

HINTERLAND DANCING ACADEMY

Risk Management Policy

1. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Hinterland Dancing Academy (“HDA”) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who attend our classes. Our employees, students and volunteers will treat children and young people with respect and understanding at all times. We will take all reasonable steps to keep safe from harm children and young people in our care (“our students”).

HDA recognizes that it is a privilege to work with children and young people and that it is also a great responsibility. Parents / guardians trust HDA to look after their children, to care for them, give them leadership and keep them safe from harm. HDA endeavours to safeguard our students by:

- a) Ensuring that our staff and volunteers are aware of the HDA Risk Management Strategy;
- b) Ensuring that our staff and volunteers respond appropriately should abuse be discovered or disclosed and that any reported incidents of abuse are fully recorded;
- c) Disseminating information to our students, parents and guardians, staff and volunteers about child protection and good practice with children and young people;
- d) Ensuring compliance by our staff and volunteers with our code of conduct;
- e) Establishing clear procedures for dealing with complaints and concerns;
- f) Ensuring that recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers is rigorous, clear, fair and reasonable;
- g) Providing effective management for our staff and volunteers through supervision, support and, where necessary, training and guidance.
- h) Monitoring and reviewing the HDA Risk Management Strategy from time to time.

2. REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000
Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Regulations 2000
Child Protection Act 1999
Risk Assessment Plan
Code of Conduct
Working with Children Policy
GCAC Concert Policy

3. BACKGROUND

The *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000* requires regulated businesses such as HDA to develop and implement an annual risk management strategy to protect our students from harm.

A risk management strategy is a set of policies and practices specifically customized to prevent harm occurring to our students. It is about identifying potential areas of harm to our students and taking steps to remove or minimize them. Although HDA cannot control all risks, our aim is to minimize risks we are aware of and to establish procedures to reduce any other risks which may arise.

Our risk management strategy includes this statement of commitment and risk management policy, a code of conduct, a working with children policy, a risk assessment plan and a concert policy for our Gold Coast Arts Centre annual concerts. Details of these documents are referred to in this policy. All the documents should be read in conjunction with each other.

4. DEFINITIONS

- a) “**student**” means a child under the age of 18 years or a young person enrolled with HDA;
- b) “**code of conduct**” means the behaviour we expect from our staff and volunteers as set out in our Code of Conduct. The code of conduct is modeled and adapted from the Royal Academy of Dance *Child Protection Policy* and *The Code of Conduct and Professional Practice For Teachers Registered with the Royal Academy of Dance* as published on the Royal Academy’s website.

Among other things it requires our staff and volunteers:

- i) to have a high level of integrity in all dealings with each other and our students;
 - ii) to be competent in both our teaching practices and knowledge; and
 - iii) above all, to be professional in the way we conduct ourselves at all times.
- c) “**designated officer**” means Annette Ashenden or, in her absence, Robert Coddington
 - d) “**harm**” to a student, is anything that causes a detrimental effect of a significant nature on the student’s physical, psychological or emotional well being. It is immaterial how the harm is caused.

Harm can be caused by:-

- i) physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
- ii) sexual abuse or exploitation;

(Section 9 Child Protection Act 1999)

- e) “**inappropriate behaviour**” means any behaviour by a staff member perceived by a student as being inappropriate;
- f) “**Incident Report Form**” means the form attached as Annexure A;
- g) “**HDA Risk Management Strategy**” means this Risk Management Policy; Risk Assessment Plan; Code of Conduct; Working with Children Policy and the GCAC Concert Policy
- h) “**relevant legal officer**” means a person authorized under the *Child Protection Act 1999* or a police officer.

5. APPLICATION OF THIS RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

This Risk Management Policy applies to all our staff and volunteers, students and parents or guardians of our students.

6. PRINCIPLES FOR SAFEGUARDING OUR STUDENTS

- a) We recognize that it is a privilege to work with children and young people and that it is also a great responsibility. Parents trust us to look after their children, to care for them, give them leadership and keep them safe. We need to ensure that we honour their trust.
- b) We acknowledge that harm can occur in a number of different ways in our society. All our students have the right to be protected. Students who have been harmed deserve care, respect and sensitivity.

- c) We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that our students are not at risk of injury, whether to their physical or mental health and wellbeing.
- d) We are committed to the protection from harm and safekeeping of all the students who attend our activities and to ensure that staff and volunteers respond appropriately should harm be discovered or disclosed. Any concerns about harm will be fully recorded.
- e) We are committed to having suitable and adequate supervision of our students at all times while they are attending HDA activities.
- f) We ensure rigorous but fair and reasonable recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers including ensuring that all staff and volunteers have appropriate Blue Cards.
- g) We are committed to our code of conduct for all staff and volunteers to ensure positive interaction between our staff, volunteers and our students.
- h) We provide constant supervision, support, training and guidance to our staff and volunteers to assist them in complying with their obligations under the HDA Risk Management Strategy and in dealing with allegations of harm.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

- a) HDA recognizes that preventing harm to our students requires identification of possible harm and taking steps to minimize the risk of that harm occurring.
- b) For high risk activities and special events HDA will follow the procedures laid out in the Risk Assessment Plan to assess the risks involved and compare them to the existing control measures in place. Additional control measures will be implemented where the need arises.
- c) HDA has identified the annual Gold Coast Arts Centre concert as a special event and has developed a specific policy to cover that event. See GCAC Concert Policy.

8. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- a) The HDA Risk Management Strategy is given to staff on commencement of their employment. It is also accessible to the staff and volunteers on HDA's website. All staff and volunteers are briefed on matters relevant to the HDA Risk Management Strategy at staff meetings from time to time including procedures on how to implement the HDA Risk Management Strategy.
- b) Parents and students are given a CD containing copies of the HDA Risk Management Strategy at registration and may access them at the HDA website.
- c) Volunteers are directed to the HDA Risk Management Strategy on the HDA website and requested to familiarize themselves with the content prior to commencing any volunteer work with HDA.
- d) A copy of the HDA Risk Management Strategy is displayed on the notice board at the Nerang studio.

9. MONITORING COMPLIANCE

- a) Recruitment, training and management of staff:
 - i) Annette Ashenden has responsibility for the recruitment, appointment, training and management procedures for staff and volunteers.
 - ii) All staff and volunteers have to be able to provide an appropriate Blue Card in addition to any evidence of qualifications (if required).

- iii) Ongoing training, support and guidance are provided to staff and volunteers in staff meetings throughout the year.
- b) Students reporting inappropriate behaviour by a staff member or volunteer
- i) The student will have the opportunity to make either an informal (verbal) or formal (written) report.
 - ii) Students can report inappropriate behaviour to the designated officer.
 - iii) Where the report is informal (verbal) then:
 - (1) the designated officer will listen, make notes and consult the staff member or volunteer for a response;
 - (2) Appropriate action will be taken as necessary.
 - (3) The student or their parent (or guardian) will be advised of the outcome.
 - (4) No written documentation will be recorded on the student or staff file.
 - iv) Where the report is formal (written), then:
 - (1) The written report should include the name of the person giving the report, the student involved, details of the inappropriate behaviour; the name of the staff member or volunteer involved and details of any witnesses. If possible the written report should be completed using the Incident Report Form.
 - (2) The written report should be given to the designated officer who will provide a copy to the staff member or volunteer involved.
 - (3) Appropriate action will be taken.
 - (4) The student or their parent (or guardian) will be advised of the outcome.
 - (5) A written copy of the report and the outcome will be filed on both the student's and the staff member's or volunteer's file.
- c) Suspected harm to a student
- i) A staff member or volunteer who is aware or reasonably suspects or who has been told that harm may have been caused to a student must report it immediately to the designated officer.
 - ii) The designated officer has the sole responsibility to report the allegations to the relevant legal officer if necessary. Prior to reporting any allegations, the designated officer may require the staff member or volunteer to complete a written report setting out the basis for the suspicion and the details of the alleged harm. The Incident Report Form can be used for this purpose.
- d) Helpful hints: Staff or volunteers may find the following points helpful where a student makes allegations of inappropriate behaviour or advises of harm occurring:
- i) Stay calm and ensure the immediate safety of the student;
 - ii) If the student needs medical attention, call an ambulance and inform the paramedics there may be a suspected child protection issue;
 - iii) If medical attention is not required, reassure the student to gain their trust by telling them that you are glad they have told you.
 - iv) Find a private place to talk to help the student making the disclosure more comfortable and less concerned.

- v) Listen and reassure the student that they have done the right thing in telling; don't promise to keep it a secret; and let them know that you will need to tell Miss Annette about the disclosure.
- vi) Believe the student. It is not your place to judge the student. Always act on the basis that what you have been told is the truth.
- vii) Don't ask leading questions. Leading questions are those that tend to suggest an answer and possibly put words into the student's mouth. Let them tell you what happened, and if you need to clarify anything ask questions such as 'what happened next?'

10. BREACHES

- a) Any person to whom the HDA Risk Management Strategy applies may lodge an informal (verbal) or formal (written) complaint about a staff member or volunteer who breaches the HDA Risk Management Strategy.
- b) All complaints must be given to Annette Ashenden.
- c) Formal complaints should be written on the Incident Report Form.
- d) Annette Ashenden will investigate the details of the complaint and compare the facts of the case to the behaviour required by the HDA Risk Management Strategy and in particular to the code of conduct.
- e) In observing the principles of natural justice Annette Ashenden will advise the staff member or volunteer about the complaint received and give them a reasonable opportunity to respond to the complaint.
- f) Disciplinary action will be implemented at the discretion of Annette Ashenden.
- g) The student or their parent (or guardian) will be advised of the outcome.
- h) A written copy of the report and the outcome will be filed on both the student's and the staff member's or volunteer's file.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

- a) HDA is committed to protecting the rights of any person to natural justice.
- b) The first priority is the maintenance of confidentiality in order to protect the rights of the complainant and the accused.
- c) All details of all complaints and incidents must not be disclosed to the media or any third party except the relevant legal officer where the law requires such disclosure.

12. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of Annette Ashenden to review this Risk Management Policy.

Should any of our staff, volunteers, students or parents want to comment or suggest changes to the Risk Management Policy, they should put their comments or suggestions in writing and give them to Annette Ashenden by 30th November each year.

This Risk Management Policy will be reviewed annually, usually in January of each year and will be updated as necessary. Any changes to the policy will be made available at registration for that year.

Updated November 2007

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Incident Report Form

Annexure A

(to the Risk Management Policy)

DATE OF REPORT: _____

TIME REPORT WRITTEN: _____

NAMES OF PERSON/S INVOLVED: _____

DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT: _____

DATE INCIDENT OCCURRED: _____

TIME INCIDENT OCCURRED: _____

LOCATION WHERE INCIDENT OCCURRED: _____

NATURE OF THE INCIDENT: _____

SUMMARY OF EVENTS: _____

ACTION TAKEN: _____

IF NO ACTION TAKEN - REASONS: _____

NAME: _____

(Person making complaint)

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

(Person making complaint)

DATE RECEIVED: _____

(By Miss Annette)