9.0 Code of Conduct - Children (Legal Version)

Melbourne Institute of Dance (MIoD)

ABN 73 551 272 156

Approved by: Kalman Warhaft, Director

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This document forms part of the legally binding agreement between each student, parent or legal guardian, and Melbourne Institute of Dance (MIoD).

It must be read in conjunction with MIoD's Terms and Conditions - Children, and Policies and Procedures - Children.

9.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to ensure that all children and young people at MIoD are safe, respected, and supported.

It outlines the behavioural expectations for students enrolled in children's classes and the responsibilities of adults in the community to protect them from harm.

9.2 Scope

This Code applies to:

- All students enrolled in children's classes and students under 18 approved to attend adult-level classes.
- Parents and legal guardians.
- Adult students and support people attending MIoD activities.
- Teachers, assistants, contractors, and volunteers.
- Visitors participating in MIoD classes, events, or activities.

This Code operates in conjunction with MIoD's Policies and Procedures - Children, Terms and Conditions - Children, and relevant Victorian Child Safe Standards.

9.3 Our Commitment to Children

MIoD is a child-safe organisation. We believe every child has the right to:

- Feel safe and be safe.
- Be treated with kindness and respect.
- Participate in a welcoming and inclusive environment.
- Speak up if something feels wrong or uncomfortable.
- Have their concerns listened to and taken seriously.

9.4 Behaviour Expectations for Students

Students are expected to:

- Treat others with kindness and respect.
- Follow their teacher's safety instructions and remain in supervised areas unless permission is given to leave.
- Practise dance safely and keep hands, feet, equipment and objects safe.
- Include others and help make sure no one feels left out.
- Respect studio equipment and shared spaces.
- Respect personal space, privacy, costumes and property.
- Stop behaviour when someone indicates that it is unsafe or unwelcome.
- Use an agreed break or support strategy where one is in place.

If a student sees behaviour that is unsafe or unkind, they should tell a teacher or trusted adult.

MIoD will respond respectfully and confidentially to concerns about a child's safety, wellbeing or behaviour, taking appropriate action in accordance with its Policies and Procedures – Children.

9.5 Respectful and Inclusive Conduct

All students, parents, and legal guardians must:

- Avoid teasing, bullying, excluding, or intimidating others.
- Speak kindly to classmates and teachers.
- Treat differences and personal boundaries with respect.
- Behave safely in both face-to-face and online environments.

9.6 Responsibilities of Parents and Legal Guardians

Parents and legal guardians are expected to:

- Support a safe and cooperative studio environment.
- Model respectful behaviour when visiting the studio or attending events.
- Help their child understand and follow this Code of Conduct.
- Notify MIoD promptly if concerns about safety, wellbeing or behaviour arise, preferably by email.
- Follow MIoD's arrival and collection procedures. Children must not be left waiting outside alone before or after class.

9.7 Shared Spaces and Safety

Children's and adult programs may operate at the same venue. Foyers, corridors and waiting areas may be shared. MIoD will supervise these areas and manage venue-specific mixed-age risks.

Children and unrelated adults must not use the same changing area at the same time. If separate facilities are unavailable, MIoD will allocate separate times or zones. Photography, filming and device use are prohibited in toilets and changing areas.

Adult students, visitors, contractors and support people must not approach a child for private contact, be alone with a child out of sight of authorised staff, exchange personal contact details or social-media accounts, offer personal gifts, provide transport, photograph or record a child, or supervise or discipline a child unless specifically authorised in writing by MIoD, with the agreement of the parent or legal guardian, and subject to MIoD's child-safety controls.

Adults are responsible for maintaining adult-child boundaries. A child will not be blamed or penalised for an adult's boundary breach. Anyone who feels unsafe or uncomfortable should tell a staff member or trusted adult.

9.8 Safe Physical Contact in Dance

Dance teachers may sometimes use physical guidance to support safe technique, posture, alignment or movement. Before touching, the teacher must explain the purpose in age-appropriate language and, where practicable, demonstrate or offer a non-contact option.

Any touch must be necessary for instruction, professional, brief, respectful and carried out in an open and observable setting. Touch must never involve private or sensitive areas or be used for discipline, punishment, emotional reassurance or a staff member's personal needs.

A child may say no, ask the teacher to stop or withdraw agreement at any time without punishment or disadvantage. The teacher must stop immediately. A child should tell a trusted adult if any touch feels uncomfortable, confusing or unsafe. Staff must report and record any boundary concern or breach.

9.9 Reporting Safety Concerns

A child may speak up in any words if they feel unsafe, worried, uncomfortable or confused, or if they see or experience bullying, threats, grooming, harmful behaviour, self-injury or another safety concern. They may tell any teacher or staff member, their parent or legal guardian, another trusted adult, Police or Child Protection.

The adult receiving the concern must listen calmly, take it seriously, avoid promising secrecy and act to protect the child. Teachers and staff must record the concern in the MIoD Online Incident, Concern and Near-Miss Form as soon as reasonably practicable: https://www.melbourneinstituteofdance.com/incident.

The form does not replace urgent action or external reporting.

A family may ordinarily email melbourneinstituteofdance@gmail.com. A person does not have to complain to the person whose conduct is in question.

If the concern involves the Director, the reporter is not required to notify the Director or use MIoD's internal complaints process before contacting an external authority. They may contact Victoria Police on 000 in an emergency or 131 444 for non-urgent police assistance, DFFH Child Protection through the appropriate regional intake service or 13 12 78 after hours, the Social Services Regulator on 1300 310 778 or contact@ssr.vic.gov.au, or another appropriate authority.

The Director must not discourage or interfere with an external report, retaliate against the reporter, or alter, conceal or destroy relevant evidence. MIoD will cooperate with any lawful external inquiry or investigation.

MIoD will not retaliate against a child, family member, staff member or other person who raises a concern in good faith. Confidentiality does not prevent a good-faith safety report or a report required by law.

9.10 Digital Behaviour and Online Conduct

Students, parents, and legal guardians must behave respectfully online whenever they represent or interact with MIoD.

Students, parents, and legal guardians must not:

- Post images or videos of other students without permission.
- Share class choreography or studio material without approval.
- Use digital platforms to exclude, tease, or harm others.
- Use communication platforms that are not age-appropriate or approved by MIoD.

This ensures online safety, privacy, and respect within all MIoD programs.

Staff, adult students, visitors and support people must not privately message a child, exchange personal phone numbers or social-media accounts with a child, invite a child into a private or disappearing-message chat, or communicate with a child without the parent or legal guardian's knowledge.
MIoD-related communication with a child must use an approved, transparent channel and include the parent or legal guardian unless an immediate safety emergency makes that impracticable. Any exception must be documented and reported.

9.11 Attendance, Punctuality and Class Conduct

9.11.1 Purpose

To maintain respect for the learning environment and ensure classes run efficiently.

Students are expected to:

- Arrive on time and be prepared for class.
- Notify the studio in advance if they are unable to attend.
- Refrain from disruptive behaviour or excessive conversation during instruction.
- Respect the teacher’s authority and maintain focus throughout the class.

Travel to and from the studio or theatre:

- For safety reasons, students must not arrive early and be left waiting outside the studio or theatre if the door is locked or no teacher is present.
- Parents and legal guardians must come to the front door (or stage door at the theatre) to pick up their children. Students are not permitted to wait outside for pick up and must remain inside the studio until collected.
- If a child is to walk home alone, written permission (via email melbourneinstituteofdance@gmail.com) from their parent or legal guardian is required.
  We do not recommend this for any children enrolled in Tiny, Pre, or Levels 1 to 4.
- Students must wear street clothes or a school tracksuit over their dance uniform when travelling to and from the studio for safety.

- Street shoes must be worn outside the studio. Ballet or dance shoes should not be worn outdoors, as this can damage the footwear, transfer dirt onto the studio floor, and increase the risk of injury.

9.12 Health, Safety, and Injury Disclosure

9.12.1 Purpose

To help keep every student safe and healthy during classes. MIoD takes care to ensure classes are safe and supervised.

Students must:

- Follow the teacher's safety instructions and immediately report feeling unwell, dizzy or injured.
- Inform their parent or legal guardian of any injuries or illnesses before attending class.
- Understand that teachers may arrange first aid or emergency assistance when necessary.
- Follow MIoD's Emergency and Evacuation Procedures as explained by their teacher and displayed at each venue.

9.13 Use of Studio Facilities

9.13.1 Purpose

To ensure a respectful, safe, and professional environment for all.

- Studio property, mirrors, sound systems, and equipment must be treated with care.
- Eating is not permitted inside studios; water only is allowed.
- Mobile phones must be silenced during class.
- Personal belongings should be stored neatly in designated areas.
- Changing rooms and common areas must be used respectfully, keeping noise and clutter to a minimum.
- Report any concerns to a teacher if something in a shared area makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

9.14 Privacy and Confidentiality

9.14.1 Purpose

To protect the personal information and dignity of all MIoD community members.

- Students, parents, or legal guardians must not disclose personal information about other students or staff without consent.
- Class or rehearsal content, choreography, or creative ideas shared by teachers are considered intellectual property of MIoD and must not be distributed or copied.
- Any personal or sensitive matters discussed with staff or management must remain confidential, unless disclosure is required by law or to address safety concerns.

Nothing in this section prevents a child or adult from making a good-faith report to a trusted adult, MIoD, Victoria Police, Child Protection, the Social Services Regulator, a lawyer, health practitioner or another appropriate authority. No person may ask a child to keep a safety concern, boundary breach or suspected abuse secret.

9.15 Photography, Filming and Social Media

Students, families, visitors and support people must not photograph, film or audio-record another person, a class, rehearsal, assessment or backstage area without MIoD's permission and the appropriate permission of identifiable participants. Photography and recording are prohibited in toilets and changing areas.

The Enrolment Form records four separate choices. Assessment recording is required for assessment participation: selecting No prevents assessment participation while that selection remains in effect but does not affect regular classes. Internal class and rehearsal recording may be refused without affecting ordinary enrolment. During recorded portions, a child with a No selection must remain supervised and outside the camera frame, may participate in non-recorded portions, and must not be penalised or unnecessarily excluded. Internal material must not be used publicly without the applicable optional general-media consent.

Stage productions are professionally recorded, and participation requires the parent or legal guardian to accept the stage-production media conditions in the Terms and Conditions - Children. Outside stage productions, public use of suitable assessment, class, rehearsal or other MIoD-related material requires optional general-media consent. Selecting No to general media does not affect ordinary enrolment, class participation, assessment eligibility or the separate stage-production choice.

A parent or legal guardian may change any recording or media selection or withdraw stage-production acceptance for future productions by emailing melbourneinstituteofdance@gmail.com. Staff must check the current recorded selection before an assessment, recording or public use, consider the child's comfort and expressed wishes, and ensure that inadvertent capture of a child with a No class-and-rehearsal selection is not used and is deleted or, where reasonably practicable, cropped, blurred or otherwise removed. MIoD will process changes under the Terms and Conditions - Children.

9.16 Substance Use and Professional Conduct

To help keep everyone at MIoD safe, healthy, and focused during classes and performances.

Children must:

- Never use or bring drugs, alcohol, or any unsafe substances to class, rehearsals, or performances.
- Never come to class if they have taken something that could make them feel unwell, dizzy, or unable to dance safely.
- Understand that smoking and vaping are not allowed anywhere inside or near MIoD venues.
- Report any concerns to a teacher immediately if you see something unsafe or worrying involving substances.

9.17 Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination

To uphold MIoD's commitment to fairness, equality, and inclusion in all programs.

MIoD provides a learning environment free from discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.
All participants are entitled to equal treatment regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, cultural background, religion, disability, or personal circumstance.

Students must treat all members of the MIoD community with dignity and respect, consistent with the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)* and MIoD's Diversity and Inclusion values.

9.18 Agreement, Enforcement and Review

This Code of Conduct helps everyone at MIoD maintain a safe, respectful, and kind environment.

When a child is enrolled, their parent or legal guardian agrees to MIoD's Terms and Conditions - Children and acknowledges that both they and their child must comply with the Code of Conduct - Children and Policies and Procedures - Children.

If a child has difficulty following the Code, MIoD will respond calmly and fairly, consult with the student and their parent or legal guardian, and consider reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

Where an immediate safety risk exists, MIoD may take protective action. Any decision to suspend or discontinue participation will follow the fair process outlined in MIoD's Policies and Procedures -

Children, including consideration of the child's circumstances and reasonable adjustments. A complaint, disability or request for adjustment is not itself misconduct.

This Code is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains up to date with Victorian laws and child safety requirements.

9.19 Responding to Behaviour and Safety Concerns

MIoD will respond to behaviour and safety concerns according to their seriousness, considering each student's individual circumstances and support needs.

Responses may include:

- Low-level concerns: Guidance, redirection, a break or adjusted instruction.
- Significant or repeated concerns: Temporary pause in participation, consultation with parents or legal guardians, incident recording and review of appropriate support.
- Serious or immediate risks: Immediate protective action, emergency assistance where necessary, incident recording and Director review.

Staff must consider disability, distress, communication differences and individual support needs before treating behaviour as deliberate misconduct.

Immediate safety measures do not automatically constitute disciplinary action. Before a final suspension or discontinuation, MIoD will provide the family with an explanation of the concerns, an opportunity to respond and written reasons for its decision.

Good-faith complaints and requests for reasonable adjustments must not be treated as misconduct.

Parents, legal guardians, visitors and approved support persons must follow their applicable Code of Conduct. Adult behaviour must be considered separately from the child's conduct.