

# SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY

## POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

REVIEW RECORD
2nd Review Date: June 2018
3rd Review Date: April 2020
4th Review Date: October 2022
5th Review Date: November 2024
To be Reviewed by: Executive Director

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Children and young people have a right to be emotionally and physically safe at all times. This Child Protection Policy outlines SDC's commitments to maintaining a child safe environment in person and online.

SDC believes that the welfare of children participating in all our activities is of the highest priority. It is the responsibility of all Workplace Participants to ensure children are protected.

- 1.2 This Child Protection Policy, in conjunction with the Child Protection Procedure Document, is designed to:
- (i) Minimise the risk to young persons and children involved in SDC programs.
  - (ii) Provide consolidated procedures to ensure any incidents or allegations of child abuse are handled in an effective and appropriate manner; and
  - (iii) Cover all activities involving children and young people including performances, open classes both in person and online, school holiday workshops, youth term class, school workshops, Pre-Professional Year, employment and volunteers.
- 1.3 This Child Protection Policy is informed by the NSW Child Safe Standards and the National Principles for Child Safety.
- 1.4 Sydney Dance Company takes a whole-organisation approach to Child Safety, with Child Safety considered at all levels of decision-making and risk-management, and with a culture of active reporting and continuous improvement.

### 2. Statement for Child Protection

- 2.1 SDC is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, stable and secure environment for children when they engage with SDC both in person and online.
- 2.2 SDC fosters practices to support children's health, developmental needs, self-respect and dignity.

- 2.3 SDC will take all reasonable steps to protect children from neglect, physical, sexual, psychological and emotional abuse whilst participating in our programs.
- 2.4 SDC has zero tolerance for child abuse and will deal with any allegations of child abuse consistently and appropriately.
- 2.5 It is the responsibility of all Workplace Participants to ensure children are protected and treated with respect.
- 2.6 Any Workplace Participants who work directly with children and young people, or have responsibility over programs for children and young people, must provide a valid Working with Children Check for the relevant jurisdiction. No individual may be employed to work with children, by law, who does not hold a Working with Children Check.

### **3. Reporting**

- 3.1 Any suspicion or evidence of significant harm to a child or young person must be reported to the Executive Director or the Chief Financial Officer. This also applies to harm that may have occurred outside of activities at SDC. The Executive Director or Chief Financial Officer will contact the Child Protection Helpline.
- 3.2 While SDC staff are not considered mandatory reporters, all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that children and young people are protected from harm. Any member of SDC staff or the community can make a report to the Child Protection Helpline on 131 221, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### **4. Complaints**

- 4.1 Complaints can be made as per the Complaint Handling and Investigation Procedure.
- 4.2 Feedback may also be provided via surveys or emails to the Child Safe Officer, which will be escalated to the Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer, or external government bodies as required.
- 4.3 Any suspicion or evidence of significant harm to a child or young person should be reported as per section 3.
- 4.4 SDC will keep families informed of the progress of complaints made and keep them involved in the process where appropriate.

### **5. Scope of Policy**

- 5.1 The Child Protection Policy is in addition to and complements existing or future SDC policies regarding employee responsibilities and behaviour. This includes policies relating to sexual harassment, discrimination, confidentiality, theft and disciplinary action.
- 5.2 Child Protection Policy violations may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination and/or reporting to the appropriate government or legal authorities. For information on SDC disciplinary procedures, refer to SDC Disciplinary Procedures.

### **6. Values for Creating a Child Safe Environment**

SDC has developed a set of principles that all Workplace Participants and children and young people are expected to uphold. These principles are published on the SDC website as “What is important to us at Sydney Dance Company” and the most age-appropriate version should be referred to during programs. They cover SAFETY, COMMITMENT, KINDNESS, RESPECT and COMMUNICATION. Children and young people are encouraged to tell a member of staff or a parent if they feel these expectations are not being upheld.

## 7. Definitions

Unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions have the following meanings in the Child Protection Policy:

<b>Child</b>	Any person under the age of 18 years.
<b>Child Protection</b>	“To provide for the care and protection of, and the provision of services to, children and young persons.” (Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998).
<b>Child Protection Policy</b>	Means these child protection policies and procedures as attached to the Code of Conduct.
<b>Emotional Abuse</b>	An attack on a child’s or young person’s self esteem or emotional or psychological wellbeing, for example through excessive criticism, bullying, exposing to violence, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating the child or young person.
<b>Neglect</b>	Harming a child or young person by failing to provide basic physical or emotional necessities.
<b>Online</b>	Any digital platform used to facilitate virtual or remote learning
<b>Physical abuse</b>	non-accidental or purposeful injury, pattern of injuries or threats to injure a child or young person
<b>SDC</b>	Sydney Dance Company
<b>Sexual Abuse</b>	Any sexual act or sexual threat imposed upon a child
<b>Working with Children Check</b>	A Working With Children Check is a requirement for people who work or volunteer in child-related work. It involves a national criminal history check and a review of findings of workplace misconduct. (Office of the Children’s Guardian)
<b>Young Person/People</b>	Usually a person between the ages of 18-25