



Safe Studio Handbook



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Our Commitment to Child Safety

Our organisation is committed to child safety.

EDS is committed to having a set of policies and procedures relating to child safety in place. These will be reviewed and evaluated regularly. We are committed to remaining up to date with current best practice and implementing this within our own organisation.

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. EDS core values clearly support this commitment.

This policy applies to all employees of Expression Dance School, whether volunteer or paid, and to all contractors and visitors.

1. Code of Conduct

1.1. STUDENTS

XDS Students always:

- Treat one another with respect and kindness throughout the learning and growing process as we build our artistic community.
- No running in the halls and no loud talking while waiting for classes.
- Correct footwear must be worn at all times. Only dance shoes are to be worn in the studios by students.
- No jewellery is to be worn in class at all. Small ear studs are allowed.
- Students must have a positive and engaging attitude. We have zero tolerance of bullying and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.
- Dancers should arrive 5 minutes before class start time, appropriately dressed. Punctuality and attendance are required as injuries can occur when proper warm-up has not occurred.



1.2.FAMILY MEMBERS

XDS Parents always:

- Follow the drop off and pick up procedure.
- Understand the appropriate time and place for discussions with teachers.
- Need to have a positive attitude and continued support is necessary in order for your child to continue the privilege of participating in the studios program.
- If the parent chooses to have a negative attitude or causes volatile scenes in any way, your child and you will be asked to leave the school. We treat our clients (children and their parents) with care and respect

1.3.TEACHERS AND TEAM MEMBERS

XDS Teachers will and will not:

- We role-model the confident characteristics we are engendering in the children (self-belief, self-discipline, courage, empathy, leadership and resilience)
- We are professional in our approach, committed to our own continued professional development combined with a positive and engaging attitude. We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.
- We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.
- We will ensure that we remain up to date with all obligations via our association and memberships with peak bodies such as EDS.
- Our Child Safety Officer (the Director) will be the first port of call for all incidents and will guide staff through all procedural requirements that will adhere to Child Protection standards.
- We are committed to remaining up to date with current best practice in this area of risk identification.
- We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.
- We will NOT develop any special relationships with students that could be seen as favouritism.
- We will NOT exhibit behaviours with students which may be construed as unnecessarily physical eg: sitting on laps
- We will NOT put children at risk of abuse ie: locking doors.



2. Hiring / Training & Mentoring / Police and Child Safety Checks

Xpression Dance Studio prides itself on hiring and training exceptional personnel as teachers and support staff. Our organisation has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers. This includes policies on the screening of all potential employees, volunteers including Working With Children Checks and national criminal history check.

As a minimum all staff will hold a current Working with Children Check and Level 2 First Aid Certificate. Staff will have relevant qualifications or be in the process of obtaining qualifications under the direction of the Director. All staff will attend regular internal and external professional development.

Our organisation is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

As a minimum our staff will participate in 4 internal professional development sessions per year. All volunteers will be given a clear briefing and induction prior to assisting with XDS events.

Training and development plans will be put in place each year that identify team and individual training needs. These plans will identify key areas for development and up-skilling and will ensure that we remain up to date with current best practice.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

3. Child Protection and & Reporting Policy

3.1. Definition of Child Abuse

‘Child abuse is an act (or omission) which endangers a child's health, wellbeing and/or development.’

Child Abuse includes:

- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Exposure to Family Violence
- Neglect
- Grooming
- Self-Harm

Our organisation is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.



3.2.Studio Infrastructure to Mitigate Against Child Abuse

XDS uses studios that have glass panels into all studio doors to mitigate the risk to children being vulnerable in lessons. All staff have current Working with Vulnerable People checks and must adhere to our Safe Studio Policy in its entirety, with no exceptions whatsoever as part of their ongoing training.

3.3.Studio Policy for Suspected Child Abuse Knowledge

In Australia, Child Protection Acts apply in each state and territory, including: Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW).

Risk of significant harm to a child or young person will be reported in accordance with the law. All EDS staff, as well as contractors, freelance faculty, volunteers and guests who suspect, on reasonable grounds, that a child or young person is at risk of harm is able to report their concerns to the EDS Director. In the even that any team member suspects any form of child abuse, the following procedure must occur:

1. Document what happened in writing,
2. Immediately inform the studio owner or manager,
3. Form a Child Safety Plan with management, protecting the student from further risk.
4. Report this at the relevant Child Abuse and Neglect Online <https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s>

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.



4. Physical Safety Procedures

4.1. Drop Off & Pick Up

- Please be prompt in dropping off and picking up your student.
- Parents/Guardians must be responsible for minors before and after class times. XDS will not provide supervision to minors outside of class time unless prior arrangements have been made. This includes students outside of XDS premises and stairwell.
- For their safety, no student (under 18) is to wait outside or leave the premises unaccompanied by a parent or guardian.
- Ensure your student is with an Instructor and in a lesson before leaving.

4.2. Injury Policy

- Dancing is an activity where injuries can occur.
- The students must report injuries to the teacher. This is important to be aware they have hurt themselves.
- When an injury occurs at our studio we will complete an injury record for the parent. Depending on the severity of the injury we do expect the parent to take the student to a physiotherapist or appropriate medical practitioner of choice.
- Students who have been injured must present a clearance report from their practitioner stating they are able to return to classes. If the injury is ongoing we must receive reports regularly so we are aware of the restrictions placed on the student.
- We are not liable for personal injuries.



ACCIDENT/INJURY PROCEDURES

In the event of an Accident/Injury or other accident at Xpression Dance Studio, the following steps will be followed:

Important information

Due to the exciting, energetic and challenging nature of acrobatics, injuries may occur, as this the case with any physical activity. Affiliated clubs such as Acrobatic Arts commitment to XDS assists in reducing the risk of injury.

- Some common injuries which may occur in acrobatics are landing and repetition injuries.
- Correct management of these injuries and returning to activity only once an injury is fully healed and with help prevent re-injury.

Accident/Injury Report Form:

All incidents that result in an Accident/Injury or potential Accident/Injury or disease must have an Accident / Incident Report Form completed and reported to the Studio Director or Business Manager. This includes emergencies or dangerous occurrences such as near-misses & equipment failure. This Accident / Injury Report Form must be completed for anyone that is injured during an EDS event, function, activity or use of EDS services, no matter how minor the Accident/Injury.

4.3. Teacher Punctuality and Supervision of Students

- Arrive to work at least 10 minutes prior to class and be prepared for class to begin.
- Use age appropriate language and music to teach class, keeping a positive attitude.
- Use appropriate classroom management skills to maintain control of the class.
- Delivering the best possible age-appropriate skills, content and materials (including movement, terminology, music, choreography, technique, etc.
- Providing a safe environment - physical and emotional
- Showing respect for all students through :
 - the use of encouraging language in offering positive reinforcement, constructive criticism and acknowledgement of achievements.
 - a fair and equitable distribution of time



4.4. Class Equipment

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- Floor areas should be level, firm and free from obstruction.
- Matting in landing areas is non-slip, even, and without gaps.
- Consideration is given to ceiling height, floor surface, lighting and heating/ventilation.
- There will be no swinging on the barres.
- Students may not assist with large gymnastic mats.
- All mats, props, barres must be packed away neatly after use.
- Be aware of changes in the environment e.g. mats shifting, moving props and other members of the team.

4.5. Health & Safety Policy

Includes: Venue / Performance Space / Equipment

- The studio space, flooring and equipment are set up to promote and maintain safe dance practices.
- Appropriate emergency procedures exist and XDS staff understand the procedures relevant to their location.
- XDS staff have the responsibility and authority to ensure that health and safety objectives are achieved. They will identify and eliminate unsafe acts, procedures, conditions, equipment, and hazards of all kinds.

4.6. First Aid / Allergies / Medical Conditions & Action Plans

- All XDS staff members hold a valid First Aid Certificate, CPR training and Working With Children Check.
- It is the responsibility of the student or parent/guardian to inform XDS of any prior or current allergies, illnesses or injuries, detailed on their enrolment form.



If an accident occurs:

- Stop the class, event or work and prevent any injured participants from moving or being harmed by further activity;
- Ensure the rest of the class is safe (give responsibility for your group to another coach to remove from the accident site) and remain at all times with the injured person; and
- Request assistance from the First Aid Officer (most senior qualified First Aid personnel) to assess the nature of the Accident/Injury and give directions regarding treatment.

Talk to the participant:

- What happened?
- How did it happen?
- What did you feel?
- Where does it hurt?
- Have you injured this part before?

Observe the participant:

- Is the participant distressed?
- Is the participant lying in an unusual position?
- Is there any swelling?
- Is there any difference when compared to the opposite limb?

In the event of minor Accident/Injury:

- Administer first aid - Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation (RICE), gloves must be worn if blood is present;
- Notify parent/guardian at the conclusion of the class, or as soon as possible;
- When talking to parent/guardian, do not make any diagnosis other than the obvious (e.g. Jane hurt her leg) and do not accept or place blame for the accident on anyone or anything; for example, equipment.
- All incidents that result in an Accident/Injury or potential Accident/Injury or disease must have an Accident / Incident Report Form completed and reported to the studio management. This includes emergencies or dangerous occurrences such as near-misses & equipment failure.



In the event of major Accident/Injury:

- Check Danger, Response, Airway, Breathing and Circulation (DR ABC) and administer first aid as required;
- Do not move the participant if there is a suspected neck or spinal Accident/Injury, unless there is a risk to life present (e.g., falling debris, fire, explosion);
- Stay with the participant and keep them as calm and comfortable as possible;
- If the seriousness of the Accident/Injury requires, call an ambulance;
- Telephone the parents/emergency contact and inform them of the situation, trying not to alarm them unnecessarily.
- When talking to parents, do not make any diagnosis other than the obvious (e.g. Jane hurt her leg) and do not accept or place blame for the accident on anyone or anything; for example, equipment

Roles & Responsibilities Teaching Staff (Legal responsibilities)

- Provide safe environment
- Adequately plan activities
- Evaluate students for injury and incapacity
- Provide safe and proper equipment
- Closely supervise activities
- Remain with participant until assistance is provided;
- Make contact with relevant emergency services;
- When in communication with ambulance, provide details regarding the nature of the Accident/Injury, address and phone number you are calling from and address where injured party is;
- Talk to parent/guardian as soon as possible;
- Follow up with injured participant and parent/guardian; &
- Complete relevant sections of Accident/Injury Report Form.



4.7. Persons Under the Influence of Drugs of Alcohol

Students, Parents, Volunteers, Employees and other people associated with the Dance School should be aware that:

1. The possession or consumption of illicit or non-prescribed drugs is not acceptable at any time.
2. Parents, Students, Volunteers and Employees must not arrive at the studio, or represent the studio at any time, impaired by the effects of non-prescribed drugs.
3. Parents, Students, Volunteers and Employees must not arrive at the studio, or represent the studio at any time, under the influence of any prescribed drug where it could risk injury to any person, including the person using the prescribed drug.
4. Volunteers and Employees must have a blood alcohol content of .00 when arriving at the studio, and when representing the studio at any time.
5. Volunteers and Employees must not promote the consumption of alcohol to Students at any time or in any forum.
6. The consumption of alcohol by Parents, Students, Volunteers and Employees is prohibited within the studio, unless expressly allowed by the Principal at an event held in a licensed premises, and then only so long as the alcohol is consumed in a responsible manner as deemed by the Director.



4.8.COVID Safe Studio Policy - in-person lessons

Following the Public Health Orders and directions from NSW Health, we have implemented measures to ensure we continue to maintain a safe & healthy environment for our face-to-face classes (as safe as is reasonably practical). We have also implemented our own safety measures. We ask you please take a moment to read the information below and pass the relevant information on to your child.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE FROM CLASSES

Drop Off and Pick Up will continue to be from outside our building doors.

If you feel your child is old enough to be dropped off in front of the building car and walk in by themselves, we encourage you to do this.

For parents of our younger students who need to walk their child in & pick them up - you will be able to park outside and walk to the doors outside the studio to drop your child off 5 minutes prior to their start time.

We will have several staff members there to escort our younger students to their classes and after classes safely. They will not be expected to leave the studio by themselves.

Parents will not be permitted to 'hang around' in the waiting room, you will need to leave the premises and can return 5 minutes prior to pick up time.

For classes that finish late in the evening, our teachers will escort students to the front of the building for pick up. Students must wait in the waiting room (not at the front of the building) when finishing late in the evening.

Please ensure you are punctual for both drop off & pick up.

ON ARRIVAL AT THE STUDIO

All staff & students **MUST** wash their hands with soap & water in our bathrooms, or use hand sanitiser, on both arrival & departure.

Hand sanitiser dispensers are located at the front desk for all to use as frequently as they wish.

Students are also encouraged to carry their own hand sanitiser in their dance bag.

Multiple QR code stations are set up around the studio. Students will not need to do this as a roll is taken in each class.



MASK WEARING

Masks are mandatory for all staff and students aged 10 years and over when inside the studio waiting room.

Students and staff may remove their face masks to eat, drink and dance.

It is recommended that the masks chosen to be worn are KP95 or N95 in effectiveness.

IN THE STUDIOS

If your child is sick with any symptoms of COVID-19, even mildly, they should be tested and must not return to classes until they are symptom free, even with a Negative test result.

You must also advise the studio that your child is being tested. They will be entitled to a make-up lesson at a later date.

If your child tests positive to COVID-19 and has participated in a class recently, we ask you please notify us as soon as possible and follow the NSW Health Guidelines.

Social distancing will be encouraged in the studio and in our buildings. Students are encouraged to limit physical contact with each other - this includes hugging/kissing. •

Ballet barres and door handles will continue to be wiped down between classes. All studios are cleaned at the end of each day.

Should a student arrive or become visibly unwell during class, the student will be isolated and a parent will be contacted to pick them up immediately. Should a member of staff become visibly unwell whilst at the studio, appropriate steps will be taken to ensure they are isolated and sent home immediately.



4.9.COVID Safe Studio Policy - online lessons

1. The sharing of this invitation and password is strictly forbidden.
2. Your child participates in these online dance classes at their own risk. You understand that dance is likened to sport and, although rare, an injury may occur. Expression Dance School will not be held responsible for any injury that may occur to your child during dance class.
3. These zoom meetings are being closely monitored and have strict safety platforms built-in. Each class will be recorded and archived for child safety purposes.
4. Though your teacher may be able to see you, it is not the same as a live, in-studio class. You will have to take more responsibility than usual for the safety of your space and of your movements.
5. Please make sure you have at least two meters clear space around you, that the floor is clear of any objects or spills, and the surface is appropriate to dance on.
6. Try to set up your screen so that it is at, or close to, eye height, and near enough to see the teacher clearly. Ensure you have the volume set high so that you can hear the instructions. If possible be lit from in front rather than behind, e.g. close curtains if dancing in front of a window. Make sure your device isn't in danger of being knocked.
7. Your sound will be on mute when you join. You will be able to hear your teachers but they will not be able to hear you. Your teachers will decide when to bring your sound on if necessary. If you have a question please raise your hand until you are noticed on the screen.
8. Have a full bottle of water bottle close by.
9. If an exercise or action causes sharp or sudden pain, stop immediately, apply first aid or seek help from your parents. Advise your teacher as soon as possible. Because of the online format, your actions are unsupervised by your teacher so please make your own judgments, as you know your own body better than anyone.
10. Have any pets or young siblings in another space to avoid sudden tripping hazards.
11. Please do not go on your phone or any other devices that may distract you from class as this is disrespectful towards the teacher.



12. Please note that the material in these online classes are copyright and has not been approved for sharing, or for third party recordings. Sharing of the classes and zoom links and passwords are strictly forbidden.

4.10.COVID Safe Studio Policy - protocol for positive case in the studio

MANAGING POSITIVE CASES AND MINIMISING RISK OF TRANSMISSION

Any staff or student who tests positive to COVID is required to follow NSW Health requirements under the Public Health Order for testing positive and self-isolation.

Currently, the requirements are:

- isolate for 7 days following the positive test
- leave isolation after 7 days unless symptoms persist (including, a sore throat, runny nose, cough, or shortness of breath). Note: if a person continues to have symptoms they remain in isolation until symptom free or medically cleared.
- if symptom free after 7 days, isolation finishes. Once symptom free there is no need to re-test.

Once a person who tested positive to COVID-19 has finished their isolation period they can immediately return to their classes provided they are symptom free.



5. Emotional Safety Procedures

5.1. CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

- There will be no gum or candy allowed in class.
- There will be no talking in class.
- There will be no hanging on the barres at any time.
- There will be no food or beverages allowed in the studios
- There will be NO mobile phones in class. Mobile phones are strictly prohibited except in the reception area.
- The mirrors will not be touched at any time.
- Sound equipment should not be touched at any time.
- The teacher will be treated with the utmost respect at all times.
- The faculty and assistants will be properly thanked after each class.
- If this general etiquette is not followed, the teacher has the right to dismiss the dancer from class. If the dancer is dismissed from class, they must see the Administration Assistant or Director.

5.2. Bullying

At Xpression Dance Studio we have zero tolerance for bullying. Any reports of bullying from students or parents will be acted upon immediately.

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.



6. Artistic Safety Procedures

6.1. How we respond to mistakes

At XDS we embrace mistakes as an integral part of learning. Mistakes are met with acknowledgement, discussion and praise in the knowledge that they will help our students grow.

6.2. Encouraging Artistic Risk-Taking

At XDS we understand that achievements in the arts are directly related to students feeling safe to take artistic risks within their class environment. Our students are encouraged to aim high and believe in their ability to consistently improve their artistic skills. Our team always empower their students by encouraging growth and expansion within their learning.

6.3. Freedom of Expression and Creativity

All students at XDS are made to feel comfortable expressing their opinions artistically. Our teachers applaud individuality, the use of student ideas and collaboration as often as possible.