

Under the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act, Victorian organisations that provide services to children must implement compulsory child safe standards to protect children from harm.

Scimm. Dance has prepared this Child Safety Policy to demonstrate our commitment to child safety and to promote the importance of ensuring a safe environment for the children in our care.

The safety of children is of fundamental importance to Scimm. Dance and we have zero tolerance for all forms of child abuse. This document demonstrates Scimm. Dance is compliant with Child Safe Policies and Procedures.

For more information, see A Guide for Creating a Child-safe Organisation produced by the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) available at www.ccyp.vic.gov.au

COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Scimm. Dance is a Child Safe organisation. As an organisation we are committed to, and focused on, providing a safe community for all students and family members at all times. We want our students to feel safe, supported, respected, happy and empowered while having fun and developing as performers and artists.

The welfare of the children in our care will always be our priority and we have zero tolerance for child abuse. This policy effective **1 January 2024**, demonstrates the strong commitment of the Artistic Directors and staff to child safety and provides the policies and practices developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse. It applies to all staff, volunteers, children and individuals involved in our training institution.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO SAFETY AND PARTICIPATION

Scimm. Dance staff encourage children to express their views. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

We teach children about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns children or their parents/carers raise with us. Anyone watching a class/rehearsal must be known to Scimm. Dance either as a parent/carer or staff member/volunteer with Scimm. Dance.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Scimm. Dance proactively manages risks and has a risk management framework and policy in place to identify, assess and mitigate risks to children in our care. Our risk management policy covers the management of risks, such as occupational health and safety risks and risks of child abuse to children.

REPORTING A SAFETY COMPLAINT, ALLEGATION OR CONCERN

Anyone can raise a complaint, allegation, or concern about Scimm. Dance's child safety practices. We treat all complaints, allegations or concerns raised with our organisation very seriously and respectfully. Nominated staff members have been trained to deal with allegations of abuse.

If Scimm. Dance receives an allegation of abuse, our staff will investigate that allegation thoroughly and professionally. We are committed to ensuring that the appropriate authorities are notified where we are concerned about the safety, abuse, or potential abuse of children.

VALUING DIVERSITY

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this, we:

- Promote the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families.
- Welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation where possible.
- Seek appropriate staff from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Our Teaching Staff's Commitment to Child Safety

Please know that all of our Scimm. Dance teachers and choreographers comprehend and actively endorse our child safety policy and are passionate about providing a safe and fun environment for all dancers/students, where every student in their class feels supported and empowered. (See our Teacher's Code of Conduct below).

Scimm. Dance applies the best practice standard in the recruitment and screening of staff. We screen all contractors and staff and require current Working with Children Checks for all positions working directly with children and young people. Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in any advertisements.

All Scimm. Dance families may advise via email if they have any concerns regarding a teacher or if they believe a teacher has breached their code of conduct.

TEACHER'S CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour by adults towards children and young people. The Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur. It also helps staff, contractors, and volunteers by providing them with guidance on how to best support children and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. All staff, contractors and volunteers are required to comply.

All Scimm. Dance staff, contractors, and volunteers are responsible for promoting the safety and well-being of children and young people by:

- Adhering to our Child Safe Policy, and other policies.
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse.
- Treating everyone with respect, including listening to and valuing their ideas and opinions.
- Welcoming all children and their families and carers and being inclusive.
- Respecting cultural, religious, and political differences and acting in a culturally sensitive way.
- Modelling appropriate adult behaviour.
- Listening to children and responding to them appropriately.
- Reporting and acting on any breaches of this Code of Conduct, complaints, or concerns.
- Complying with our guidelines on physical contact with children.
- Working with children openly and transparently – other adults should always know about the work you are doing with children and young people.
- Respecting the privacy of children and their families and carers, and only disclosing information to people who need to know.

Scimm. Dance staff, contractors, and volunteers must NOT:

- Seek to use children in any way to meet the needs of adults.
- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of child abuse.
- Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour, or language with children and/or young people.
- Engage in rough physical games.
- Discriminate based on age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability or sexuality.
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Develop 'special' relationships with specific children or show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention.
- Exchange personal contact details such as phone numbers, social networking sites or email addresses with children.
- Have unauthorised contact with children and young people online or by phone.

All teachers have read this Code of Conduct and agree to it at all times.

As part of the screening process, an applicant must provide Scimm. Dance appropriate evidence to show they are suitable to work with children and young people in a safe dance environment. This includes:

- Working With Children's Check (WWCC).
- Current First Aid and CPR (where required).
- Appropriate/high level of dance experience.
- Appropriate dance teaching and/or choreography experience.
- Communication and organisation skills.
- Lesson planning experience.

REVIEWING THIS POLICY

This policy will be reviewed every two years, and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from students, parents, carers and staff.

Policy updated 10/05/2024



Scott Pokorny

Artistic Director



Tim Barnes

Artistic Director



Kelliann Brady

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