

Michelle Rae School of Dance

Staff Code of Conduct

Issued June 2026 | To be read alongside the MRSD Child Safe Policy

This Code of Conduct applies to all teaching staff and volunteers at Michelle Rae School of Dance. It sets out the standards of behaviour expected toward children and young people in our care, and provides guidance for managing difficult situations. It is to be read alongside the MRSD Child Safe Policy (Revised June 2026), which this Code forms part of.

Breaches of this Code will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment or engagement.

Our Commitment to Child Safety

Michelle Rae School of Dance is a Child Safe organisation. We are committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students and their families. We want our students to feel safe, supported, respected, happy, empowered and able to enjoy their dance education.

The welfare of children in our care is our first priority. MRSD has zero tolerance for child abuse in any form. All staff and volunteers share this commitment and are responsible for upholding it in everything they do.

Staff Responsibilities

All MRSD staff and volunteers are responsible for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children by:

- Adhering to the Child Safe Policy and all related procedures at all times
- Treating all children with respect and taking their ideas and concerns seriously
- Working with children in open and transparent ways — avoid being alone with a child in a non-visible space
- Taking reasonable steps to protect children from abuse or harm
- Welcoming all children and families and actively promoting inclusion
- Respecting cultural, religious, personal and individual differences
- Modelling appropriate adult behaviour at all times
- Listening to children and responding appropriately to their concerns
- Reporting any concerns, disclosures or breaches of this Code promptly to the Principal
- Maintaining appropriate professional boundaries at all times
- Respecting the privacy of children and their families
- Modelling and championing child safe behaviours
- Using official MRSD communication channels only for all contact with students — no personal social media or direct messaging
- Holding a current and valid Working With Children Check at all times
- Completing induction and annual declaration requirements as directed by the Principal

Staff and Volunteers Must NOT

- Use children to meet adult emotional or personal needs
- Ignore or dismiss concerns or disclosures of abuse
- Use discriminatory, oppressive or inappropriate language
- Engage in rough physical games or unnecessary physical contact
- Discriminate based on age, gender, race, culture, sexuality or any other characteristic
- Develop 'special' or exclusive relationships with individual children
- Exchange personal contact details with students
- Have unauthorised online or phone contact with students
- Be alone with a child in a non-visible or unsupervised space
- Video or photograph students without authorisation from the Principal
- Discuss child safety concerns with anyone other than the Principal or relevant authorities — do not gossip or speculate

Physical Contact in Dance Instruction

Physical corrections and adjustments are a normal and necessary part of dance teaching. Staff must approach all physical contact with care and professionalism:

- Demonstrate movements first before making physical corrections
- Use a verbal consent approach before making physical adjustments — ask before touching
- Ensure all corrections are visible to others in the room
- Use the least intrusive touch necessary for the correction
- Stop immediately if a student expresses discomfort
- Never initiate physical contact that is not directly related to safe dance instruction

Training & Awareness

All staff and volunteers are supported through induction, ongoing guidance and resources to:

- Understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety
- Identify signs of harm or abuse, including physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect
- Recognise peer-to-peer harm, bullying and online safety risks
- Respond appropriately to child safety concerns and disclosures
- Maintain safe and professional boundaries when working with children
- Create culturally safe environments for all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from CALD backgrounds, and LGBTIQ+ children

Staff are encouraged to engage with external training and resources shared by the Principal via Dance Arts Alliance and teaching association communications, and to share learnings with the team.

Empowering Children

All staff are expected to actively support children's rights to safety and participation. This means:

- Actively listening to children and taking their concerns seriously
- Supporting children to speak up about anything that makes them feel unsafe
- Teaching children age-appropriate strategies to recognise and respond to unsafe situations
- Ensuring children know who they can speak to if they have a concern ('Talk to Us' process)
- Inviting student feedback in class and responding to it thoughtfully

Reporting Obligations

If a child discloses abuse or harm, or you form a reasonable belief that a child is at risk:

- Listen calmly and without judgement — do not promise confidentiality
- Do not investigate or ask leading questions
- Record what was said as soon as possible, using the child's own words
- Report immediately to the Principal — or directly to Child Protection (13 12 78) or Victoria Police (000 / 131 444) if the concern involves the Principal or requires urgent action
- Confidentiality obligations do NOT override the obligation to report — you must report even if you are unsure

Students and families are also encouraged to notify Miss Michelle immediately if they have any concerns about staff behaviour. Any breach of this Code will be addressed promptly.

Key Contacts

Principal (Child Safety Contact)	Miss Michelle 0409 351 248 michelleraeschoolofdance@outlook.com
Alternate Contact (if concern involves Principal)	Mikaela Wall, Administrator mikaela.wall@outlook.com
Child Protection	13 12 78
Victoria Police	000 (emergency) 131 444 (non-urgent)
CCYP	1300 782 978 www.ccyp.vic.gov.au

Policy Review

This Code of Conduct is reviewed as part of the full MRSD Child Safe Policy review, which occurs every two years (next review: June 2028) and more frequently if required by legislative change, incident or material risk. Feedback from staff, students, families and the community is sought as part of every review.