



Child Safe Reporting Policy

Reporting suspected child harm is done via **Child Safety**:

- **If a child is in immediate danger:** call **000**.
- **Outside business hours (nights/weekends):** Child Safety After Hours Service Centre – **1800 177 135 (24/7)**.
- **Business hours (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm):** call your **Regional Intake Service (RIS)**

Purpose of this Policy

This policy sets out **Balance Dance School's** policy on child safe reporting and complaint handling.

Everyone at Balance Dance School's must:

- Know **what** to report, **who** to report to and **how** to report
- Report any concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or young person immediately
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child is paramount when responding to a disclosure or allegation about a child being harmed or at risk.

Our reporting practices will be regularly reviewed and updated to make sure they remain effective and comply with legislation.

Definitions of harm and abuse

General definitions

Psychological abuse (also known as emotional abuse)

This includes bullying, threatening and abusive language, intimidation, shaming and name calling, ignoring and isolating a child, and exposure to domestic and family violence.

Physical abuse

This includes behaviours such as pushing, shoving, punching, slapping, kicking and unauthorised use of restraint.

Sexual abuse

This includes the sexual touching or sexual assault of a child, grooming, and production, distribution or possession of child abuse material.

Grooming

This is a process where a person manipulates a child or group of children and sometimes those looking after them, including parents, carers, teachers and leaders. They do this to establish a position of 'trust'

so they can then later sexually abuse the child.

Misconduct

This is inappropriate behaviour that may not be as severe as abuse but could indicate that abuse is occurring and would often be in breach of an organisation's Child Safe Code of Conduct. This could include showing a child something inappropriate on a phone, having inappropriate conversations with a child or an adult sitting with a child on their lap.

Lack of appropriate care

This includes not providing adequate and proper supervision, nourishment, clothing, shelter, education or medical care.

Reportable conduct definitions

Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 defines reportable conduct as:

- a child sexual offence
- sexual misconduct committed in relation to, or in the presence of, a child
- ill-treatment of a child
- significant neglect of a child
- physical violence committed in relation to, or in the presence of, a child
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child

Sexual offence

A sexual offence is an offence of a sexual nature under a law of QLD, another state/territory, or the Commonwealth committed against, with or in the presence of a child, such as:

- sexual touching of a child
- a child grooming offence
- production, dissemination or possession of child abuse material.

An alleged sexual offence does not have to be the subject of criminal investigation or charges for it to be categorised as a reportable allegation of a sexual offence.

Sexual misconduct

Sexual misconduct of a child means any conduct with, towards or in the presence of a child that is sexual in nature (but is not a sexual offence). The following are examples of sexual misconduct:

- descriptions of sexual acts without a legitimate reason to provide the descriptions
- sexual comments, conversations or communications
- comments to a child that express a desire to act in a sexual manner towards the child, or another child.

Ill-treatment

Ill treatment of a child means conduct towards a child that is:

- unreasonable, and
- seriously inappropriate, improper, inhumane or cruel.

Ill-treatment can include a range of conduct such as making excessive or degrading demands of a child; a pattern of hostile or degrading comments or behaviour towards a child; and using inappropriate forms of behaviour management towards a child.

Neglect

Neglect of a child means a significant failure to provide adequate and proper food, supervision, nursing, clothing, medical aid or lodging for the child that causes or is likely to cause harm to the child, by:

- a person with parental responsibility for the child
- an authorised carer or an employee if the child is in the employee's care.

Neglect can be an ongoing situation of repeated failure by a caregiver to meet a child's physical or psychological needs, or a single significant incident where a caregiver fails to fulfil a duty or obligation, resulting in actual harm to a child or where there is the potential for significant harm to a child.

Examples of neglect include failing to protect a child from abuse or exposing a child to a harmful environment.

Assault

An assault can occur when a person intentionally or recklessly:

- applies physical force against a child without lawful justification or excuse - such as hitting, striking, kicking, punching or dragging a child, or
- causes a child to apprehend the immediate and unlawful use of physical force against them, such as threatening to physically harm a child through words and/or gestures.

Behaviour that causes emotional or psychological harm to a child

Behaviour that causes significant psychological or emotional harm is conduct that is intentional or reckless (without reasonable excuse), obviously or very clearly unreasonable and which results in significant emotional harm or trauma to a child.

For a reportable allegation involving psychological harm, the following elements must be present:

- an obviously or very clearly unreasonable or serious act or series of acts that the employee knew or ought to have known was unacceptable, and
- evidence of psychological harm to the child that is more than transient, including displaying patterns of 'out of character behaviour', regression in behaviour, distress, anxiety, physical symptoms or self-harm, and
- an alleged causal link between the employee's conduct and the significant emotional or psychological harm to the child.

Unacceptable behaviours under our Code of Conduct

Our Child Safe Code of Conduct provides a list of unacceptable behaviours around children and young people that breach our Child Safe Code of Conduct.

Types of complaints (what to report)

All complaints should be reported. This includes:

- criminal conduct
- disclosures or reports of abuse
- risk of significant harm (ROSH)
- reportable allegations (an allegation that an employee or volunteer has engaged in conduct that may be reportable conduct)*
- unacceptable behaviour around children and young people that breaches our Child Safe Code of Conduct.

Making an external complaint/ report

Who must make an external report

It can be a criminal offence for adults not to report to police if they know, believe or ought reasonably believe that a child abuse offence has been committed against another person. In addition, it can be a criminal offence for people employed in an organisation that provides child-related services if they fail to reduce or remove the risk of a child becoming a victim of child abuse.

Mandatory Reporting

In Queensland, mandatory reporting is regulated by the Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld) (see Division 2 – Mandatory reporting by particular persons, including sections such as 13E–13G), which requires a “relevant person” who forms a reportable suspicion about a child to make a report to the chief executive (Child Safety). Under the Child Protection Act 2021, it is an offence for any adult to fail to report a sexual offence against a child by another adult to police, unless they have a reasonable excuse.

Mandatory reporters in our organisation include:

Principal of Balance Dance School, Rebecca Wagner

Sector-specific reporting obligations

In addition, children and young people, their families or advocates and members of the community who may interact with our services are encouraged to disclose and report to our organisation and will be supported when doing so.

How to make an external complaint/report

Reporting criminal conduct to the police

It is of the utmost importance that criminal allegations be reported to police at the earliest opportunity and that entities obtain guidance from police before taking any action that could compromise a criminal response.

Sometimes, it will be very clear that a report to police is required. For example, if you receive a report about sexual assault of a child, or a serious physical assault. At other times, it may be less clear. The QPS encourages all matters to be reported. It is critical that criminal allegations be reported immediately to police, as taking risk management action or commencing investigative steps before consulting with police may jeopardise a police investigation.

It is important to note that some failures to report criminal allegations to police will constitute a criminal offence.

Contact QLD Police on Morningside Station 07 3823 8666 **for anything you consider could be a criminal offence.** This includes sexual assault, physical assault, grooming offences, and producing, disseminating or possessing child abuse material.

For general enquiries, please contact QLD Police on 131 444.

Making an internal complaint/ report

Who must make an internal report

Everyone engaged to work or volunteer in Balance Dance School must make an internal report about any child abuse or misconduct concerns they either observe or are told about.

The person making the internal report will not be penalised. A failure to report, or preventing another person from reporting, will be considered misconduct.

How to make an internal report

Internal reporting by employees, contractors and volunteers

Complete an incident report form or record the details as soon as possible so that they are accurately captured. Include:

- time, date and place of the disclosure
- 'word for word' what happened and what was said, including anything you said and any actions that have been taken, and
- Date of report and signature.

If you need to take notes as the person is telling you, explain that you are taking a record in case any later enquiry occurs.

Reporting breaches of our Child Safe Code of Conduct

All breaches and disclosures must be reported to [Principal of Balance Dance School, Rebecca Wagner](#), made in person, by phone, or in writing via email. Children and young people may choose to speak directly to a trusted teacher or adult, who will then assist them to report the matter to the Principal as soon as possible.

Internal reporting by children and young people or their families or advocates, and other members of the community

Balance Dance School encourages children, young people, families, advocates, and members of the community to speak up about any concerns relating to child safety, wellbeing, or behaviour that does not align with our Child Safe Code of Conduct. All concerns and complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and respectfully.

Concerns may include, but are not limited to, inappropriate behaviour, breaches of professional boundaries, bullying, unsafe practices, misconduct, or any situation where a child or young person feels unsafe or uncomfortable.

We are committed to providing a child-friendly and supportive reporting process. Children and families will be listened to, treated with respect, and supported throughout the process. Where appropriate, assistance may be provided to help children express their concerns.

All reports will be handled confidentially, documented appropriately, and managed in accordance with the school’s Child Safe policies and legal obligations. The safety and wellbeing of the child or young person will always be the primary consideration.

No person will be disadvantaged or treated unfairly for raising a genuine concern or complaint in good faith.

Example of Child Friendly reporting.

Child-Facing	Staff-facing
<p>1. We make sure you are safe right now: If you feel unsafe tell a trusted adult straight away, you can bring a friend or another adult with you.</p>	<p>Immediate danger? Call 000 Triage immediate risk first (separate parties if needed, supervision adjustments, stop activity, preserve safety)</p>
<p>2. Listen, believe, and explain what happens next: We will listen. You won’t be in trouble for speaking up.” We will explain the next steps in a way you understand and check what you need right now.</p>	<p>Respond calmly and respectfully, do not investigate in the moment, do not promise secrecy (promise privacy instead), and use a trauma-informed, child-centred approach.</p> <p>Note: Offer Multiple ways to speak up: in person, phone, email, anonymous option, “worry box”, QR form, through a trusted intermediary.</p>
<p>3. Write it down and keep it private: We will write down what you tell us so we get it right. Only the people who need to know will be told</p>	<p>Make a contemporaneous record (facts, dates/times, exact words where possible, witnesses, actions taken). Store securely; limit access.</p>
<p>4. Report it to the right people: (including outside the organisation when needed) Some things must be reported to keep you and other children safe. We’ll tell you who we need to contact and why</p>	<p>If you suspect a child is being abused or is at risk, follow Queensland reporting pathways to Child Safety (intake / after-hours) and/or police as appropriate</p>
<p>5. Act on risk and assess what happened: We will act quickly to keep everyone safe while we look into it. We will check in with you and/or your parent/carer about what’s happening</p>	<p>Put interim risk controls in place (e.g., supervision changes, temporary removal from duties, altered class groupings). Manage the matter timely and transparently, keeping the child’s wellbeing central</p>
<p>6. Close the loop: outcome, support, and improvement We will tell you what we can about the outcome. We will offer support and you can ask for a review if you feel it wasn’t handled well</p>	<p>Provide an outcome (in a child-appropriate way), document actions taken, offer supports, and capture learnings (training, supervision, environment, policy changes).</p>

Child safeguarding officer(s) in our organisation

Rebecca Wagner

How complaints should be handled

National Office for Child Safety's [Complaint handling guide - Upholding the rights of children and young people](#).

When Balance Dance School receives an allegation or disclosure of harm, inappropriate behaviour, or a breach of the Child Safe Code of Conduct, immediate and ongoing safety of the child, other children, staff, and anyone involved is the highest priority. The following risk management strategies are implemented:

Immediate Safety Strategies:

- Ensure the child or young person is safe and appropriately supervised by a trusted adult.
- Remove the child from any immediate risk or unsafe environment, without causing distress.
- Separate the alleged perpetrator from the child or other vulnerable individuals, if necessary.
- Provide reassurance, emotional support, and a calm environment for the child.
- Contact emergency services immediately if the situation involves immediate danger or medical attention.

Reporting and Documentation:

- Notify the Principal, Rebecca Wagner, as soon as possible.
- Accurately document the allegation or disclosure, including date, time, people involved, and the nature of the concern.
- Comply with mandatory reporting obligations and report to external authorities as required, including Blue Card Services or other relevant regulatory bodies.

Ongoing Safety Strategies:

- Adjust supervision and class arrangements to maintain child safety.
- Implement temporary measures, such as standing down or redeploying staff, contractors, or volunteers implicated in the allegation.
- Develop and follow individual risk management or behaviour support plans for children or staff, if required.
- Maintain open communication with parents or carers, where appropriate, keeping the child's safety and confidentiality in mind.
- Monitor the situation continuously and review safety measures regularly to ensure they remain effective.
- Provide access to counselling or support services for children, staff, or families affected by the allegation.

Overview of the complaint-handling process

Once an allegation or complaint has been made, use this step-by-step process to make sure it is appropriately followed up:

1. steps are taken to identify and address any risks
2. the incident is recorded
3. reporting obligations are met, if necessary
4. an investigation is conducted, keeping everyone involved up to date with what is happening
5. ongoing support is offered to the child or young person as needed
6. the incident is reviewed and our child safe documents are updated, if necessary. This includes reviewing our Risk Management Plan.

Best Practice Example: When we receive a complaint or allegation, we act quickly to keep everyone safe.

Immediate safety strategies (same day):

- *Check the child is safe right now. If a child is hurt or in danger, we call 000.*
- *Separate the child/young person from the situation and provide a safe, calm space (e.g., office with a second adult present, or parent/carer present where appropriate).*
- *Two-adult safeguard: No one-on-one behind closed doors. All conversations are held in view or with two adults present.*
- *Pause any contact between the child and the person of concern (e.g., change class grouping, change teacher, suspend private lessons).*
- *Preserve information (e.g., rosters, sign-in sheets, CCTV if applicable, emails/texts), and remind staff: do not discuss the matter broadly.*

Ongoing safety strategies (next days/weeks):

- *Interim risk plan for the child and class: supervision, transport/pick-up arrangements, changing room plan, and clear boundaries for touch/physical corrections.*
- *Support person offered to the child (and family), and a nominated studio contact for updates.*
- *Welfare check-ins (age-appropriate) and adjustments to participation if the child wants a break.*
- *Staff guidance: reinforce “need-to-know” confidentiality, documentation standards, and escalation pathways.*

Risk management on receiving an allegation or disclosure

It is the responsibility of the Principal Rebecca Wagner to conduct a risk assessment after receiving an allegation, to ensure the safety of all people involved and maintain the integrity of any potential investigation.

Procedural fairness, including privacy and confidentiality

Any allegation of abuse must be treated in a fair, transparent and timely manner.

Workers subject to an allegation will be notified when a disciplinary hearing is to take place and what will occur at the hearing. We follow the obligations defined under the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth).

Any relevant reportable conduct investigations are conducted with the OCG’s Reportable Conduct Directorate.

Additionally:

- all information is recorded on our reporting form for complaints and allegations (see Appendix for a copy of this form)
- all reporting forms for complaints and allegations are stored securely and only accessed by those in the organisation with responsibility for oversight of the investigation
- information may be exchanged under *Child Protection Act 1999* with other agencies who have responsibilities relating to the safety, welfare or wellbeing of children or young people
- our organisation maintains the privacy of those involved in accordance with our obligations under the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*

- if an incident is found to be substantiated, likely outcomes or responses will be determined from advice given by relevant authorities

Relevant legislation

- *Criminal Code Act 1899*
- *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024*
- *Child Protection Act 1999*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)*
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998.*
- *Family and Child Commission Act 2014*
- *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

How we publicise and support our Child Safe Reporting Policy

To make sure everyone in our organisation is aware of our Child Safe Reporting Policy and their reporting obligations, we:

- make sure staff have read and understood our Child Safe Reporting Policy each year.
- provide links to our Child Safe Reporting Policy (via email and on our website) that describes what to report, who to report to and how to report.
- create and promote age and ability-appropriate communications for children that explain what to do if they feel sad, angry or concerned.

Next review date

Rebecca Wagner – Balance Dance School Principal will review this policy annually and after any critical incidents, to make sure our child safe reporting practices are continually improved and that we keep up to date with relevant legislation and sector requirements.

The next review date is [31/01/2027](#).

Appendix – Template for recording complaints and allegations

The form on the following pages can be adapted and downloaded to record any complaints and allegations that occur in your organisation.



Template for recording complaints and allegations

This form should be used to record a suspicion, allegation or disclosure of child abuse, or a complaint of unacceptable behaviour.

Your name and position	
Name of the child or young person involved	
Name of person making complaint	
Name of person who the complaint was made against	

1. Nature of the complaint: include time, date, location, what happened and who was involved (this can include observations of the child's behaviour).

2. Details of any injuries and if the child received medical attention.

3. Accurately record what the child said when describing what happened – use their exact words – or record why you suspect abuse due to an indirect disclosure, such as a drawing or observed behaviour.

(In the case of an allegation of abuse, formal investigations and interviews will be carried out by Dept. and/or QLD Police. You must record what the child has said but unless it is your role to investigate, you should not interview the child.)

4. Details of anyone who saw what happened.

5. Does this complaint indicate the possibility of child abuse, such as physical abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect?

Yes No

6. Who did you make a report to?

- QLD Police
- Emergency 000
- Non Urgent PoliceLink 131 444
- Child Safety Regional Intake Service
- Internal reporting obligations (name the relevant department or person)
- Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC)
- Other (name them)

7. People spoken to in relation to the matter (describe who was spoken to and why they were spoken to about the matter – include first responders, and anyone else you spoke to).

Date(s):

This template was originally developed by the NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian then repurposed by AusdanceQLD.