

# Child Safe

## Code of Conduct

### **Commitment to Child Safety**

Caper creates and maintains an environment that promotes the safety of all children and young people (students). Caper values the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of its students and aims for a culture where preventing and reporting abuse is supported and encouraged by all staff and volunteers.

This code of conduct sets expectation for how adults, including staff and volunteers, at Caper should behave around children. It is important in preventing children from being harmed. This includes; physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, ill treatment and grooming.

### **Caper staff agree to engage in positive behaviours**

Caper commits to keeping children safe in a way that is consistent with our culture and values. The team at Caper aim to do this by demonstrating positive, child safe behaviours. Positive behaviours that Caper reinforces include:

- Taking reasonable steps to protect children from abuse.
- Respecting the privacy of children and their families.
- Treating all children with respect regardless of race, colour, gender identity, sexual orientation or culture and promoting an inclusive culture.
- Valuing and listening to the ideas and opinions of children.

These behaviours help children in gaining confidence to speak up if they are being harmed or have concerns about their own or their friend's safety. These behaviours also demonstrate to parents and carers within the community that Caper takes child safety seriously.

### **Physical contact with children**

Caper identifies that there are specific situations where physical contact with students is either acceptable or prohibited. Situations of acceptable physical contact with child's permission include:

- Assisting to develop dance skills/techniques.
- Treating injury

Caper staff understand and will not engage in the following unacceptable physical contact:

- Any unwarranted or unwanted touching with hands, other body parts or objects.
- Corporal punishments (e.g. smacking).
- Undertaking a task of personal nature for a child if they can do it for themselves (e.g. dressing and toileting).

### **Caper staff agree to interacting positively with others**

Caper supports a culture where adults are to treat students with respect by using positive, non-offensive language, remaining calm and listening carefully and addressing issues with a helpful attitude.

Caper staff understand and will not engage in the following unacceptable interactions:

- Offensive language
- Acting abusive or intimidating
- Passive aggression
- Bullying

### **Caper staff understand and agree to the following restrictions on engagement with children via technology and social media**

- Using a device in a way that is inconsistent with the organisations child safe policy.
- Communicating online with a child about romantic, intimate or sexual feelings or adult content.
- Using a device to exploit or harass a child.
- Using a camera to record a child while dressing or using the bathroom.
- Using private messages to communicate with a child.

Caper has a public Instagram and Facebook page and a private Facebook group for current students and family members. Caper staff are welcomed to interact with students and families in these public forums, where risks of bullying, threats, abuse, harassment and grooming can be monitored.

**Caper staff understand and agree the following behaviours regarding alcohol, recreational drugs and child abuse images are unacceptable:**

- Providing children with alcohol, drugs or pornography.
- Working while intoxicated or under the influence of illegal drugs.
- Discussing with topics of adult or sexualised nature with children.

**Concerning behaviours**

Concerning behaviours include those behaviours that may not implicitly breach the Code of Conduct but may allude to a pattern of behaviour posing a risk to child safety. Caper considers the examples below to be concerning behaviours but they are not an exclusive list:

- Having conversations about hurting children with other adults.
- Being alone with a child without reason.
- Showing favour to one child.
- Sharing adult themed information and stories to students.
- An adult asking a child to keep a secret.

**Reporting obligations**

All staff, volunteers and community members of Caper are encouraged to speak up if they have concerns regarding the safety of children within our studio. Complaints regarding a breach of this code of conduct must be reported to studio directors Katherine Valdez (Kate) and Elisabeth McDermott (Beth) 0402 328 721.

Some breaches of the code of conduct may need to be reported to the NSW Police, the Department of Communities and Justice and the Office of the Children’s Guardian. Caper’s *Child Safe Complaints Procedure* provides further details on reporting obligations. This policy is accessible via Caper’s Team App.

Under NSW law it is a criminal offence for adults not to report child abuse in organisations (*Crimes Act 1990*).

**Ramifications for staff who breach the Code of Conduct**

Caper staff and volunteers who breach the code of conduct may be subject to disciplinary action. This may include increased supervision, appointment to an alternative role, suspension or termination from Caper.

**Review**

The Child Safe Code of Conduct will be reviewed regularly. Caper will incorporate comments and suggestions from children, parents, staff, volunteers and students.