



# Child Safe Policy

## Purpose

All children at **Balance Dance School** have a right to feel safe, protected and included and supported in every aspect of their dance experience.

This Child Safe Policy forms part of our organisation's commitment to meeting the Queensland Child Safe Standards and the Universal Principle, and our obligations under the Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld). It outlines the practical steps, expectations, and safeguards we implement to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children who attend classes, rehearsals, workshops, performances, programs and events.

This policy:

- Describes the child safe practices we put in place to protect children from harm and abuse
- Sets clear expectations for staff, volunteers, teachers, choreographers, contractors and parent helpers
- Supports our families to understand how we create a safe, inclusive and culturally respectful dance environment
- Guides consistent and safe decision-making in all dance-related activities, including classes, backstage environments, competitions, performances, excursions and online engagement.

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## Our Commitment to Child Safety

At **Balance Dance School** we commit to the safety and wellbeing of every child in our care. Please read our **Statement of Commitment to Child Safety**, which is available on our website, [www.balancedanceschool.com.au](http://www.balancedanceschool.com.au) and in a folder in our studio cupboards at our Bulimba and Norman Park studio locations.

Our organisation ensures services and activities are inclusive of all children, including children with diverse needs.

We support the safety and wellbeing of children by:

- Upholding the Child Safe Standards and the Universal Principle, as required under the Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)
- Maintaining a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of harm, abuse, exploitation, grooming and unsafe behaviour
- Embedding child safety and Cultural Safety practices in our teaching methods, programs, rehearsals, backstage areas and events
- Training our staff and volunteers to recognise, prevent and respond to harm

- Ensuring all children feel comfortable raising concerns or asking for help
  - Making our expectations clear to staff, volunteers, contractors, student assistants and visiting teachers
  - Valuing and respecting the diverse identities, abilities and backgrounds of all children
  - Encouraging open communication between children, families and the studio.
  - Reviewing our child safe documents regularly and updating them as needed.
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## Scope and audience for this policy

This Child Safe Policy applies to **every adult** who represents, works for, or interacts with children at **Balance Dance School**. It covers all people, all activities and all environments where children participate in dance.

This includes:

### Staff and Core Personnel

- Studio owner and Principal
- Administrative and reception staff
- Dance Teachers
- Student Assistant Teachers
- Contracted teachers, Choreographers, Accompanists and Workshop Facilitators

### Volunteers and Parent Helpers

- Backstage volunteers during performances
- Parent helpers for concerts, fundraisers or events
- Adults accompanying children on studio excursions or performances

### Contractors and Service Providers

- Photographers and Videographers

## Activities Covered

This policy applies to **all areas and activities**, including:

### In the studio

- Regular dance classes
- Private lessons
- Changing areas, bathrooms and backstage rooms
- Waiting areas, hallways and arrival/departure zones

### Outside the studio

- Concerts, dress rehearsals
- Excursions

### Digital environments

- Online classes
- Livestream or Zoom rehearsals
- Social media engagement
- Messaging platforms or digital learning portals

Everyone covered by this policy must:

- Understand the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle
  - Follow the Child Safe Code of Conduct
  - Uphold Cultural Safety
  - Comply with all reporting obligations
  - Model safe, respectful behaviour at all times
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## Responsibilities for children's safety

Everyone at **Balance Dance School** is responsible for protecting the safety, wellbeing and Cultural Safety of every child who walks through our doors. Child safety is a shared responsibility - across leadership, teachers, staff and volunteers.

Our child safe responsibilities align with the **Child Safe Standards**, the **Universal Principle**, and the **Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)**.

### Leadership Responsibilities (Owners, Principal, Studio Managers)

Leaders at **Balance Dance School** must:

- Ensure the organisation complies with all child safety legislation in Queensland
- Implement and maintain this Child Safe Policy and all related documents
- Ensure all adults working with children are appropriately screened and are Blue Card compliant
- Ensure teachers and staff receive child safe induction and ongoing training
- Ensure risk management plans cover dance-specific environments (e.g., backstage, change rooms, acrobatics, props, physical corrections)
- Respond promptly to reports, concerns or allegations
- Ensure the Universal Principle and Cultural Safety are embedded in programs and practice
- Support teachers and staff to uphold safe behaviours
- Review all child safe documents annually or after any incident

### Teachers, Assistant Teachers & Workshop Leaders

This includes full-time, part-time, casual, contracted, and guest teachers.

Teachers must:

- Follow the Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Supervise children actively and appropriately during class, transitions and breaks
- Ensure physical corrections are safe, professional and appropriate
- Maintain visible and appropriate touch practices and obtain consent as instructed
- Follow safe music, choreography and costume standards
- Monitor group dynamics and respond to bullying or exclusion
- Communicate with children respectfully and without favouritism
- Recognise and respond to signs of harm or distress
- Report all concerns or incidents immediately
- Ensure younger assistants or volunteers are supported and supervised.

### Student Assistants / Junior Demonstrators (often 13–17 years)

Student helpers must:

- Be always supervised by a lead teacher
- Follow the child safe guidelines relevant to their age and level of responsibility
- Avoid engaging in private conversations, physical corrections or behaviour that could be misinterpreted
- Never be responsible for a class or for supervising children alone
- Report anything concerning to the lead teacher immediately.

## **Volunteers, Backstage Helpers & Parent Assistants**

These adults must:

- Complete a basic child safe induction
- Follow the Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Supervise dressing rooms, side-stage areas and warm-up spaces appropriately
- Ensure safe bathroom and changing-room procedures
- Never be alone with a child, other than their own, outside open/supervised spaces
- Follow communication and privacy requirements
- Report concerns immediately
- Hold a valid Blue Card or complete a Blue Card exemption form

## **Contractors & Service Providers**

Examples: photographers, videographers, accompanists, makeup artists, costumiers, cleaners, tradespeople.

They must:

- Comply with the studio's Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct
- Provide Blue Card details where relevant
- Work only in spaces where supervision is present
- Never be alone with children
- Obtain consent for images, recordings or fittings
- Avoid inappropriate physical contact, conversation or material
- Report concerns immediately to studio leadership.

## **All Adults in the Organisation**

Every adult working or volunteering at **Balance Dance School** must:

- Uphold the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle
- Read, sign and follow the Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Complete child safe induction and training
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Follow safe online communication practices
- Report any concerns, disclosures or breaches immediately
- Protect children's privacy and personal information
- Contribute to creating a safe, inclusive and **culturally respectful** environment.

Please contact Rebecca Wagner, Balance Dance School Principal with any of your child-safety related questions or concerns.

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# **Active participation of Children, Families and Communities**

At **Balance Dance School** we recognise that children, young people, families and communities play an essential role in creating a safe, supportive, and **Culturally Safe** dance environment. Children are more protected when they feel heard, respected and empowered to participate in decisions that affect their wellbeing and experience.

We encourage active participation by:

## **Listening to Children and Young Dancers**

We support children to express:

- When they feel unsafe, uncomfortable or unsure
- Concerns about choreography, costumes or physical corrections
- How they prefer to be supported or communicated with
- Any worries about peers, teachers or other adults
- Their Cultural needs or preferences
- Their accessibility needs, including sensory support or disability-related adjustments

We make it clear that children can approach teachers, staff or designated child safety contacts at any time.

### **Encouraging Family & Community Input**

Parents, carers and community members are invited to:

- Provide feedback on our child safe policies and Code of Conduct
- Raise concerns early so we can respond quickly
- Share Cultural perspectives important to their family (e.g., modesty, privacy, language, cultural dress requirements, gender considerations)
- Participate in consultations about costumes, concerts, outings and travel
- Request adjustments so their child feels safe and respected

We value input from all families, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, CALD communities, LGBTQ+ families, and families with disability.

### **Ensuring Feedback Pathways Are Accessible**

We ensure that children and families can:

- Contact the studio easily (email, phone, in person)
- Speak privately with the Principal, Dance Teacher or child safety contact
- Raise concerns without fear of being judged, dismissed or disadvantaged
- Access a child-friendly complaints process
- Understand how feedback is used to improve safety

Information is provided in clear, inclusive language and available in multiple formats if needed.

### **Embedding Cultural Safety & the Universal Principle**

We commit to:

- Creating Culturally respectful spaces for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families
- Consulting local Elders or knowledge holders when engaging with First Nations content or Cultural material
- Ensuring choreography, music and costuming do not cause Cultural harm
- Recognising that actions which damage Cultural identity are a form of harm
- Celebrating diverse Cultural identities across the studio

### **Supporting Participation in Performances and Events**

We ensure children have safe ways to speak up about:

- Backstage arrangements
- Quick-change areas and supervision
- Costume comfort or modesty needs
- Pressure, expectations or performance anxiety
- Interactions with volunteers, staff, parent helpers or other dancers

Children's voices guide our decisions, so dance remains a safe and empowering experience.

# Definitions of Harm and Abuse

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## General definitions

### **Harm**

Under the *Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)*, harm to a child includes any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. Harm can be caused by:

- physical, psychological or emotional abuse
- sexual abuse or exploitation
- neglect
- an act of omission or commission that exposes a child to danger, violence or persistent unsafe environments.

### **Physical Abuse**

Any non-accidental physical injury or behaviour that results in harm. This can include hitting, shaking, choking, kicking or any action that causes pain, injury or significant risk of harm.

### **Emotional or Psychological Abuse**

Behaviours or threats that cause a child to feel frightened, rejected, belittled or constantly criticised. This may include bullying, intimidation, name-calling, isolating a child, or exposing them to domestic or family violence.

### **Sexual Abuse and Exploitation**

Any sexual activity involving a child, including:

- sexual touching
- exposure to sexual content or behaviours
- sexualised conversations
- exploitation through online environments
- the creation, distribution or possession of child exploitation material.

Sexual abuse also includes situations where a child cannot give informed consent due to age, power imbalance, manipulation or coercion.

### **Grooming**

A deliberate process where an adult builds a deceptive relationship of trust with a child, their family or community for the purpose of sexual abuse. Grooming may occur online or in person, and often involves secrecy, special attention, gift-giving or boundary testing.

### **Neglect**

Failure to provide a child with basic needs essential for physical and emotional development. Neglect may include lack of adequate supervision, food, shelter, medical care, education or protection from known risks.

### **Inappropriate Conduct / Boundary Violations**

Behaviours that fall short of abuse but breach acceptable professional boundaries. These may include overly personal conversations, private messaging with a child, misuse of power, or any conduct contrary to a Child Safe Code of Conduct.

### **Misconduct Risk in the Sector Context**

**Balance Dance School** recognises that misconduct can occur in dance organisations and may include:

- Inappropriate use of authority or status
- Physical contact outside clearly defined dance teaching boundaries
- Favouritism, gift-giving or special treatment
- Unsafe social media or communication practices
- Poor supervision or inadequate leadership oversight.

# What the policy covers

**Balance Dance School** is a private dance studio offer dance classes for children and young people as outlined in detail in our **Child Safe Risk Management Plan**.

In summary, **Balance Dance School** provides supervised dance programs for children and young people in a structured, inclusive environment across two community hall venues. Programs include toddler classes with caregiver participation, kinder classes with caregiver observation, school-aged ballet, jazz and contemporary classes, and private lessons delivered within shared, supervised spaces. All activities are led by qualified teachers and may include supervised assistant teachers. Classes involve standard dance practice, including technique, choreography, and performance preparation. An annual end-of-year concert is held for students aged 3 years and above, with appropriate supervision during rehearsals and backstage.

This policy outlines how **Balance Dance School** keeps children safe in all situations where dance activities take place. It applies to every class, program, event, environment and interaction—both onsite and offsite—where children participate or are impacted by our activities. Because dance environments involve physical contact, close personal spaces, body-based learning, costuming, and mixed-age areas, our child safe practices extend across all operational areas.

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## 1. Supervision of Children in All Spaces

Including but not limited to:

- Students are in the care of Balance Dance School staff During classes and rehearsals, school holiday programs and private lessons.
- Students are to stay inside the studio to be supervised during breaks between classes.
- Students are supervised by Balance Dance School staff and volunteers, backstage in changing rooms or costume areas and side-stage in the Theatre at our annual concert.

Supervision must be active, appropriate to the risk level, and consistent with the Child Safe Standards.

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## 2. Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

This includes:

- Students are to be dropped off and picked up in a timely manner, parents will be called if a student has not been collected or a teacher notified by 5 minutes after the class has concluded.
- Students will only be released to a parent/carer or authorised adult.
- Our Bulimba Hall only has an outside waiting area where students are the responsibility of parents before class, Norman Park has a 'student only' waiting area in the foyer where students can wait for a reasonable time prior to their class commencing.
- **Concert and dress rehearsal at the Theatre** – all students are required to be promptly dropped off and collected, by being signed in and out of the venue by a responsible adult.

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## 3. Physical Contact During Dance Teaching

As dance is a physical activity, Balance Dance school is committed to ensuring that all physical contact is safe, appropriate and respectful. This includes the use of consent-based physical corrections, with clear explanations provided to students before any contact occurs.

Students will be given the option to choose alternatives if they prefer not to receive physical corrections, and their preferences will be always respected. Additional care will be taken when teaching lifts and partnering works to ensure safety and clear communication and mutual trust between participants.

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## 4. Change Rooms, Dressing Areas & Bathrooms

This includes:

- **Studios** - at both studio locations, studio bathrooms where students can get changed are adjacent to the hall – with direct entry from the hall/studio.
- **Concert** - during the dress rehearsal, photo day (at the hall) and concert (at the theatre) – all students who are multiple dance items, requiring multiple costume changes, are required to wear a skin tone leotard for costume changing. No photography is permitted in the Theatre dressing rooms.

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## 5. Photography, Filming & Media Use

The Principal will request consent from parents or guardians for any photography, filming, or media involving students at Balance Dance School. All images and recordings must be respectful, appropriate, and culturally sensitive. Staff must not use personal devices to capture images or videos of students unless explicitly authorised by the Principal.

These guidelines apply to all settings, including concerts and in-class activities. Any in-class filming intended for social media content requires prior consent from parents and students before use in advertising or online platforms. Livestream or Zoom classes must not be recorded or screen captured under any circumstances. Additionally, consent from parents and students is required before any images or videos are used in publicity or promotional materials.

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## 6. Social Media and Communications Policy

Staff, teachers, volunteers and contractors at **Balance Dance School** must maintain clear, professional boundaries with children always - including outside normal class hours.

Out-of-hours contact includes any form of communication or interaction that occurs:

- Before or after class
- On weekends or days off
- Via text, email, phone calls or messaging apps
- Through social media (DMs, comments, friend requests)
- In public settings (e.g., bumping into a student at the shops)
- In private settings (e.g., invitations to meet, coffee catch ups, sleepovers)
- Private lesson arrangements
- Unofficial studio events organised by individual teachers

To protect children - and adults - from boundary breaches or misinterpretation, the following rules apply:

### **No Private One-to-One Contact with Children**

Staff, volunteers and teachers must not:

- Send private messages to a child
- Respond to a child's DMs or private messages
- Initiate contact outside authorised studio communication channels
- Call, text or email a child directly

**All communication must include a parent or carer or occur through an official studio platform.**

## **No Personal Social Media Interaction**

Staff must not:

- Friend/follow a child from personal accounts
- Like, comment on or react to a child's posts
- Send or accept DM requests
- Tag children on personal posts
- Share images of students on personal accounts

If a student contacts a teacher directly, staff must:

- Not engage
- Direct the child to use official studio channels
- Inform parents/carers if needed
- Notify management if anything concerning appears

## **No Out-of-Hours Meet-Ups or Personal Invitations**

Staff and volunteers must not:

- Meet a child alone outside studio activities
- Provide lifts or offer transport
- Invite children to personal events
- Organise unofficial "hangouts," coffee catch ups, or one-on-one mentoring sessions
- Host rehearsals in private homes

Even with parent permission, one-to-one personal meet ups are **not permitted** for child safety reasons.

## **Communication Must Be Transparent and Professional**

Allowed communication (must include a parent/guardian):

- Class updates
- Timetable changes
- Costume or event information
- Reminders for rehearsals or performances
- Lost property enquiries
- Wellbeing check-ins when appropriate and logged

All communication must be:

- Via official studio email accounts
- Via studio management systems/apps
- Copied to parents/carers
- Logged where necessary

## **Managing Necessary Exceptions Safely**

Certain situations may require limited direct contact (always with safeguards), such as:

- Contacting a young assistant (16–17 years old) regarding their volunteer shift
- Confirming arrival times

- Coordinating emergencies at events

In these cases:

- Communication must remain professional
- The parent must be included
- The contact must be logged or documented
- Messages must be kept strictly to logistics

### **Staff Must Declare Pre-Existing Personal Relationships**

If a staff member has a pre-existing personal relationship with a child (e.g., family friend, neighbour, sibling of a friend), they must:

- Disclose this to management
- Avoid being placed in a supervisory or one-to-one position with the child
- Follow the same safe communication rules

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## 7. Behaviour Management & Child-to-Child Interactions

### Code of Conduct for Students

Students at **Balance Dance School** are expected to demonstrate respectful, safe, and inclusive behaviour always. This includes showing respect towards teachers and fellow students, and demonstrating a willingness to listen, follow instructions, and actively engage in learning. Students are expected to behave safely and appropriately while waiting for classes to begin, as well as when being collected after lessons or rehearsals.

All students share a responsibility to contribute to a positive and supportive environment. Bullying in any form is not accepted, and students are expected not only to refrain from such behaviour but also to speak up and respond appropriately if they witness harmful actions.

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## 8. Costumes, Choreography & Music Selection Safety

### Costume and Uniform Safety

All bodies are dancing bodies. **Balance Dance School** maintains a body-positive studio environment that values cultural respect, visible representation, inclusive choreography, and costuming, as well as flexible uniform options to support all students.

**Balance Dance School** is committed to selecting costumes that are age-appropriate, comfortable, and inclusive, with the principal, Rebecca, overseeing and guiding staff in making choices that anticipate a diverse range of needs, including body image concerns, cultural considerations, and sensory sensitivities. For safe costume changes during the end of year concert, all students require a skin tone leotard that remains on while changing.

Supporting body positivity, **Balance Dance School** teaching practices prioritise functionality and inclusive language, for example encouraging students to “use your core by pulling your belly button towards your spine for a strong body” rather than using language that may feel critical or body focused. Staff model constructive, supportive language and imagery when giving corrections, with a focus on movement quality, creativity, and safety, rather than body shape or size, to help build confidence and a positive self-image in every dancer.

### Choreography and Music Selection

**Balance Dance School** will prioritise age-appropriate choreography that aligns with the developmental stage of the child. Music selection will also be carefully considered to ensure it is appropriate in

language, themes, and overall content for young performers. Movements that could be considered over-sexualised will be avoided, with a strong focus on maintaining a safe and respectful environment. Children will be encouraged and supported to express any discomfort they may feel, and their concerns will be taken seriously. Any choreography that causes embarrassment, shame, or presents a potential risk will be promptly reviewed and removed to safeguard the wellbeing of every participant

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## 9. Health, Safety, First Aid & Injury Management

At **Balance Dance School** we take all illnesses, injuries and wellbeing concerns seriously. Dance involves physical movement, partnered work, stretching and repetitive training — all of which carry some risk. Our responses must protect the safety, dignity and privacy of every child.

This section outlines how we manage minor and major injuries, sudden illness, first aid, supervision and communication with families in a child safe and Culturally Safe way.

### 1. Immediate Response to Injuries

If a child is injured during class, rehearsal, a performance or any studio activity, staff must:

- Stop the activity safely
- Calmly assess the injury
- Ensure the child is supported and reassured
- Move other students away to protect privacy
- Follow first aid procedures appropriate to the injury
- avoid unnecessary physical contact
- Maintain supervision by ensuring at least one other adult is aware of the situation

Typical dance injuries covered under this policy include:

- Sprains and strains
- Falls or slips
- Minor collisions
- Overstretching injuries
- Pointe or footwear-related pain

### 2. First Aid and Qualified Assistance

Where first aid is required:

- It must be administered by a trained first aid officer or an appropriately qualified adult present
- Gloves and basic infection control must be used
- First aid should occur in a visible, supervised space (never behind closed doors)
- Staff must never ask a child to partially undress in an exposed area
- Cultural and modesty needs must be respected (e.g., providing a towel or privacy screen)

If a child is distressed, an additional adult may be present to offer reassurance and to maintain transparency.

### 3. When to Contact Parents or Carers

Parents/carers must be informed **as soon as possible** when:

- The injury affects the child's ability to continue safely
- The child is in pain or distress

- First aid beyond a simple ice pack was required
- There is a suspected sprain, strain, head knock or potential fracture
- The child requests to go home
- Ongoing monitoring is advised

Parents should be contacted even for minor concerns if the child asks to speak with them.

#### **4. When to Call an Ambulance (000)**

Staff must call emergency services immediately if:

- The child has a suspected fracture
- There is a head, neck or spinal injury
- The child cannot weight-bear
- The child loses consciousness or is disoriented
- Breathing is compromised
- There is severe pain
- There is any concern for life-threatening injury

Another adult must supervise other students while emergency response occurs.

#### **5. Managing Illness**

If a child becomes unwell during a studio activity:

- They must be moved to a supervised, ventilated area
- An adult must remain nearby until a parent or carer arrives
- Staff must minimise physical contact
- Parents should be contacted immediately to collect the child

Children should not be left alone in bathrooms, change rooms or isolated areas.

#### **6. Incident Reporting & Documentation**

All injuries requiring first aid, medical attention or parent notification must be recorded using:

- An injury/incident report form
- Date, time and location
- Description of the incident
- Actions taken (first aid, communication, supervision)
- Name of staff involved
- Whether emergency services were contacted
- Parent/carers notification details

Reports must be stored securely and reviewed as part of ongoing risk management.

#### **7. Privacy, Dignity & Cultural Safety**

When attending to illness or injury, staff must:

- Protect the child's privacy
- Consider Cultural, disability-related or gender-based needs
- Provide appropriate coverings if clothing adjustments are required

- Never conduct assessments behind closed doors or without another adult nearby
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## 10. Accessibility and Flexibility

**Balance Dance School** is committed to removing barriers that may prevent a child from fully participating in dance. This includes considering physical access to spaces, as well as sensory needs such as adjusting music volume for students with sound sensitivities. Students with low vision may be supported through front-row placement and additional verbal cues, with teachers encouraged to face students when speaking to support communication. Neurodiverse learners are supported through adaptable teaching methods, including clear step-by-step demonstrations, visual schedules, and allowing additional processing time where needed.

The school incorporates a range of teaching approaches to support different learning styles, including visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic methods. Flexible uniform options are provided to ensure students can move comfortably, express their identity, and feel safe. This includes gender-neutral choices, stretchy and practical fabrics, and culturally appropriate attire.

**Balance Dance School** also recognises financial barriers and offers flexible options such as trial lessons, sliding-scale fees, and payment plans to support equitable access for all students.

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## 11. Health, Medical & Allergy Management

**Balance Dance School** requires parents/guardians to disclose any medical conditions, allergies and health concerns via our online enrolment form. This information is used to support the safe participation of all students. Staff will follow provided medical information and action plans and take reasonable steps to manage identified health needs.

Students diagnosed with anaphylaxis must provide up to date action plan and have their prescribed epi-pen readily accessible. For younger students or those with severe allergies a parent/guardian may be required to remain onsite or immediately contactable during classes.

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## 12. Emergency & Evacuation Procedures

Evacuation plans are displayed at both hired community halls and are followed in the event of any emergency requiring evacuation.

In the event of an evacuation:

- The dance teacher will supervise and direct all students to the designated assembly area in accordance with the displayed evacuation plan.
  - A roll call will be conducted to ensure all students are accounted for.
  - Students will remain under the dance teacher's supervision until they are safely reunited with their parents/guardians or emergency contacts.
  - Emergency services will be contacted where required.
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## Secondary Employment

At **Balance Dance School**, we recognise that many dance teachers, contractors and staff work across multiple studios, schools or programs. This is common in the dance sector and can be beneficial for professional development - however, it must not compromise child safety.

Secondary employment includes:

- Teaching at another dance studio
- Running or assisting at external workshops
- Teaching school dance programs
- Teaching Pilates, body conditioning, acrobatics, cheer or other movement specialties elsewhere
- Choreographing for external groups
- Hiring out your own services as a contractor
- Working in any other child-facing organisation

To ensure transparency, safety and compliance with Queensland child safety legislation, all staff and volunteers must:

### **1. Declare all secondary employment that involves children**

This helps the studio identify:

- Potential conflicts of interest
- Safeguarding risks
- Role overlaps that may affect safety or supervision
- Situations where a family might misunderstand your role
- Situations where a teacher uses multiple “hats” with the same child (e.g., tutor + teacher)

### **2. Keep roles clearly separate**

Staff and teachers must:

- Avoid blurring boundaries between studio employment and outside roles
- Avoid using the studio’s name, branding or contacts to promote private work
- Avoid recruiting studio students into external programs unless approved
- Avoid engaging with students on personal accounts for external business purposes

### **3. Ensure all external work is compliant**

All secondary employment must:

- Meet child safety legislation in Queensland
- comply with Blue Card requirements
- Follow child safe standards
- Maintain Cultural Safety
- Follow safe physical contact practices
- Maintain professional boundaries

### **4. Not use studio resources for secondary work**

Teachers must not:

- Use studio equipment, rooms or digital platforms without permission
- Use student contact details obtained through the studio for outside work
- Promote external classes to children unless approved by management

## 5. Notify the studio of any concerns arising in external work

If a teacher observes harm or risk in another setting that may affect a shared student, they must:

- Report this to the studio's Child Safety Contact Person
- Follow reporting obligations under the Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)
- Ensure safety information flows appropriately

## 6. Maintain safe boundaries in private lessons

If staff deliver private lessons:

- They must occur in open studio spaces, not in private homes
- A parent or responsible adult must be present
- Communication must remain professional and transparent
- Safety and supervision standards must be as strong as studio standards

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# Child Safety Standards

## Standard 1 Leadership and Culture

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

- At Balance we have a strong collegial community including the principal's husband, who was also a professional ballet Dancer. Studio owner and principal actively models inclusive and respectful behaviours.
- Cultural safety is included in policies, staff conversations and decision making, Balance Dance School will create a safe, nurturing and positive environment where First Nations children and teenagers feel comfortable with themselves and with expressing their Culture and spiritual beliefs
- The Principal will promote respectful, inclusive, and culturally appropriate choices in choreography, themes, music, and costuming.

## Standard 2 Voice of Children

*Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously*

- Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions that affect them and are taken seriously at Balance Dance School.
- Talk time is built into warm-up and stretch time and as students enter the class – 'how was your day?'
- Balance Dance's staff and volunteers will make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children feel respected, proud of their identity and culture, and empower them to exercise their rights.

## Standard 3 Family and Community

*Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing*

- Balance families are given child safety information at enrolment.
- Balance teachers hold casual parent conversations about allowing children to be children, understanding the basics of neuroscience and what that means for problem solving, the value of making mistakes and developing a network that supports the child, with respect for cultural protocols and perspectives.

## Standard 4 Equity and Diversity

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

- Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice at Balance Dance School, including adjustments for neurodiversity, disability and health needs.

- All children are presented with the opportunity to shine, through inclusive language and teaching practices.

### **Standard 5 People**

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

- Blue Cards are registered with blue card services Queensland Government.
- Clear expectations for boundaries and behaviours, with appropriate supervision of staff and assistants.
- All students are required to wear a skin tone leotard – under costumes in backstage dressing rooms for safe costume changing at the end of year concert.

### **Standard 6 People Complaints management**

*Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused*

- Contacting Balance Principal via phone 0415729030 or email [info@balancedanceschool.com.au](mailto:info@balancedanceschool.com.au)
- Balance Dance School has clear reporting pathways, with concerns taken seriously and supportive response to disclosures
- Students can directly approach any staff member who will document their concerns and bring back to Rebecca

### **Standard 7 Knowledge and skills**

*Staff and volunteers of the entity are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training*

- Staff and volunteers have a clear understanding of boundaries and consent with ongoing professional reflection.
- Images or videos of student's dancing in class will only be used on social media platforms after seeking permission from a parent/carer, students are also asked if they do/do not wish to be filmed.
- Students who own phones are not allowed to use them to take photos or film in dressing areas – for example – end of year concert dressing rooms.

### **Standard 8 Physical and online environments**

*Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed*

- Staff and volunteers understand safe supervision and visibility, understand clear online communication boundaries – for example not accepting follow requests or contacting students via social media platforms
- Staff and volunteers, respect Balance Dance School's studio culture

### **Standard 9 Continuous improvement**

*implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved At Balance we annually review our Child Safe Standards, updating policies and practice.*

- A staff meeting will be had at the commencement of each year to maintain standards are understood.

### **Standard 10 Policies and procedures**

*Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children*

At Balance Dance School, in accordance with Ausdance QLD guidelines, we maintain a comprehensive set of interconnected child-safe documents that guide our governance and operations. These documents ensure that all interactions with children and young people are safe, transparent, and culturally respectful. Collectively, they support our compliance with the Child Safe Standards, the Universal Principle and relevant legislative requirements in Queensland. Including:

## 1. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

A short, public statement that:

- Explains that child safety is a core value of the studio
  - Refers to the **Child Safe Standards and the Universal Principle**
  - Confirms a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, harm, neglect and grooming
  - Is displayed on the website and a link emailed on enrolment.
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## 2. Child Safe Code of Conduct

A document that:

- Sets out behaviours for all adults in the studio
  - Covers physical contact, corrections, backstage conduct, online behaviour, language and boundaries
  - Applies to staff, volunteers, contractors, student assistants and external hirers
  - Is signed as part of employment, contract or volunteer onboarding.
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## 3. Child Safe Reporting Policy

A practical guide that:

- Explains how to recognise concerns about harm or abuse
  - Outlines **step-by-step internal reporting** (who to tell, how, by when)
  - Sets out **external reporting requirements** (Police, Child Safety Services, Blue Card)
  - Includes decision-making flowcharts for staff who are unsure
  - Covers how information is documented and stored securely.
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## 4. Child Safe Recruitment, Induction and Training Policy

A document that:

- Describes how staff and volunteers are recruited safely
  - Includes Blue Card checks and reference checks
  - Makes child safe questions part of the interview process
  - Sets out what is covered in induction (policies, procedures, studio tour, how to report)
  - Outlines **ongoing child safe training** requirements for teachers and staff.
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## 5. Child Safe Risk Management Plan

A plan that:

- Identifies risks in dance-specific settings (studios, backstage, change rooms, foyers, competitions, acro work, props, stage edges, lighting, etc.)
  - Assesses likelihood and consequences of each risk
  - Lists control measures (e.g. supervision, rules, signage, procedures)
  - Is updated after concerts, incidents or near misses.
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## 5. Child Friendly Complaints Information Policy

A child-friendly version of complaints process that:

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- Uses simple language and visuals
  - Explains who children can talk to if something feels wrong or unsafe
  - Reassures them they won't be in trouble for speaking up
  - Is displayed where children can see it.
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## Publication, Communication and Engagement

At **Balance Dance School** we ensure that our child safe documents are easy for children, families, staff and community members to access and understand. Visibility is essential — it helps build trust, confidence and transparency.

We commit to sharing this Child Safe Policy and all related documents regularly and clearly through:

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### 1. Our Website & Digital Platforms

We publish:

- Our Child Safe Policy
- Our Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Our Child Safe Code of Conduct

These documents are updated at least annually and whenever changes occur.

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### 2. Enrolment & Registration Processes

Families receive child safety information through:

- Welcome emails
- Consent forms on the online enrolment form (media, first aid, medical information)

We highlight the parts of the policy that matter most to families, such as supervision, reporting concerns, physical corrections and change-room protocols.

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### 3. Studio Noticeboards & Physical Displays

We display:

- Our Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Key child safe messages
- Our Child Safety Contact Person
- Child-friendly posters encouraging children to speak up
- Cultural Safety acknowledgements (e.g., Acknowledgment of Country)

These are placed in areas visible to families and students (e.g., foyer, waiting room, change rooms).

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### 4. Staff, Volunteer & Contractor Induction

Every teacher, assistant, staff member, contractor or volunteer receives:

- A copy of this Child Safe Policy
  - The Child Safe Code of Conduct (signed on induction)
  - Guidance on supervision, reporting, boundaries and corrections
  - A briefing on safe backstage and performance procedures
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- Training on Cultural Safety and the Universal Principle

We also provide refresher training annually or after any incident.

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## **5. Parent & Carer Communication**

We regularly remind families about our child safe practices through:

- Newsletters
- Email updates

We ensure parents know how to raise concerns and who to contact.

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## **6. Social Media & Public Communication**

We promote child safety principles through:

- Awareness posts about respectful behaviour
- Reminders about supervision, pick-up, and online safety
- Community updates about new policies or changes
- information about Cultural awareness and respectful representation

We never publish sensitive information or details about specific incidents.

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## **7. Child Engagement**

We ensure children understand their rights to feel safe by:

- Explaining parts of the policy in child-friendly language
- Reminding students at the start of the year who they can talk to
- Reinforcing safe space expectations in age-appropriate ways
- Displaying posters or simple checklists they can understand

# Related legislation, regulations and standards

All child safety practices at **Balance Dance School** are guided by the legislation, standards and regulatory frameworks that apply in Queensland. These frameworks ensure that organisations working with children provide safe, inclusive and Culturally Safe environments always.

Our work is informed by the following:

## **Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)**

This legislation requires relevant organisations to implement the **Child Safe Standards and the Universal Principle**, ensuring Culturally safe, child-centred and transparent practice. Although dance studios vary in structure, any organisation delivering programs to children must align with these standards.

## **Child Safe Standards (QFCC)**

The 10 Child Safe Standards, plus the Universal Principle, guide how we:

- Prevent harm
- Respond to concerns
- Build culturally respectful environments
- Empower children's participation
- Develop safe physical and online spaces
- Embed child safety in leadership and governance

## **Universal Principle – Cultural Safety for First Nations Children**

We commit to creating environments where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children feel safe, respected, celebrated and culturally supported. We recognise that culturally unsafe practice can itself cause harm.

## **Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)**

Defines harm, outlines mandatory reporting obligations, and sets out how concerns about children's safety must be reported to Child Safety Services and Queensland Police.

## **Criminal Code (Qld)**

Sets out the criminal offences relating to child sexual abuse and includes obligations for adults to report child sexual offences to Police.

## **Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld) — Blue Card System**

All adults working with children in regulated activities must hold a current, valid Blue Card (unless exempt). This includes:

- Teachers
- Accompanists
- Contractors
- Volunteer supervisors
- External hirers working with children

Studios must maintain a **Blue Card Register** and notify Blue Card Services of any changes.

## **Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)**

Guides how we store, protect and use personal information, including children's records, enrolment information, injury reports, consent forms and video/photo files.

## **Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)**

Affirms the rights of children to protection, privacy, Cultural identity, safety and dignity.

## **Other Governance Requirements**

Depending on the organisation's structure, responsibilities may also arise under:

- Australian Consumer Law (marketing, enrolment transparency)
- WHS obligations (safe physical spaces, equipment, props)
- incorporated association requirements (if applicable)
- insurance and liability policies
- expectations from local councils, schools or venues
- compliance frameworks required by grant funders or sponsors

## Next review date

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This Child Safe Policy will be reviewed **every 12 months**, or earlier if required due to:

- Changes to Queensland legislation
- Updates to the Child Safe Standards or Universal Principle
- Significant incidents or concerns
- Changes in studio operations, staffing or programming
- Feedback from children, families, staff or the community
- Best practice updates within the dance sector

Reviews help ensure that our policies remain current, effective, practical and aligned with contemporary expectations for child safe practice in Queensland.

**Next scheduled review date: January 2027**

**Reviewed by (role/title): Rebecca Wagner, Principal**

**Approved by (name/role): Rebecca Wagner, Principal**