn:

- Basic physiology of the musculo-skeletal system
- alignment principles that develop ability to correctly align body parts in movement and in stillness.
- safe dance practices for the prevention and management of injury including effective warm-up and warm-down and CERID – Compression, Elevation, Rest, Ice, Diagnosis.
- body maintenance for the dancer.
- methods of safely developing and maintaining technical and physical skills including use of alignment, coordination, balance, strength, control, flexibility, stamina, and transference of weight.
- Learn the movement possibilities of joints and the actions of muscles.
- Learn basic terminology to name body parts and describe bone and muscle placement and positioning.
- describe correct alignment of body parts to facilitate ease of movement, efficient use of energy and to avoid injury.
- understanding of effective methods for preventing and managing injury.
- understanding of factors which impact on body maintenance, and methods of body maintenance relevant to dancers.
- understanding of effective methods for safely developing and executing technical skills.

Safe Dance Practice

THE EDGE aims to help encourage and educate dancers:

Healthy lifestyles and promoting physical health.

- Promote a responsible attitude toward general health issues and provide healthy lifestyle role models.
- Give participants information about nutrition and explain its importance to dance training and physical performance.
- Provide access to water and explain the importance of being hydrated before, during and after exercise.
- Provide information on the effects of substance abuse, especially its impact on susceptibility to injury.
- Promote a responsible attitude towards dancer health and provide healthy body image role models.
- Teach students about individual body types and the normal changes that occur during growth periods.
- Accept all body types and help students to make realistic career choices.
- Explain the specific nutritional needs of dancers, including different food types.
- Explain the risks of under-eating and excessive exercise.

Encourage and promote emotional well-being.

- Develop open and trusting relationships with students.
- Appreciate individuality and help build on strengths.
- Promote self-esteem, assertiveness, independence and confidence.
- Provide referral to relevant health professionals.
- Be aware of, and sensitive to, the external pressures facing students, especially teenagers.
- Accept and work together to manage stress, anxiety or other problems.
- Use motivational strategies to help a dancer through challenging developmental periods, illness, injury, and rehabilitation.

Provide a balanced approach to training.

- Recognise the psychological and physiological symptoms of overtraining and discuss ways to manage, avoid and overcome this.
- Encourage a balance between training and rest.
- Give students information about time management skills.
- Encourage complementary activities like meditation, swimming or yoga for stress relief and balance.

Teach dancers to take responsibility for their own training.

- Encourage independence and the development of adult identity.
- Encourage students to understand and accept physical limitations and challenges.
- Encourage students to set and attain realistic personal goals.
- Teach students about self-monitoring and training decisions (e.g. decreasing the pace, intensity or nature of training).

Provide a Safe Dance environment which includes.

If the ideal environment is not available, design/adapt the activity so that is safe and conduct regular risk assessment checks.

- a venue that is free of obstacles such as furniture, building support structures, shoes and clothing
- sprung, non-slip floors (NB: concrete floors are not safe for repetitive physical activity even with wood or carpeted covering)
- approximately 6 square metres minimum space per participant (depending on the movement style/genre)
- adequate lighting and ceiling height for dance activity
- enough ventilation and heating for weather/climate conditions and number of participants

Apply knowledge of anatomy (musculoskeletal system)

- Use correct anatomical terminology.
- Demonstrate correct anatomical alignment for the dance genre/style.
- Identify and resolve incorrect alignment.
- Teach students to self-correct.
- Describe common skeletal and muscular variations and/or limitations (scoliosis, lordosis, kyphosis).
- Explain the challenges that various congenital or medical conditions can cause for a dancer and outline what can be done to overcome or work with these challenges.
- Identify muscle imbalances caused by injury or prolonged functional misuse.
- Explain how to avoid muscle imbalances and prevent injury.
- If needed, refer students to professionals for advice about remedial work.

Apply knowledge of kinesiology (anatomy and mechanics)

- Use safe mechanically correct movement patterns specific to the dance style/genre.
- Use exercises and choreography that are mechanically safe and efficient.
- Identify incorrect, inefficient, and potentially dangerous movement patterns.
- Demonstrate and teach safe, mechanically correct movement.
- Adapt exercises and/or choreography that may be risky.
- Demonstrate movement mechanics for balance, weight transfer, weight taking, lifting techniques and partnering, suitable for the dance style/genre.
- Make sure lifts, throws, balances, falls and weight support movements are suitable for gender, physical development, age, experience and skill level.
- Emphasise preparation in learning lifts, falls and cooperative work involving trust.
- Make sure that correct hand positions and alignment are used for support in lifts.
- Match body shape and weight for partnering exercises.

Apply knowledge of physiology (cardiovascular, respiratory, and nervous systems)

- Explain fitness requirements (eg: strength, muscular endurance, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility) for the genre/style.
- Monitor student fitness.
- Recognise limitations and understand the dangers of pushing the body beyond safe limits.

- Match exercises and choreography to participant ability/fitness level.
- Consider offering alternatives such as 'own pace' or 'level'.
- Explain how to develop cardiovascular endurance and find ways to combine aerobic and anaerobic training in technique and conditioning programs.
- Explain how to develop strength and muscular endurance and find ways to safely combine them in technique and conditioning programs.
- Explain the types of flexibility training.
- Teach students about the role of metabolism in diet and conditioning responses.
- Explain the neuromotor required for the dance style/genre.
- Explain and develop ways to challenge all three neurological systems (visual, vestibular & somatosensory).
- Explain motor patterns, their development, and the effect on training.
- Use imagery to help development correct sequencing and to re-learn incorrect motor patterns.

Apply knowledge of physical variables (gender, age, development and level of control)

- Understand issues relevant to age, gender, physical development and skill level, and how each affects the approach to training.
- Match exercise/choreography length, type, intensity and duration with age, gender, physical development and level of control.
- Create programs and training strategies specific to participant physical, social and psychological development.
- Consider age, development and level of control for activities that require maximum strength and power (eg: lifts).

Use injury prevention and management strategies.

- Warm up correctly
- Stretch all joints and muscles groups.
- Make sure dancers have rested, and isn't not over training.
- Maintenance of the Dancers body through Allied Health professionals
- Mental and Emotional support

Use strategies to enhance training and prevent injury.

- Make sure students dress safely for the dance style/genre.
- Make sure space and floor surface is suitable for the style/genre being taught.
- Manage space use to reduce accidents.
- Encourage individuals to take responsibility for their safety and the safety of others.
- Structure the class so that exercises progress.
- Make sure that exercises are suitable in type, intensity and duration for the group's age, development, and level of control.
- Create training plans (eg: school term, annual, course length) that gradually increase the load and intensity of training based on age, physical development, alignment and level of control.
- Create annual training plans that include a limited number of 'peaks' and sufficient rest periods.
- Create annual training plans that ensure progression in training load and intensity aimed at 'peaking'.
- Use the principle of periodisation to achieve a balance between technique, fitness training, conditioning, rehearsal time, rest, and recovery.

- Use foundation training (ie: aerobic fitness, skeletal stability, and development of base strength) to maintain fitness during breaks and prepare for the training period ahead (eg. a term).

Understand common injuries for the dance style/genre you are teaching.

- Be aware of common injuries, their causes and prevention.
- Use injury terminology suitable for age and understanding.
- Empower participants with the knowledge to take responsibility for their own safety.
- Include preventative conditioning exercises in classes and training programs.
- Give students conditioning exercises relevant to individual needs.

Understand potential risks in exercises and techniques.

- Identify and adapt potentially dangerous exercises and choreography to suit the age, physical development, and level of control.
- Discuss the potential risk of some movements, caused by lack of fitness (eg: strength, mobility etc).
- Adapt exercises or choreography to match fitness levels.
- Develop conditioning programs to help participants meet the fitness level (e.g. strength, muscular endurance, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility) needed for the genre/style.

Understand the risk of over-training and fatigue

- Adapt exercises and choreography where students show obvious signs of fatigue.
- Teach students about the risk of fatigue and empower them to take responsibility for their safe training and rehearsing.
- Check participants have developed enough aerobic capacity in their foundation training.
- Use techniques such as mental imagery for students suffering from fatigue.
- Modify the frequency and intensity of activities to avoid overtraining and fatigue.
- Make sure there is a balance between activity and rest during rehearsals, a performance or examination season.
- Use recovery techniques and include them in a training program—be aware of things that inhibit recovery from training.

Understand the risk of repetition and high impact activities

- Make sure you have the correct floor for the style/genre.
- Teach techniques that are mechanically safe and efficient.
- Structure your teaching and rehearsal to avoid excessive repetition and overuse of body parts—vary the intensity, volume and activity.

Understand the risk of inadequate warm-up and cool-down

- Explain the reasons for warm-up and cool-down exercises.
- Include all warm-up and cool-down stages.
- Make sure the warm-up and cool-down time is suitable for the planned content and participants.
- Explain the potential advantages and/or disadvantages of stretching types (passive, assisted, ballistic and PNF).
- Empower participants with the knowledge to take responsibility for their own warm-up/cool-down.

Assist Students If they want a career as a dancer, use safe and relevant screening or pre-testing and auditioning procedures.

- Use suitable assessment procedures.
- Assess the dancer's physiology to give a realistic evaluation of career suitability.
- Make sure the dancer's self-esteem is protected during the process

If students need out-of-class practice, use a safe environment

- Make sure the tasks are limited to activities that are safe in the chosen environment (e.g. flooring, space).
- Give clear instructions for out-of-class exercises, with the main points available in written form.
- Remind participants about the importance of warm-up/cool-down to prevent injury.

Use current injury recovery and rehabilitation procedures.

- Be prepared and know how to deal with or refer accidents, injury and illness.
- Encourage students to report their illness and injuries.
- Encourage students to get professional advice for allied Health professionals.

Use strategies to help participants through illness and injury.

- Encourage participants to rest when they need to.
- Find ways for participants to join classes—to maintain interest, fitness, strength, knowledge or to rehabilitate.
- Find suitable rehabilitation and/or alternative techniques to help participants keep active.
- Put together a recovery program using specialist advice that includes underlying weakness correction, an incremented return to training and alternate activities to maintain fitness and motivation.
- Adjust the dancer's movement to avoid repeating the injury.
- Empower students with the knowledge and motivation to self-correct.
- Use imagery and mental rehearsal as a tool for re-learning movement patterns and to re-develop physical confidence after injury.

Correctly apply first aid, set-up work health and safety and emergency procedures

- Do an accredited course such as the First Aid Level 2
- Use RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation) for soft tissue injury.
- Prepare a First Aid kit and have ice packs ready.
- Display emergency phone numbers.
- Follow legislated OH&S and emergency procedures, including evacuation and critical incident procedures, floor plans/exits, phoning sequence.

APPENDIX F

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain THE EDGE's commitment to making sure every member of the dance school, regardless of their background or personal attributes, is treated with respect and dignity. THE EDGE strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff.

POLICY

DEFINITIONS

Personal attribute: a personal characteristic that is protected by State or Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation. These include: race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious belief or activity, political belief or activity, age, intersex status, physical features, pregnancy, carer and parental status, breastfeeding, marital or relationship status, lawful sexual activity, employment activity, industrial activity, expunged homosexual conviction or personal association with anyone who is identified with reference to any protected attribute.

Direct discrimination: unfavourable treatment because of a person's protected attribute.

Indirect discrimination: imposing an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice that disadvantages a person or group of people with a protected attribute.

Sexual harassment: unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature towards another person which could reasonably be expected to make that other person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. It may be physical, verbal, visual or written.

Disability harassment: humiliating comments or actions about a person's disability.

Vilification: conduct that incites hatred towards or revulsion or severe ridicule of a person or group of people on the basis of their race or religion.

Victimisation: subjecting a person or threatening to subject them to detrimental treatment because they (or their associate) has made an allegation of discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected attribute (or asserted their rights under relevant policies or law).

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

THE EDGE is committed to creating a dance school community where all members of our dance school community are welcomed, accepted and treated equitably and with respect regardless of their backgrounds or personal attributes such as race, language, religious beliefs, gender identity, disability or sexual orientation so that they can participate, achieve and thrive at school.

THE EDGE acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of backgrounds and experiences in our dance school community, and we will not tolerate behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others. At THE EDGE we value the human rights of every student, and we take our obligations under anti-discrimination laws and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities seriously.

THE EDGE will:

- Actively nurture and promote a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that students are not discriminated against (directly or indirectly).
- Acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs, identities, and strengths of all students.
- Encourage empathy and fairness towards others.
- Challenge stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices.
- Contribute to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students
- Respond to complaints and allegations appropriately and ensure that students are not victimised.

Bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification, and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals or groups because of their personal attributes will not be tolerated at THE EDGE.

Students who may have experienced or witnessed this type of behaviour are encouraged to speak up and to let their dance teachers, parents or carers know about those behaviours to ensure that inappropriate behaviour can be addressed.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

THE EDGE also understands that it has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with disabilities. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist students with disabilities to participate in dance classes on the same basis as their peers. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students with disabilities in consultation with the student, their parents or carers, their teachers and if appropriate, their treating practitioners.