



# **OnBeat Dance Studios**

## **Policy for Safeguarding and the Protection of Children and Adults at Risk**

*Effective 1 February 2025*

### **Purpose:**

The safety and well-being of every child attending OnBeat Dance Studios is paramount. This policy outlines our commitment to creating a safe environment where children and vulnerable adults can learn, grow, and thrive without fear of harm or abuse.

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### **Scope:**

This policy applies to:

- All children under the age of 18, whether their responsible adult is present or not,
  - All adults at risk, and adult students where good safeguarding practices apply to all participants,
  - Vulnerable people of any age, as the safeguards for children also apply to them,
  - All staff, contractors, freelance staff, volunteers, and consultants working within OnBeat or on our premises.
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### **OnBeat Dance Studios will:**

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel safe, are encouraged to vocalise their concerns, and are listened to and believed,
- Ensure children know there are trusted adults they can approach if worried or in difficulty, and that their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon appropriately,

Last Reviewed: 1 February 2025

- Promote a protective ethos where all individuals feel safe, respected, and confident that their concerns will be taken seriously.

This policy is available to parents/carers via OnBeat's website and in hard copy upon request. It will be reviewed annually or more frequently if legislation or guidance changes.

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## **1. Commitment to Safeguarding**

We are committed to safeguarding children and young people who participate in activities at our dance studio. This includes promoting their physical, emotional, and psychological safety at all times.

### **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:**

- Protecting children from maltreatment,
  - Preventing impairment of children's health or development,
  - Ensuring children grow up in circumstances providing safe and effective care, and
  - Taking action to enable children to feel safe and supported again.
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## **2. Prevention**

Our goal is to prevent harm from occurring. It is our policy that all OnBeat staff, teachers, and volunteers will promote and safeguard the well-being of all students, whether child, adult, or at-risk.

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends, and open lines of communication with trusted adults help protect children and young adults from harm.

To ensure the protection of children and adults at risk, OnBeat will:

1. Carefully select our staff,
2. Provide regular training on safeguarding practices and recognising signs of abuse (all four types),
3. Ensure all staff, instructors, volunteers, and adults in a position of responsibility undergo background checks and hold valid Working With Children Checks (WWCC) or ACT Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) cards,
4. Create an environment where everyone feels secure, respected, and encouraged to talk,
5. Take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of all participants,
6. Take measures to prevent any staff member or member of the public from putting any child or adult at risk,
7. Report any suspicion of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse to the Director,
8. Implement this policy alongside the Staff Code of Conduct and Studio Values.

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### **3. Roles and Responsibilities of Staff**

Everyone at OnBeat shares the responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students by adhering to the following principles:

- Provide a safe learning environment,
- Identify and respond to children, young people, and adults at risk,
- Support children's development and foster self-esteem,
- Foster a learning environment where students feel valued and can express their feelings,
- Ensure that students, volunteers, parents, and carers understand how to raise concerns and seek help.

#### **Code of Conduct for Staff:**

- The safety of participants and staff is always the top priority,
- Report all accidents to the Director immediately or as soon as possible,
- Familiarise yourself with facility safety, including fire procedures, emergency exits, and first aid,
- Report any suspected cases of abuse to the Director or relevant agency,
- In case of distress, accidents, or emergencies during class, contact the child's parent/guardian using emergency contact details,
- Ensure that activities start and end on time,
- Demonstrate and incorporate the values of respect, trust, and professionalism throughout all activities,
- Ensure adequate insurance for protection against claims of negligence.

#### **Photography:**

- Photos or videos of students should only be taken with the student's consent, which must be obtained after explaining the purpose and usage of the images in an age-appropriate manner. Consent may be withdrawn at any time.
- Students should not feel pressured to participate in photography or video footage.

#### **Changing Assistance:**

- Teachers or teaching assistants may assist young children to use the bathroom when necessary. Ideally, students should go to the bathroom on their own, with staff monitoring age-appropriately.
- In urgent cases, if a parent is unavailable, a teacher or assistant can take a child to the bathroom. Always ask the child how they need assistance.
- If changing into costumes, students should be wearing appropriate undergarments as per OnBeat's "Troupe Requirements." Teachers or volunteers should never remove a student's undergarments.

- For intimate changing needs (e.g., wetting themselves or inappropriate undergarments), assistance should be given privately with another adult present, and the Director should be notified of this cause for concern. Parents should be informed immediately.

#### **Social Media:**

- Teachers should not interact directly with underage students on social media (this includes friending/following, direct messaging, etc.). All communication with students must be through official studio channels (email, studio pages, or group messaging). Personal accounts should be kept private and separate from professional responsibilities. Teachers who have public social media accounts or dance/teaching accounts may allow students to follow them if they wish, but should not follow students back or direct message them.
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## **4. Reporting**

Any member of the OnBeat community (student, carer, teacher, staff member, volunteer) can report a concern. All reports will be taken seriously and handled confidentially.

Educators, including OnBeat teachers, are “mandated reporters” under section 356 of the Children and Young People Act 2008.

If you have concerns about the safety or well-being of any student, report it as soon as possible to the Director (via [alana@onbeatdance.com.au](mailto:alana@onbeatdance.com.au) or 0428 076 774), or another member of OnBeat staff.

In an emergency where a child is at immediate risk, contact the police immediately by dialling 000.

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## **5. Promoting a Safe Environment**

- Our premises are designed to ensure safety, with adequate lighting, secure entry and exit points, and appropriate facilities for children.
  - We promote positive relationships and a supportive atmosphere where children feel comfortable expressing concerns or seeking help.
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## **6. Communication and Awareness**

- Parents/guardians will be informed of this safeguarding policy upon enrolment, with updates provided as necessary.

- We encourage open communication with parents/guardians and value their involvement in our safeguarding efforts.
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## 7. Categories of Abuse

**Physical abuse:** Any unwanted physical contact, including hitting, shaking, throwing, or any form of physical harm. This also includes physical correction of a student without prior consent.

**Neglect:** Persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs, resulting in the impairment of their health or development.

**Emotional abuse:** Persistent emotional maltreatment, such as conveying that a child is worthless or unloved.

**Sexual abuse:** Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, with or without violence.

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## 8. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with current legislation. Incidents, concerns, and actions taken will be documented and reviewed to identify areas for improvement.

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## Conclusion

We are committed to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. By implementing this policy, we aim to create a safe and supportive environment where children can benefit from dance education without compromising their safety or well-being.



Alana Beaton

Director/Designated Safeguarding Lead

Onbeat Dance Studios