



# **The Newry Studio of Irish Dancing**

## **Child Safe Policy**

**2022**

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# Purpose

This Child Safe Policy has been prepared by The Newry Studio to demonstrate our commitment to child safety and to promote the importance of ensuring a safe environment for the children in our care. The safety of children is of fundamental importance to The Newry Studio. We have zero tolerance for all forms of harm towards a child.

# Context

This policy reflects our commitment to provide a safe environment where every person has the right to be treated with respect and is safe and protected from harm. It complies with our obligations under the Children & Young People (Safety) Act 2017.

# Scope

This policy, from the date of endorsement, applies to all teachers, staff members, volunteers, parents, caregivers, guardians and any other individuals involved in the administration or management of The Newry Studio.

# Commitment to Child Safety

The Newry Studio is committed to the safety of all children in our care. All children in our care have the right to be protected from any activity that may harm their health, development or wellbeing.

- We take a zero tolerance approach to harm towards a child and we actively look into ways to continuously improve the protection of children in our care.
- We will report to the authorities where we are concerned about the safety, harm or risk of harm of children in our care.
- We understand the importance of providing a safe, happy and fun environment for all children in our care and we aim to create an environment where children can learn, grow and thrive.
- We work together with the children we care for and their parents to provide a safe, inclusive and open environment.
- We listen to all suggestions and ideas that are raised by the children and parents who use our services.
- We have a transparent and confidential feedback system that enables children and parents to speak up about issues that are important to them.
- We respect all views and opinions and act to address concerns raised by children or their parents.
- We are committed to seeking to prevent all forms of harm towards a child and have implemented practices to identify and remove risks relating to the harm or risk of harm of children in our care.
- We are committed to supporting and encouraging the cultural safety of aboriginal children or children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- We are also committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for children with a disability.

# Our values

The Newry Studio's values include:

- caring for others;
- welcoming children from all cultural backgrounds;
- acting in the best interests of children in our care;
- respect; and
- creating a sense of trust

Our values underpin the work of The Newry Studio and our commitment to providing a safe environment for all children in our care. We aim to provide a caring environment that is welcoming, inclusive and allows all children to feel valued and safe.

We encourage parents, children, staff, volunteers or others to speak out if they witness behaviour or practises which are inconsistent with these values.

# Children and young peoples participation

The Newry Studio Encourages and respects the views of children and young people who access our services. We listen to and act upon any concerns that children, young people or their families raise with us. We teach children what they can do if they feel unsafe. Children, Young people and their families know their rights and how to access the complaints procedures available to them.

# Recruitment practises

The Newry Studio takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. Working With Children Checks (WWCC) are required for all teachers and volunteer parents as required by the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016

# Code of Conduct

All of our staff, parents, caregivers/guardians, volunteers, students and any other person involved in the studio must abide by our Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct sets out expected standards of behaviour. This is supported by a procedure which outlines the steps we will take if someone breaches the code of conduct.

A copy of our Code of Conduct can be found on our website.

## Supervision, Training, Development and Support for employees and volunteers

The Newry Studio will provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We ensure that our teachers, staff members, volunteers, parents, caregivers, guardians and any other individuals involved in the administration or management of the studio who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and training so that their performance is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child safe environment. All new employees undergo induction and receive a copy of our child safe policy and code of conduct to sign.

## Reporting and responding to a suspected child that may be at risk of harm

The Newry Studio will not tolerate incidents of child harm. All employees and volunteers understand their obligation (Child Safety (Prohibited persons) Act 2016) to notify Emillie Court, then action a call to the Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child is being harmed or is at risk of harm.

Anyone charged with, or under investigation for a serious criminal offence will be asked to remove themselves from our premises until the matter has been dealt with. The Newry Studio will work with the Child Abuse Helpline to discuss the best individual approach for all parties involved.

We also ensure that employees have access to relevant information resources such as:

- Child safe environment: Guidelines for mandated notifiers and information for organisations (available to view or download from [www.families.sa.gov.au/childsafe](http://www.families.sa.gov.au/childsafe))
- Families SA reporting child abuse website: <http://www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/default.aspx?tabid=485>
- Free online SMART (Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma) Learning package, developed by the Australian Childhood Foundation: [www.childhood.org.au](http://www.childhood.org.au)

We ensure that support is also available for the employee making the report, particularly where an ongoing service is provided to the child, young person and their family.

In addition to making a report to the Child Abuse Report Line, employees and volunteers must also report to Emillie Court if reasonable suspicion is formed that a child has been, or is being, harmed by another member, employee, or volunteer. In response to any report to management concerning a member, employee or volunteer of the Newry Studio, management may determine to take disciplinary action. Other protective actions may also be introduced to ensure the safety of children and young people within our organisation.

Employees with knowledge or suspicion of child harm must report to Emillie Court, and ensure confidentiality to all other persons within the organisation including employees, parents and children.

# Supporting children, young people and their families

Child Protection is everyone's responsibility. The Newry Studio recognises that even when a report is made, we may still have a role in supporting the child or young person. This support may include:

- Referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services
- Dealing with reports or concerns relating to the actions of an employee or volunteer of our organisation

## Child Protection guidelines for employees and volunteers of The Newry Studio

Caring for children and young people brings additional responsibilities for employees and volunteers of the Newry Studio. All employees and volunteers of this organisation are responsible for promoting the safety and well-being of children and young people by:

- Ensuring the safety and welfare of the child or young person is paramount at all times.
- Treating all children and young people with dignity, equality and respect.
- Adhering to this organisation's child safe policy at all times.
- Listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people within the organisation.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people within the organisation.
- Ensuring children and young people understand their rights and explaining to the child in age-appropriate language what they can expect when participating in a service, activity or program offered by the organisation.
- Responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian.
- Notifying the Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child or young person has been or is being abused or neglected.

Employees/volunteers will not:

- Take part in any unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person.
- Discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability or sexuality.

## Strategies to minimise risk

The Newry Studio has a documented risk management plan that identifies, assesses and takes steps to minimise and prevent risk of harm to children because of the action or inaction of a person involved in the organisation (including an employee, volunteer or another child).

The Newry Studio has a policy and/or procedure regarding the making of appropriate reports of suspicion that a child or young person may be at risk to the Department for Child Protection via the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78).

# Harassment/bullying

The Newry Studio opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying. We take this issue seriously and encourage anyone who believes that they, or another person, has been harassed, discriminated against or bullied to raise this issue with the Emillie Court.

# Communication

The Newry Studio will ensure that everyone to whom this policy applies is aware of and has had an opportunity to read the policy.

We ask employees and volunteers (where appropriate) to sign a written statement indicating that they have read and will abide by our child-safe policy. We retain a copy of all signed statements.

# Related policies and procedures

- Student Code of Conduct
- Employee and Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Risk Management Strategy

# Review

The Newry Studio regularly reviews our practices and procedures in relation to child safety. Where possible, we will involve children and their parents in these reviews and ensure that the review considers issues regarding Aboriginal children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability.

Where the review results in this policy being updated, we will make the updated policy available, including on our website.

# Contact us

If you would like information about this policy, have any concerns or queries regarding child safety or to report a child safety complaint, allegation or concern, please contact our child safety officer. The contact details for our child safety officer are set out below:

Emilie Court: [newrystudio@gmail.com](mailto:newrystudio@gmail.com) or 0417 401 347