

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Dynamite Studios is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all students. All children have a right to physical and mental safety and Dynamite Studios shall do everything in our power to protect the children entrusted into our care by taking any necessary steps. This is a legal requirement as well as a moral obligation. Dynamite Studios thereby will not tolerate any violations of the Child Protection Policy; such violations may result in disciplinary action.

Everyone working at Dynamite Studios is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse.

Policy Statement

This policy applies to all staff, contractors and volunteers, and to the broad range of situations where interaction with children and young people may occur in the delivery of Dynamite Studios' services.

Dynamite Studios is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children. We acknowledge our responsibility to protect children and prevent any harm, abuse or exploitation where we can. Dynamite Studios fosters practices to create a safe, supportive and respectful environment for all children, free from discrimination, harassment, bullying or any form of maltreatment.

Dynamite Studios will take any necessary and reasonable steps to ensure children are protected from neglect, and physical, sexual, psychological and emotional abuse whilst in our care.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers engaged by Dynamite Studios are aware of the organisation's commitment to creating and maintaining a childsafe environment;
- facilitate the prevention of child abuse within Dynamite Studios;
- establish the framework for an organisational culture of child safety;
- outline the responsibilities that various parties have for identifying possible occasions for child abuse, for establishing controls and procedures for preventing abuse, and for detecting abuse when it occurs;
- provide guidance to staff, volunteers, and contractors as to the action that should be taken when they suspect any abuse within or outside of Dynamite Studios;
- provide a clear statement to staff, volunteers, and contractors forbidding any such abuse; and

- provide assurance that all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.

Responsibilities

Dynamite Studios' management, staff, volunteers, contractors, and parents/guardians have shared responsibilities to protect children. A childsafe organisation has strong policies and procedures in place to reduce environmental risks and keep children safe. This includes supervision and education of both paid and unpaid staff about appropriate and acceptable behaviour.

Management

Management is responsible for implementing and regularly reviewing the Child Protection Policy to ensure it remains up-to-date with evolving best practices. All Management members are responsible for:

- dealing and investigating reports of child abuse;
- ensuring that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation's Code of Conduct;
- ensuring that all parents/guardians and students within the Dynamite Studios community are aware of their obligation to report suspected misconduct of a child in accordance with the aforementioned policies and procedures.

Staff, Contractors, and Volunteers

Staff, contractors, and volunteers must be aware of their responsibilities, receive appropriate training, and report any concerns to the designated child protection officer. All must:

- familiarise themselves with relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and Dynamite Studios' policy and procedures in relation to child protection;
- comply with all aforementioned requirements;
- report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to management;
- provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians must provide accurate information about their child, communicate concerns, and adhere to Dynamite Studios policies and procedures.

Recruitment and Training

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 (Blue Card) for the relevant jurisdiction.

Legally, no individual may be employed to work with children if they do not possess a current Working with Children Check.

All staff members will receive training on the policy to help create a shared understanding and foster a culture of child-centred communication. Training includes guidelines against leading questions as it is an important measure to ensure the fair and unbiased collection of information from children. By avoiding leading questions educators and professionals can minimise the risk of influencing or distorting the information provided by children, thereby promoting objectivity and safeguarding the child's rights.

The purpose of training staff on how to communicate and interact with students allows us to maintain a safe and supportive environment where children feel comfortable expressing themselves without undue pressure or manipulation. By refraining from asking leading questions, adults can facilitate open-ended questions, allowing children to share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences freely.

Code of Conduct for Interacting with Children and Young People

To ensure Dynamite Studios students are kept safe and always protected, it is imperative that all Dynamite persons build and maintain relationships with students by abiding by the practices and procedures contained in this policy.

The Standard or Appropriate Behaviour for Dynamite Studios Persons

Inappropriate language:

- insults, criticisms, and name-calling
- bullying, swearing, or yelling
- sexually suggestive comments/jokes

Inappropriate relationships:

- favouritism or giving gifts
- spending excessive amounts of time alone with children and young people
- bullying and/or harassment
- 'grooming' children or young people

Inappropriate physical contact:

- violent or aggressive behaviour (hitting, kicking, slapping, or pushing)
- kissing or touching of a sexual nature consistent with 'grooming'

Other inappropriate behaviour:

- using alcohol or other substances before or during work
- inappropriate clothing
- sending inappropriate emails, texts, photos, etc

Procedure to Minimise Harm to Children and Young People

Physical Contact with a child and/or young person should only be permitted in the following circumstances:

- to develop dance/acrobatic/aerial-based skills;
- to prevent or respond to an injury in an emergency;
- to prevent or respond to an injury as part of normal role operations; and/or
- to meet the specific requirements of the class curriculum.

All physical contact by Dynamite Studios persons with a child or young person should be appropriate for the development of a skill and should follow the above points. When demonstrating technique and/or developing skills, Dynamite Studios persons should always follow the following guidelines:

- prior to touching a child or young person, Dynamite persons are to give a verbal explanation of how, where, when, and why so that the child or young persons can hear;
- always ask the child or young person for permission after the explanation - if permission is given, the demonstration is to continue.

Where Dynamite Studios persons are required to supervise the children or young people in change rooms or toilets, the appropriate protocols should be followed:

- the Dynamite persons should wait in close proximity to the entrance of the changing room/toilet for the children or young people;
- the Dynamite persons should only enter the facility when there is a valid reason to do so, such as an emergency situation. In this case, it is preferable for a staff member of the same gender to supervise children or young people (although it is acknowledged that it is not always possible);
- should Dynamite persons need to enter a change room/toilet at any stage, the persons must loudly and clearly announce to the room occupants before entering to ensure privacy;
- photos must never be taken in changing rooms/toilets.

Dynamite Studios persons are required to have more than one adult with children or young people on an overnight camp/trip. The adults must not isolate themselves with a child or young person at any time. Dynamite Studios persons must always obtain separate sleeping accommodations from children and young people.

All personnel within the Dynamite Studios community are required to abide by the collection procedures enforced by the organisation.

- Parents and guardians are notified of the times to drop off and collect their children/ young people.
- It is not Dynamite Studios responsibility to transport children and young people home if parents are delayed.
- When parents/guardians are delayed in picking up their child or young person, the student will wait with the carpark attendant, admin, or a member of the Dynamite Studios staff.
- Dynamite Studios persons will always have access to a phone so that they can attempt to contact the child or young person's parent/guardian where they have not been collected in a timely manner.
- If a child or young person is not permitted to be collected by a certain person or a Domestic Violence Order (DVO) is in place, the parent/guardian will need to provide a written copy of this to admin upon enrolment, or at the time it is ordered so that Dynamite Studios persons are aware.

- Should students need to get picked up early, Dynamite Studios persons will follow the procedure and check that the parent/guardian there to collect the child or young person is on their file and that no protection order is in place.

Ideally, all children and young people should have their own transport; however, if they do not, written approval will need to be obtained from the parent/guardian of the young person.

Language and Behaviour

Dynamite Studios persons staff, contractors, and volunteers should avoid using aggressive language, insults, swearing, criticism, and bullying.

Injury and Illness

Only Dynamite Studios persons qualified and trained in administering first aid or treating injuries should do so. All Dynamite Studios management staff maintain a current first aid and CPR certificate. The comfort level and dignity of the child or young person should always be considered and be a priority. When treating a child or young person, seek medical attention as soon as possible, where necessary. Dynamite Studios persons must always report and document any incidents or injuries and treatment by filling out and filing an incident report. Parents and guardians must always be informed whether the person involved is a child or a young person.

Smoking, Alcohol, and Use of Illegal Drugs

Smoking and the consumption of alcohol and illegal drugs is prohibited on Dynamite Studios premises and before work.

Photographing Children and Young People

All Dynamite Studios staff, contractors, volunteers, and parents/guardians should be mindful when taking photos and videos of children and young people. No parents are permitted to post pictures or videos with another child in it. Any suspicious or irregular behaviour should be reported to a Dynamite Studios staff member immediately. When parents/guardians enrol their child or young person as a student here, photo consent is located within our T&Cs. There is also an option within the enrolment forms for parents/guardians to advise that they do not consent to their child or young person being posted on social media.

If a parent/guardian wishes to post photos or videos of any child or young person that is not their child or young person, they should be advised to seek permission from the other child or young person's parents/guardians prior to taking the photo or videos.

Social Media

All persons whilst on Dynamite Studios premises, or representing Dynamite Studios by wearing the uniform, must represent Dynamite Studios in a positive light and in accordance with the code of conduct located in the student handbook. Any person who brings Dynamite Studios into disrepute through the use of technology or social media may be subject to action taken by Dynamite Studios.

Cyberbullying Prevention and Response

Our commitment to safeguarding children extends to the digital realm, recognising the significant impact that cyberbullying can have on a child's emotional, psychological, and physical well-being. We are dedicated to creating a safe online environment for all students by implementing comprehensive prevention strategies, including digital literacy and online safety education for students, parents, and staff. Our policy mandates the monitoring of online interactions within school-managed digital platforms and encourages the reporting of any cyberbullying incidents. In cases of cyberbullying, we are committed to taking prompt and effective actions to support the victim, which may include counselling services, and to address the behaviour of the perpetrator in line with our disciplinary policy. We also collaborate with parents, technology providers, and, if necessary, law enforcement, to manage and resolve incidents of cyberbullying, ensuring the continued safety and well-being of our students in both physical and digital spaces.

Managing Suspicious and/or Disclosures of Child Abuse or Harm

Reporting and Responding to Concerns

Any person who has any concerns, suspicion or knowledge about a risk to a child's safety or welfare must report it immediately to their supervisor. Dynamite Studios will ensure that all reports are taken seriously, and appropriate action will be taken promptly. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the entirety of the reporting, investigation and response process, ensuring the rights and privacy of all individuals involved.

The *Child Protection Act 1999* is the leading legal framework that Dynamite Studios is guided by and abides by. Core principles of the Act in relation to child protection are:

- the welfare and best interests of the child are paramount;
- the preferred way of ensuring a child's welfare is through support of the child's family;
- intervention is not to exceed the level necessary to protect the child;
- family participation in planning and decision-making for children;
- consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies in decision-making regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children;
- children and families have a right to information;
- services are to be culturally appropriate;
- coordination, consultation, and collaboration with families, other professionals, agencies, and the community;
- accountability of the department.

Reporting and Referring Concerns

If any staff member has any concerns for a child or family, a referral can be made to Family and Child Connect, or a report can be made to Child Safety depending on the seriousness of the concerns. Where there are concerns for a child's safety, a report should be made to Child Safety.

If someone has concerns about a child or family that does not require a report to Child Safety, there are referral options available that enable support to be offered to the family. There is also a Child Protection Guide available to assist professionals to determine which pathway to take regarding their concerns about a child's safety and wellbeing.

Under the *Child Protection Act 1999*, a child is an individual under 18 years of age. Section 9 of the *Child Protection Act 1999* defines 'harm to a child' as any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional well-being. The Act also emphasises that it immaterial how the harm is caused.

Staff will report concerns about a child's safety if they reasonably suspect that a child may be in need of protection. A report will be made where a child who may be in need of protection has suffered, is suffering, or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm and may not have a parent able and willing to protect them. A parent may be willing to protect their child, but not have the capacity to do so. Alternatively, a parent may have the capacity and be able to protect their child but may choose not to do so.

Dynamite Studios will consider the following matter when forming a reasonable suspicion about harm to a child:

- a. whether there are detrimental effects on the child's body or the child's psychological or emotional state that are:
 - i. evident to the person; or
 - ii. considered likely to become evident in the future; and
- b. in relation to any detrimental effects mentioned in paragraph (a):
 - i. their nature and severity; and
 - ii. the likelihood that they will continue; and
- c. the child or young person's age.

The person's consideration may be informed by an observation of the child, other knowledge about the child or any other relevant knowledge, training or experience that the person may have. Dynamite Studios will maintain proper records of incidents, reports, and actions taken, ensuring the security and confidentiality of all individuals.

Responding to a Suspicion and/or Disclosure of Harm

All incidents and suspicions of harm are to be taken seriously and actioned immediately. Dynamite Studios persons should:

- not react shocked or with disbelief to a disclosure;
- find a private place to talk (in view of another adult eyewitness) to ensure the child or young person feels more comfortable and safe in making the disclosure;
- not give reassurance to the child or young person that the information provided will be kept secret, as it needs to be reported to keep them safe;
- reassure them that they have done the right thing in speaking to someone;
- not attempt to resolve the situation or investigate beyond the information provided, but rather report it to the relevant authorities immediately;
- not ask leading questions; and
- ensure the child or young person is safe.

The *Confidential Record of Child Abuse Allegation Form* (Appendix 1) must be completed as soon as possible.

Reporting Actual Harm

Where a Dynamite Studios staff, contractor, or volunteer observes actual harm towards a child or young person, they must intervene immediately (provided it is safe to do so). If unsafe, police must be called immediately. The Dynamite Studios person must immediately report the incident to a member of management.

Dynamite Studios staff, contractors, and/or volunteers should follow the flowchart attached in Appendix 2. Under the *Child Protection Act 1999* any person who reports suspected child abuse is protected from civil or criminal legal actions and is not considered to have broken any code of conduct or ethics. Details of the person who made the report are to be kept completely confidential and will not be made available to the family of the child or young person or the person whom the allegation has been made against. If the alleged person is a Dynamite Studios employee or contractor, their role/duties will need to be reviewed immediately and may be altered whilst an investigation is undertaken.

Complaints are to be recorded by Dynamite Studios employees; however, all notes, documentation and information must always be kept confidential. The matter must only be discussed with persons who can provide support and advice about the process. Personal information will be treated in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)*.

Dynamite Studios is committed to ensuring this policy and procedure is implemented for the safety and well-being of its students and community. Dynamite Studios believes it is crucial to emphasise that we have zero tolerance for any violation of the Child Protection Policy and any violations may result in disciplinary actions.

General Advice

Teachers should always:

- work in an open environment;
- avoid spending time alone with children away from others;
- encourage open communication with no secrets;
- treat every child equally and with respect and dignity;
- put the welfare of each child first;
- ensure you/your staff are aware of an obligation to advise employers or managers of any concerns about the safety, welfare, and wellbeing of children and young people that may arise;
- ensure you/your staff are aware of mandatory obligations to report suspected risk of significant harm and of the procedures for doing so;
- studio owner/teachers, school principles, and company managers should maintain a register of staff employment and induction (including non-teaching, part-time, and casual staff); and
- keep records of any incidents/reports made to the state or territory child protection agency as confirmation that mandatory reporting requirements have been met.

Teachers should never:

- allow or engage in physical or sexually provocative games;
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching;
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child or young person;
- reduce a child to tears as a form of control;
- fail to act on, and record, any allegations made by a child.

Definitions

Adult refers to any person 18 years of age or over.

Child refers to any person under the age of 18.

Effect of Guardianship according to the *Child Protection Act 1999*, 'if the chief executive or someone else is granted guardianship of a child under a child protection order, the chief executive or other person has— (a) the right to have the child's daily care; and (b) the right and responsibility to make decisions about the child's daily care; and (c) all the powers, rights and responsibilities in relation to the child that would otherwise have been vested in the person having parental responsibility for making decisions about the long-term care, wellbeing and development of the child'.

Child Protection 'to provide for the protection of children; to promote the safety of children and to the extent that is appropriate, to support families caring for children'.

Parent (of a child) refers to the child's mother or father; a person in whose favour a parenting order operates; a person, other than the chief executive, has custody or guardianship of the child under another Act or a law of another State; a long-term guardian of the child; a permanent guardian of the child.

Working with Children Check refers to an ongoing assessment of a person's eligibility to work or volunteer with children and involves checking a person's national criminal history (including spent convictions, pending and non-conviction charges) and other disciplinary and police information.

Leading Question refers to a question that suggests a particular answer or contains assumptions, potentially steering children towards a desired response.

Serious Physical Injury refers to the loss of a distinct part or an organ of the body; or serious disfigurement; or any bodily injury of a nature that, if left untreated, would endanger or be likely to endanger life, or cause or be likely to cause permanent injury to health.

Harm according to the *Child Protection Act 1999*, 'Harm involves any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child and young person's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm of caused. Harm can be caused by physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or sexual abuse or exploitation. Harm can be caused by a single act, omission or circumstance; or by a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.'

Child in Need of Protection according to the *Child Protection Act 1999*, a child in need of protection is a child who has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm; and does not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from harm.

Persons Required to Hold a Blue Card

Under the Act, the following people are required to hold a valid **Blue Card** if they are likely to work more than seven (7) days per calendar year:

- any paid employee (excluding teachers and registered health practitioners working within their professional capacity) if their work falls under a category of regulated employment under the Act;
- all volunteers 18 years of age or over (unless they are a parent of a child attending the school); and
- students enrolled in a tertiary course and undertaking practical placements in regulated employment as part of their studies.

Appendix 1: Confidential Record of Child Abuse Allegation

Complainant's Name:	
Date the Complaint was Received:	
Role/Status:	

Child's Name:	
Child's DOB:	
Child's Address:	

Reason for Suspicion <i>eg. observation, injury, disclosure</i>	
Name of Person in Suspicion	
Witness Name:	
Witness Contact:	
Interim Action Taken (if any):	

Designated DSA Person Notified:	
Police Contacted:	Contacted By: Date: Advice Given:
Child Protection Agency Contacted	Contacted By: Date: Advice Given:

Police Investiagtion Flnding:	
Action Taken:	

Completed By:	Name:
	Position:
Signature:	

Appendix 2: Process for Responding to a Disclosure of Harm to a Child or Young Person

Receiving a Disclosure

- remain calm and find a private/safe place to talk;
- explain that you can't keep it a secret as you need to keep the child/young person safe;
- only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter;
- do not ask leading questions;
- do not attempt to conduct your own investigation.



Documenting a Disclosure

- fill out the Confidential Record of Child Abuse Allegation form, and be sure to include the following:
 - time, date, and place of the disclosure;
 - 'word-for-word' what was said during the disclosure;
 - any actions that have been taken;
 - date of the report.



Reporting a Disclosure

- the disclosure must be reported to Dynamite Studios' Business Manager who will report it to the appropriate institution.



Following a Disclosure

- support should be offered to all parties involved;
- where a Dynamite Studios employee, contractor, or volunteer is alleged to have committed harm to a child or young person, their duties must be reviewed by Dynamite Studios' Business Manager immediately;
- the policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm must be reviewed.