

Ablaze Dance Academy (ADA)

Child Safety, Protection & Wellbeing Policy

Introduction

Ablaze Dance Academy (ADA) is committed to fostering a safe, supportive, and respectful environment where every child and young person feels protected, valued, and encouraged to thrive. We believe child safety is a shared responsibility and is embedded throughout our teaching practices, studio culture, communication, and operations.

This policy applies to all staff, contractors, volunteers, guest teachers, student teachers, and representatives associated with ADA.

1. Our Commitment to Child Safety

ADA is committed to:

- Providing a physically and emotionally safe environment for all students
- Promoting inclusion, respect, confidence, and wellbeing
- Preventing harm, abuse, bullying, neglect, grooming, or exploitation
- Acting quickly and appropriately when concerns are raised
- Maintaining professional and transparent relationships with students and families
- Empowering children to speak openly and feel heard

Every child has the right to participate in dance in an environment where they feel safe, respected, and supported.

2. Child Safe Principles

ADA operates in alignment with Australian Child Safe Standards and relevant New South Wales legislation.

Our safeguarding approach is guided by the following principles:

- Children's wellbeing comes first
- Staff are accountable for maintaining safe boundaries
- Concerns are responded to promptly and professionally
- Safeguarding is proactive, not reactive
- Families are respected as important partners in child wellbeing
- Inclusive and respectful practices are upheld at all times

3. Expectations of Staff & Representatives

All ADA staff and representatives are expected to:

- Treat students with kindness, fairness, patience, and professionalism
- Encourage a positive and inclusive learning environment

- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times
- Ensure interactions with students remain visible and appropriate
- Follow all safeguarding and supervision procedures
- Report any concern, disclosure, or incident immediately

Staff and representatives must never:

- Be alone with a student in a private or isolated space
- Use inappropriate, humiliating, or discriminatory language
- Develop inappropriate personal relationships with students
- Engage with students through personal social media accounts
- Photograph or record students without consent
- Display favouritism, intimidation, or inappropriate conduct

4. Physical Contact & Dance Instruction

ADA recognises that dance training may involve appropriate physical correction or guidance.

Physical contact is only acceptable when:

- It is necessary for instruction, correction, or injury prevention
- The purpose is explained clearly to the student
- The interaction remains professional and respectful
- It occurs in an open and supervised environment
- The student feels comfortable and safe

Students are encouraged to communicate if they feel uncomfortable at any time.

Physical contact must never be unnecessary, secretive, forceful, or inappropriate.

5. Supervision & Studio Safety

ADA maintains safe studio practices by ensuring:

- Classes are supervised by approved and qualified staff
- Studio spaces remain visible and accessible where possible
- Students are supervised appropriately before, during, and after classes
- Change rooms and bathroom areas are monitored responsibly
- Equipment and facilities are maintained to safe standards
- Emergency procedures are communicated and regularly reviewed

Parents and carers are responsible for students outside of scheduled class times unless otherwise arranged.

6. Communication & Digital Safety

ADA is committed to professional, transparent, and age-appropriate communication.

- Official communication occurs through approved ADA channels
- Parents or guardians are included where appropriate
- Staff must not engage in secretive or private communication with students
- Feedback is delivered respectfully and constructively
- Digital communication must remain professional and studio-related

7. Photography, Media & Social Platforms

ADA respects the privacy and dignity of all students.

- Parent or guardian consent is obtained for photography and filming
- Student images are used professionally and respectfully
- Personal information is not publicly shared without consent
- Staff may not post student content on personal accounts without approval
- Social media activity must reflect ADA's safeguarding expectations and professional standards

8. Responding to Concerns

All child safety concerns are taken seriously.

If a child discloses harm or a concern is identified:

1. The child will be listened to calmly and respectfully
2. Reassurance and support will be provided
3. The concern will be documented confidentially
4. ADA leadership will be informed immediately
5. Mandatory reporting obligations will be followed where required
6. Appropriate next steps will be taken to prioritise the child's wellbeing

Confidentiality will be respected while ensuring the child's safety remains the priority.

9. Student Wellbeing & Behaviour

ADA promotes a culture of respect, teamwork, encouragement, and inclusion.

Bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation, or unsafe behaviour will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to:

- Treat peers and staff respectfully
- Support a positive studio environment
- Use appropriate language and behaviour
- Respect personal space and boundaries
- Follow studio expectations and instructions

10. First Aid & Incident Procedures

ADA follows clear procedures for injuries, illnesses, and emergencies.

- Qualified staff provide immediate assistance where required
- Incidents are documented appropriately
- Parents or guardians are contacted promptly
- Emergency services are contacted if necessary
- Risk management processes are reviewed regularly

11. Recruitment, Screening & Training

To support child safety, ADA ensures:

- Relevant staff hold current Working With Children Checks (WWCC)
- Safeguarding responsibilities are included during onboarding
- Ongoing training and reminders are provided
- Student teachers and assistants are appropriately supervised
- Leadership oversight and accountability are maintained

12. Partnership with Families

ADA values open communication with families and carers.

We encourage families to:

- Share relevant medical or wellbeing information
- Raise concerns or ask questions regarding safeguarding practices
- Support respectful behaviour expectations
- Inform ADA of any changes affecting their child's wellbeing or safety

13. Reporting & Complaints

Students, parents, carers, and staff may report concerns regarding child safety or conduct at any time.

All reports are:

- Taken seriously
- Managed sensitively and respectfully
- Addressed promptly
- Handled confidentially where appropriate

Where required, matters may be referred to external authorities or child protection services.

14. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains aligned with current legislation, industry expectations, and best practice child safeguarding standards.

ADA Commitment Statement

Ablaze Dance Academy is dedicated to maintaining a culture where children and young people feel safe, empowered, supported, and respected.

Child safety and wellbeing are central to our teaching philosophy, operational practices, and studio culture, ensuring every dancer can learn and grow with confidence.