

Tamworth City Dance Academy (TCDA)

Child Safe Child Friendly Policy 2021

30 January 2021

1. Policy Statement

Our Child Safe Child Friendly Policy guides staff, volunteers and students on how to behave with kids in our organisation. The policy focuses on how we can promote kids participation in our organisation and make it safer for them.

2. Supporting Kids' Participation.

TCDA supports the active participation of children in our organisation. We listen to the child's views, respect what they say and involve them when we make decisions, especially about matters that will directly affect them.

Our primary means to achieve this end is by encouraging dialogue and feedback from our students. This is met by a number of means including using teaching assistants and junior teachers who are closer to the students age to engage directly with students in groups and individually.

The availability of teaching assistant and junior teacher positions at TCDA further empowers young people as does our policy of raising teachers primarily from our own ranks means that young people know that their mentors were once students here and that advancement is achievable.

3. Supporting Staff, Volunteers and Students

1. We promote respect, fairness and consideration for all staff, volunteers and students.

2. All staff, volunteers and students have a more senior person assigned to support and supervise their work. Staff, volunteers and students are made aware of the organisational structure of TCDA.

3. All staff and volunteers are presented with an induction package with our code of conduct and complaints management strategy and return a signed agreement. Our code of conduct and Child Safe, Child Friendly Policy is displayed within our premises.

4. Recruitment

TCDA will maintain a rigorous and consistent recruitment, screening and selection process.

All staff will be screened via the Working With Children Check (WWCC) in accordance with current regulations. Staff will be assessed based upon technical proficiency as well as aptitude and other factors contributing to their suitability for the position utilising references, interviews, prohibited employment declarations and other evidence.

5. Dealing With Complaints

Complaints pertaining to child safety may be received either in writing or verbally. If unresolved immediately, verbal complaints should be asked to be put into writing. Complaints received must be referred as soon as possible to the most senior staff member on site. Miss Kellie, the Child Safety Contact Person must be made aware of the complaint. The Principal and Studio Manager will assess the complaint and the associated risk and determine measures to eliminate or minimise it. If the complaint is unable to be resolved or is of a serious nature it may be referred to the NSW Police.

6. Communication

Our Child Safe Child Friendly Policy is published on our website and available as a hard copy at our Tamworth studio and can be found in our Policies and Procedures Folder

Our Policy is included in induction packages for all new staff.

7. The Working With Children Check

Since June 2013 people seeking to work or volunteer with children under 18 years in NSW have been required to have a Working With Children Check (WWCC).

The WWCC provides a unique number to a person who has been cleared to work with children. The WWCC application process involves a national police check and a review of findings of workplace misconduct. The result is a clearance to work with children for 5 years or a bar.

Barred applicants cannot work or volunteer with children.

All new applicants for paid child related work (direct face-to-face contact with children) must provide a WWCC number to their employers.

Who does NOT need a WWCC? The legislation in NSW allows parents and other close relatives such as a sibling, grandparent, step parent, uncle, etc) to volunteer in activities that involve their own children without needing a WWCC number.

This includes volunteering with a class, program, or other activity in which their child usually participates.

Therefore a parent volunteer or close relative who teaches or instructs a class that includes their child does not need a WWCC number.

Individuals that do not have direct face to face contact with children do not need a WWCC number.

Parents who volunteer at performances or rehearsals that include their own children (for example help with setting up, makeup, costumes, etc), or are spectators at events do not require a WWCC number.

Persons who teach adult classes do not require a WWCC number as the participants are not children.

The results of the WWCC are stored by TCDA within the Employees folder off and within our procedures manual.

8. Code Of Conduct

TCDA teachers abide by the TCDA Code of Conduct that is explained and signed during induction. Section 11 of the TCDA teachers induction handbook addresses child protection concerns and risk reduction as listed below.

11. Child Protection

Children have a fundamental right to be safe from any form of abuse while involved in dance. This is a legal as well as a moral obligation. To this end please ensure that you:

- Always work in an open environment
- Avoid spending time alone with children away from others except in essential one on one situations such as private classes.
- Encourage open communication with no secrets
- Treat all children equally and with respect and dignity
- Put the welfare of the child first
- Notify the Principal and / or Studio Manager of any concerns that you may have about the safety, wellbeing or welfare of children and young people in your classes
- Are aware that you have a mandatory obligation to report suspected risks of significant harm

You are obligated to report the following to the Principal or Studio Manager:

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

You will be required to register for a working with children number and provide it to us. All TCDA paid employees are required to have their working with children status verified. To apply for a Working with Children Check Number visit www.services.nsw.gov.au. Once you have registered, visit Services NSW to obtain your number and supply it to us for employer verification.

9. Information and Resources

Frequently asked questions, fact sheets and resources, and online tutorials about the WWCC, Child Safe Organisations and Childrens Employment are available at the Office of the Childrens Guardian at www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au and the Advocate for Children and Young People at www.acyp.nsw.gov.au

10. Questions

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy or child safety in general, please contact us by phone 0448 621 383 or by email.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Next review date : 30 January 2022

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