



## Nook Dance Centre Policies and Procedures

Last updated 08/08/2023  
Next review date: 05/08/2024

### Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

#### Introduction

Nook Dance Centre is a child safe organisation. We are committed to prioritizing the safety and best interests of the children in our Nook Dance Centre community.

We understand the nature and risks of child abuse and take deliberate steps to protect the children who attend our classes and we are committed to removing all barriers to reporting child abuse.

All Nook Dance Centre teachers undergo the [Keep Kids Safe in Dance](#) teacher training which educates dance teachers on the [11 Victorian Child Safe Standards](#) that must be implemented in all organisation that service children in Victoria.

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy outlines how Nook Dance Centre meets the 11 Child-Safe Standards and ensures the safety and wellbeing of all children in our organisation.

**Standard 1:** *Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.*

Nook Dance Centre is committed to supporting Aboriginal children who attend our classes and ensuring that they feel safe to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.

- Nook Dance Centre teachers will show videos of Bangarra Dance Theatre (among other dance companies) to students regularly throughout the year.
- Nook Dance Centre staff will acknowledge the Aboriginal land we are gathered on at all Nook Dance Centre events.
- Nook Dance Centre staff will ensure that Aboriginal children are given opportunities to express their culture through 'free-dance' if desired.

**Standard 2:** *Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.*

- Nook Dance Centre staff will prioritise child safety at all times and regularly assess their class for risks. When risks are identified, Nook Dance Centre



staff will act quickly to remove/minimise the risk and/or report any child safety risks to Tammy immediately through our staff communication app.

- All Nook Dance Centre staff agree to abide by a staff/teacher code of conduct every year and a breach of the code of conduct will result in disciplinary action or termination of contract.
- As the studio owner, Tammy will carry out risk assessments each school term to identify and mitigate risks to children at Nook Dance Centre. In 2023 these will take place on 11/07/2023 and 10/10/2023.

**Standard 3:** *Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.*

- An age-appropriate code of conduct will be shown and explained to all children in Nook Dance Centre classes at the start of each term. This document is a laminated, A4 poster, stored at each venue that helps children:
  - understand their rights, including to safety, information and participation
  - know how adults in the organisation should behave
  - understand the organisation's complaints process and how to raise safety concerns for themselves, their friends or peers
  - know about support services aimed at children.

**Standard 4:** *Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.*

- Nook Dance Centre will regularly communicate with families of all children who attend our classes via email. All email communication will include an invitation for families to reply with any questions, concerns or feedback.
- Parents/guardians are sent a link to the Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct upon enrolment. This outlines the correct way that parents/guardians should make a complaint or raise concerns within Nook Dance Centre. This is also available on Nook Dance Centre's website.
- Parents/guardians are given regular opportunities to be involved in their child's dance education by attending Watching Day, Mid-Year Showings or the End-of-Year Show.
- Parents/guardians are given the opportunity to volunteer at the End-of-Year Show.

**Standard 5:** *Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.*

All children and families are welcome at Nook Dance Centre and we work with children of all abilities and their families to make any changes or adjustments needed in order for them to participate comfortably in our classes.

- Nook Dance Centre's enrolment form includes a text box requesting for parents/guardians to indicate if their child has any allergies, medical



conditions, injuries or disabilities. Tammy will advise teaching staff of any additional needs a child may have in their class and guide the teaching staff on how to manage any additional needs or requirements. This enrolment information will be listed under the child's name on the attendance roll for the teacher to take note of. In instances where further details are needed, Tammy will contact the parent/guardian.

- Nook Dance Centre's enrolment form includes pronoun selection which allows the parent/guardian to indicate which pronouns their child uses.
- Nook Dance Centre offers 2 choices in costuming to all children where possible rather than allocating a costume based on gender identity. In other circumstances, gender-neutral costumes will be provided to children.
- Staff are provided with an LGBTQIA+ inclusive badge to wear during classes.
- Gender-neutral language is used when referring to children's parents/guardians until more information is obtained.
- Nook Dance Centre has no uniform requirements, allowing children to wear clothing they feel comfortable in. This also allows children to dress in a way that expresses their culture or religion.

**Standard 6:** *People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.*

All Nook Dance Centre staff agree to abide by a staff/teacher code of conduct and a breach of the code of conduct will result in disciplinary action or termination of contract.

### Human Resource Practices

All potential Nook Dance Centre staff members undergo a robust recruitment process. This includes a Working With Children check, a face-to-face interview with Tammy and referee checks. This is to ensure that we only hire the right people who will uphold Nook Dance Centre's values and to ensure the safety of all Nook Dance Centre students. All Nook Dance Centre staff will attend regular meetings and trainings to continue to ensure that our knowledge and practices are current, safe and of the best possible standard.

- All Nook Dance Centre teachers who teach preschool classes will complete Kinderballet training including passing an assessment to become an accredited Kinderballet teacher.
- All Nook Dance Centre teachers must complete First Aid Level 2 training: HLTAID011 and ensure this accreditation remains valid at all times while working for Nook Dance Centre.
- All Nook Dance Centre teachers must hold a valid Working With Children's Check.
- All Nook Dance Centre teachers must complete the Keep Kids Safe in Dance teacher training at the start of their employment with Nook Dance Centre.



**Standard 7:** *Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.*

- An age-appropriate code of conduct will be shown and explained to all children in Nook Dance Centre classes at the start of each term. This document is a laminated, A4 poster, stored at each venue that helps children:
  - understand their rights, including to safety, information and participation.
  - know how adults in the organisation should behave.
  - understand the organisation's complaints process and how to raise safety concerns for themselves, their friends or peers.
- Parents, guardians and older children can learn how to make a complaint about Nook Dance Centre's policies, procedures and practices by clicking 'How to make a complaint' on Nook Dance Centre's website: <https://www.nookdancecentre.com.au/complaints>. Families will be made aware of this webpage each term by email.

**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.*

- All Nook Dance Centre teachers must complete the Keep Kids Safe in Dance teacher training at the start of their employment with Nook Dance Centre.
- Nook Dance Centre will hold a staff meeting each term to ensure staff members are kept up to date on child-safety practices and procedures within Nook Dance Centre.
- Tammy will attend classes throughout the year to provide staff with feedback including any child-safety training requirements.

**Standard 9:** *Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.*

- Nook Dance Centre staff will prioritise child safety at all times and regularly assess their class environment for risks. When risks are identified, Nook Dance Centre staff will act quickly to remove/minimise the risk and/or report any child safety risks to Tammy immediately through our staff communication app.
- All Nook Dance Centre staff agree to abide by a staff/teacher code of conduct which includes the following points regarding online environments:



**As a Nook Dance Centre teacher, I will NOT:**

- Arrange personal contact, including online contact, with children I am working with for a purpose unrelated to Nook Dance Centre's activities (any need for communication via text message/phone call with Nook families/students must be communicated to Tammy first).
- Have contact with a Nook Dance Centre parent/guardian or student on social media (in circumstances where a teacher is connected to a Nook Dance Centre family outside of Nook Dance Centre's classes this is permitted but this relationship must be made known to Tammy).
- Post pictures of children publicly via social media or any other platforms without the express consent from a parent or guardian.

A breach of the code of conduct will result in disciplinary action or termination of contract.

- As the studio owner, Tammy will carry out risk assessments each school term to identify and mitigate risks to children at Nook Dance Centre. In 2023 these will take place on 11/07/2023 and 10/10/2023. A risk management plan will follow and this will be communicated to staff via staff communication app.
- All cover teachers and guest teachers must provide a photo of their valid Working With Children's Check and agree to the Nook Dance Centre Teacher Code of Conduct before teaching any classes. Classes will only be taught by cover teachers who have taught in the presence of Tammy previously.

**Standard 10:** *Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.*

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Codes of Conduct will be reviewed and updated regularly by Tammy. In 2023, this will take place on 11/07/2023 and 10/10/2023.
- Nook Dance Centre will hold a staff meeting each term to ensure staff members are kept up to date on child-safety practices and procedures within Nook Dance Centre. This is also an opportunity for staff to raise any concerns about child safety at Nook Dance Centre.

**Standard 11:** *Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.*

- This Child Safety and Wellbeing policy covers all 11 of the Victorian child safe standards and how Nook Dance Centre will comply with these standards.
- All policies, codes of conduct and complaint procedures are made available to all Nook Dance Centre staff and families on Nook Dance Centre's [website](#) and by email at the start of each term.



- Risk assessments will be carried out by Tammy on 11/07/2023 and 10/10/2023 and these will be kept on file.

## **RESPONDING AND REPORTING**

It is mandatory that any Nook Dance Centre student, parent or staff member who suspects an incident of child abuse of any kind must report this to the Child Safety officer, Tamsin McLinden.

**\*\*If a person is in immediate danger, 000 must be called immediately\*\***

### **What to report:**

- If a child discloses an incident of abuse or harm.
- Allegation, suspicion or observation of abuse or harm.
- Breach of Code of Conduct by a Nook Dance Centre member of staff.
- Environmental safety issues of any kind at Nook Dance Centre.

### **Who to report to:**

- Child safety officer: Tamsin McLinden, via phone, email or in person.
- Secondary child safety officer: Rebekah Parsons, in person only.

### **What action will be taken:**

The child safety officer will:

- Offer support to the child, the parents, the person who reports and the accused staff member or volunteer.
- Initiate internal processes to ensure the safety of the child, clarify the nature of the complaint and commence disciplinary process (if required).
- Decide, in accordance with legal requirements and duty of care, whether the matter should/must be reported to the police or child protection and make a report as soon as possible, if required. For guidance on reporting abuse to child protection, visit the following link:

<https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse>

## **TOILET POLICY**

Nook Dance Centre has different toilet policies depending on your child's age. Please read the relevant policy below:

### Preschool students:

All preschool students **MUST** be accompanied by a parent/guardian when going to the toilets at our venues. Nook Dance Centre staff cannot accompany preschool students to the toilet and we cannot send them on their own for safety reasons. This policy means that at least one parent/guardian **MUST** remain at the venue for the duration of the class.



### Primary and High School Students:

Primary school and high school students are permitted to go to the toilets at our venues on their own. When possible, a member of Nook Dance Centre staff (who is not teaching a class) will accompany students to the toilet area of the building to ensure the students' safety when walking to and from the toilets. Nook Dance Centre staff WILL NOT enter the toilet cubicle with a child and WILL NOT assist with toileting. If your child cannot use the toilets at our venues independently, a parent/guardian MUST remain on the premises for the duration of the child's class in order to accompany them to the toilet.

### Primary School Students at Jika Jika Community Centre

Jika Jika Community Centre (Northcote venue) is a shared space and therefore extra care must be taken to minimise risks to children attending classes at this venue.

When there is not an additional member of Nook Dance Centre staff to accompany students to and from the toilets, the student's teacher will watch the student walk to the bathroom area from the hall/studio. Students will also be sent to the toilets in pairs and walk to and from the toilet area together.

## **PHYSICAL CONTACT POLICY**

Dance teachers occasionally use physical contact to effectively teach students correct dance technique. Having a teacher physically adjust a child's body helps the child to feel the correct placement/alignment of their body and be able to implement this independently in the future.

Dance teachers may also make physical contact with a student when demonstrating partner work.

### Appropriate physical touch in a dance class looks like:

- The teacher asking a student in an age-appropriate way if it is ok for them to touch the child's body, and specifically where e.g. "Emma, can I move your left foot to the correct place on the floor?"
- The teacher waits for the child to verbally consent before going ahead with the physical correction.
- The teacher touches only the body part that needs adjusting and no other body parts in the process.
- The teacher's touch is gentle and respectful and doesn't cause the child pain.

**Nook Dance Centre teachers will NEVER touch a child on private/inappropriate areas of their body (genitals, breasts, bottom). This is abuse and must be reported immediately using our reporting procedures.**

## **SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITIONS POLICY**



Nook Dance Centre must be made aware of any serious medical conditions prior to a child attending any class with us. An action plan must be put into place in case of medical emergencies.

## **INJURY POLICY**

Dance is an activity that comes with some risk of injury.

Students with a pre-existing injury of any kind must advise Nook Dance Centre prior to commencing any class.

Injuries are taken seriously at Nook Dance Centre. The health and safety of our students will always be put first, so we will never allow a student to dance if they are injured (unless advised by a physio/osteo on specific movements that are permitted).

There will always be an adult trained in First Aid present at every Nook Dance Centre class or event. Should a child sustain an injury during classes at Nook Dance Centre, the first aider will assess the injury and decide if the injury is minor, moderate or serious. The actions taken will depend on the severity of the injury.

Below is a basic outline of how injuries will be dealt with at Nook Dance Centre.

### **Minor injury:**

- Detailed injury report filled out and kept on file.
- Student may continue with some/all aspects of the class as long as no pain is experienced.
- Parent or carer advised of the injury when collecting the child and will receive an email following up on the injury during the week.
- (In the case of Preschool aged students, parent will be advised immediately, as preschool parents are required on premises for duration of class)

### **Moderate injury:**

- First aid will be immediately applied to the student and the student may be advised not to continue with aspects of the class.
- Detailed injury report filled out and kept on file.
- Parent or carer advised of the injury immediately by phone (if deemed necessary by Nook Dance Centre staff), or when collecting the child and will receive an email following up on the injury during the week.
- (In the case of Preschool aged students, parent will be advised immediately, as preschool parents are required on premises for duration of class)

### **Serious Injury:**

First aid will be immediately applied to the student.

000 will be called if deemed necessary by the first aider.





Parent or carer advised of the injury immediately by phone or in person if on the premises.

Nook Dance Centre reserves the right to call an ambulance for any child or adult if deemed necessary by staff.

### **PHOTO/VIDEO POLICY:**

Nook Dance Centre reserves the right to take photos and videos of its students for promotional purposes. If you do not want your child's photo to be taken for these purposes, you must advise us on enrolment. We do not list the names of children in the photos and we do not share photos of children in their school uniforms.

For child safety, we do not allow anyone other than Nook Dance Centre staff to take photos/videos of students during classes or at events including Watching Days.

Photos/videos taken of students before or after classes are not the business of Nook Dance Centre.

### **REFUND POLICY**

Refunds of fees will only occur if classes are cancelled/postponed by Nook Dance Centre or in some special circumstances, which will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

### **WAITING AREA POLICY**

We do not allow family and friends to be in the studios/halls while our classes are taking place unless specifically asked by your child's teacher (E.g. if your child is feeling anxious without you). If staying on the premises (particularly for parents/carers of Preschool aged students) please use the allocated waiting areas at our venues. For our Kinderballet classes, we hold an open day on the last day of each term to give family and friends the opportunity to see what we have been learning during the term. For all other Nook Dance Centre students, the mid-year and end of year performances are a great opportunity to watch our students dance.

Preschool parents/guardians are required to stay on the premises for the duration of the class. Nook Dance Centre is responsible for children inside the hall during class times, we are unable to be responsible for children who are not inside the hall. Nook Dance Centre staff cannot take children to the toilet, and (due to being in a public space) we cannot allow any preschool aged children to go to the toilets alone. If you do need to leave the premises for any reason, please arrange for another parent or carer from your child's class to be responsible for taking your child to the toilet if required.

### **PRIVACY POLICY**



We respect your privacy. We will not share your personal information provided to us (when enrolling, making an enquiry or for any other reason) with anyone else.

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