

Complaints Management

Complaints & Allegations Policy



CHILD SAFE POLICY

We want children and young people who belong to Caper School of Performing Arts to have a safe and happy experience. We support and respect our students, their families and our workers.

Introduction

Everyone that is a part of Caper School of Performing Arts should be confident that all child safe complaints will be dealt with honestly and fairly. Teachers, students, volunteers, parents and staff should feel confident in reporting inappropriate behaviour around children and young people. They are also responsible for reporting any concerns they may have regarding the safety or welfare of a child or young person immediately.

Reporting Obligations

Department of Family and Community Services - NSW Reporting Obligations

Any person who has reasonable grounds to believe that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm may report to Department of Family and Community Services. Phone 132 111 to report child abuse or neglect (24-hour service)

Persons listed below must report if they have reasonable grounds to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm. They are legally "mandatory reporters" and must report concerns about risk of significant harm to children to Department of Family and Community Services:

- Health Care (e.g. Doctors, Nurses etc)
- Education (e.g. Teachers)
- Child Services (e.g. Child Care Centres)
- Residential Services (e.g. refuges)
- Law Enforcement (e.g. Police)

A person who is paid to provide the above services and a person (paid or unpaid) who is in a management position in these services are mandatory reporters.

Caper has a legal obligation to report findings of sexual misconduct and serious physical assault involving children by a child-related worker to the *Office of the Children's Guardian*.

Under Schedule 1 of the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012.

The conduct that must be reported is:

1. Sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child, including grooming of a child.
2. Any serious physical assault of a child.

Under the legislation, Caper must investigate allegations of such conduct to make an informed finding as to whether or not the conduct occurred. To determine whether or not the conduct meets the criteria, Caper must consider the nature of the conduct itself and the context in which it occurred. If the investigation results in a finding that sexual misconduct or serious physical assault occurred, Caper must report this finding to the Office of the Children's Guardian. Under the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* only the findings of sexual misconduct and serious physical assault must be reported.

Types of complaints

All complaints should be reported. This includes:

- Disclosure of abuse
- Inappropriate behaviour around children
- Suspicion of abuse or harm to a child

Responsible workers

Caper School of Performing Arts Child Safety Contact Person/s:

Katherine Valdez and
Elisabeth McDermott
Principal/Owner
Mobile: 0402 328 721

Making a complaint

A child or young person, or any staff member/volunteer/student can make a complaint, or raise a concern, directly to the Child Safety Contact Person. Each complaint will be dealt with complete confidentiality.

<p>Complaint process</p>	<p>The following action will be taken by the Child Safety Contact Person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the person making the complaint and make a record of the complaint using the “Complaint Record Form”. • Make a report to the Department of Family and Community Services in the case of an allegation of child abuse. Inform everyone involved in the complaint of the requirement to make this report. <p>If the complaint involved inappropriate behaviour and a breach of the Code of Conduct, the Principal will need to take action in accordance with the internal discipline procedure which will include reporting to the appropriate agencies.</p>
<p>Privacy and Confidentiality</p>	<p>Caper will investigate and complete all necessary documentation for the complaint with complete and strict confidentiality.</p> <p>All information collected, managed and stored is secured and accessible only by the Safety Contact Person unless otherwise requested by Government Bodies following obligations defined under the <i>Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998</i>.</p>
<p>Communication and support for stakeholders</p>	<p>All staff, teachers and volunteers will be trained in the procedures of dealing with child safe complaints and their role as a mandatory reporter. Regular communication will be utilised to ensure ongoing awareness. All staff, teachers, students and volunteers have access to all relevant documentation via the App.</p>
<p>Review date</p>	<p>The policy and guidelines will be reviewed on 1 March 2023. Caper will incorporate comments and suggestions from children, young people, parents, staff, volunteers and students.</p>