



Grace Studios

School of Speech and Drama

Sutherland Shire Studios

ABN: 90466231779

W: grace-studios-drama.com

E: grace-studios@live.com.au

P: (+61)421187881

2019 Child Safety Policy

The following policy was approved and shared with all Grace Studios community members on 17/01/2019. Additionally, the policy is made available online for public review at: grace-studios-drama.com

Should any community member wish to make recommendations on how the policy should be further adjusted to meet the needs of the Grace Studios community, and ensure the health and safety of its students, submissions can be made via email to: grace-studios@live.com.au

This policy has been drafted based on annual community consultation and will continue to be reviewed at the end of each year. Parents and teachers can participate in this review by completing the 'feedback form' which is emailed to all community members via the email address with which they have registered their enrolment or employment.

Studio Recruitment:

All employees and/or contractors engaged by the studio will be required to meet the following standards:

1. A current working with children check number
2. Relevant industry training and education including diploma and/or degree level qualifications in child care and/or teaching
3. 12 months experience working independently with children in a role which required them to be wholly responsible for their duty of care during the hours of teaching and supervision
4. Two references to validate their teaching experience and further validate their proof of character
5. Copies of awarded certifications upon request
6. Appropriate personal information including TFN or ABN





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In the instance that they do not meet experience standards the following requirements should be met:

1. Certificate level qualifications (those below a diploma or degree), or less than 12 months teaching experience will require the employee / contractor to complete a 12 month studio traineeship including extended supervision and mentoring from an allocated senior educator at the studio.

Staff Training:

Each year staff will review current studio policies and complete a signed agreement to acknowledge their commitment to adhering to the stipulated protocol (**Appendix A**). Staff will also participate in:

1. Quarterly term planning sessions (**Appendix B**)
2. Periodic reviews – At the discretion of the studio director staff may be reviewed for performance and training purposes. Senior educators participating in a studio training program, or the studio director, may request to sit in on / audit lessons.

Child Health and Safety

1. All enrolled students will supply the following information to the studio: name, age, address, name of guardian, contact number, information on relevant allergies.
2. Guardians of children with allergies will be asked to complete a medical plan that will be provided to the studio and class teacher (**Appendix C**).
3. When enrolling, parents must complete an online authentication to acknowledge that they have read and agree to the following studio policies:

Supervision:

- Class supervision commences only at the specified lesson time. If students arrive early, they should be supervised by the parent who is dropping them off. If parents are going to be more than five minutes late to collect their child, they must contact the studio as a matter of urgency. If you are late, your child will need to wait inside the building and you will be required to come in and collect them from a class teacher.





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- Class teachers are given access to the contact telephone number provided by enrolled student guardians. Parents seeking to contact the studio in an emergency should call: Studio Phone – 0421187881 or Director: 0402 766 157.
- Teachers will try to contact a student’s registered guardian via the telephone contact listed on the student enrolment. In the instance that a student is not collected from class within 30 minutes of the designated collection time and parents are not contactable the studio will contact local police services.
- If an incident occurs in class which compromises a student’s health or safety, parents will be notified formally via email and, in the instance of urgent circumstances, via telephone.
- In the instance that a child is injured, all teachers carry a first aid medical kit which includes bandaids and basic medical supplies. Should the nature of the injury exceed that which can be treated with basic first aid, parents will be contacted and, if necessary, an ambulance called.
- Parents are not able to view the classes except on allocated viewing days or by special arrangement. This is because students behave differently in front of an audience and some may suffer from anxiety. We work very hard to create a space in which students feel completely comfortable and supported and they should not be exposed to an audience without warning and preparation.

Allergies:

- Students and teachers should not bring food into the class as some students have allergies. A drink bottle is not only allowed but is suggested.
- All students who have allergies documented on their enrolment are required to complete a ‘Health Plan’ that can be shared with teachers. In the instance that students require immediate medical assistance (e.g. an EpiPen), teachers will follow the instructions set out in the health plan.

What to Wear and What to Bring:

- We ask that students come to drama dressed in clothes that allow them to move freely and comfortably. Please bring all appropriate materials to your lesson, including scripts, texts and props.
- Students and teachers should not bring food into the class as some students have allergies. A drink bottle is not only allowed but is suggested.





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Complaints and Concerns:

- All complaints and concerns from students or guardians should be submitted in writing to grace-studios@live.com.au and will be reviewed within seven days and a formally acknowledged response will be issued in writing. The studio's primary concern is the wellbeing and happiness of its students. Studio policies are put in place to ensure that we are able to provide a safe and professional service. Studio policies are reviewed yearly. Should the studio need to change or add to the existing policy, based on feedback provided by the Grace Studios community, the studio will notify all community members in writing at the time of the change.
- At the end of each year customers will be provided with a review form that will enable students and guardians to give feedback on the studio's services, and make recommendations for policy reviews.
- Should teachers witness any incident which did or could have resulted in a student health or safety issue, they will notify the studio director within 24 hours of the class in which the incident took place. The acting studio director will then complete an incident report including consultation with the relevant student or guardian (**Appendix D**).

Appendices: A, B, C & D





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Appendix A: Staff Policies 2018

As an educator employed by Grace Studios for the purpose of providing theatrical education I acknowledge the following responsibilities:

1. I have read and agree to adhere to the attached child safety policy by implementing the stipulated procedures in relation to child supervision, health, classroom management and complaints.
2. I will always greet parents and children on arrival and departure. Once in my duty of care, I will supervise all children until they have been collected by parents. This includes ensuring that they do not leave the studio premises for any reason without the consent of the enrolling guardian. Should a parent be late to collect a child I will follow the child safety policy.
3. I will arrive on time for classes I have been contracted to teach. In the instance that I will be late I will immediately contact the studio director on 0402766157.
4. Should I witness an incident that has or could have compromised the health and safety of a student, I will document this incident in writing to the studio director within 24 hours of the incident taking place. The director will then notify the student's guardian if necessary. This submission can be made to: grace-studios@live.com.au.
5. I will ensure that at all classes I teach I am in possession of the contact list of class students, including information on allergies / health plans and guardian contact details. I will notify a student's guardian of any concerns I have for their health or safety upon student collection.
6. I will carry a basic first aid kit and, in the instance that any incident is life threatening, or could have immediate adverse effects on a student's health and safety, I will follow the following procedure:
 - Call emergency services
 - Follow the student's health plan (if applicable)
 - Call the studio director on 0402766157 who will then notify the student's guardian.
 - In the instance that the director cannot be reached, call the guardian.
7. I will not use personal information provided by the studio to make contact with students or their families outside of professional and studio authorised engagements, including social media. I will not connect with students currently enrolled at the studio on any social platform, for example, Facebook, Snapchat or Instagram. Except in the instance that I have a pre-existing (prior to being contracted by the studio) relationship with an adult client at the studio, for example the parent of a student, I





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will not connect with them on any social media platform which could compromise the professionalism of the studio or my own personal privacy and professional reputation.

8. I will uphold the studio's values as expressed in the Grace Studios Teaching Philosophy, so as to ensure that my lessons are inclusive, safe and well managed.
9. In any interactions I have with students or parents at the studio I will maintain my professionalism. As a speech, drama or musical theatre teacher, I will consider how my speech, body language, dress and level of engagement impacts on the reputation of the studio and of the services I help to provide.
10. I will attend a quarterly planning session as proposed in the planning session arranged by the studio, so as to review my own performance, teaching content, studio policies and administrative duties. Additionally, I will use this opportunity to express feedback on how the studio can improve its services or address my concerns.
11. I will provide an in date working with children check number which qualifies me to complete paid work with children, and which can be verified with the studio.
12. I will provide my current TFN / ABN and personal contact details.
13. I will respond to administrative updates from the studio in a timely fashion to ensure that I am up-to-date on important information which could impact on student health or safety. This includes sending an acknowledgment that communications have been received.

Signed (Teacher's Name):

Date:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

ABN:

TFN:

WWC:





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Appendix B: Studio Philosophy and Values

Do:

- ⇒ Greet parents and children on arrival and departure ensuring pickup and drop off, and road safety.
- ⇒ Take time to learn every student's name and build rapport with them and their family.
- ⇒ Create lessons that are developmentally appropriate, mapping student needs and interests.
- ⇒ Follow the educational objectives set out in quarterly planning meetings.
- ⇒ Use 'I' messages to communicate your feelings / perspective.
- ⇒ Give positive feedback to affirm effort and good behaviour.
- ⇒ Follow teachable moments.
- ⇒ Choose literature which is developmentally appropriate, maps the needs and interests of your students and explores a diverse number of genres, themes, characters, cultures and social concerns.
- ⇒ Keep an eye on the time.
- ⇒ Facilitate engaging discussions that are inclusive, respectful and thoughtful.
- ⇒ Set up your class space making clear your expectations for respecting the teacher, other students and the property. Clearly identify out of bounds areas.
- ⇒ Look for hazards such as objects and furniture students should not be climbing on, as well as hazardous behaviours such as running in socks.
- ⇒ Implement 'freeze' as a term which calls your class to immediate attention.
- ⇒ Help your students to feel comfortable in the space, showing them where bathrooms are, chairs and exits for safety, including in the event of an evacuation.
- ⇒ Call the studio director and/or student guardian immediately if a student is involved in threatening behaviour that compromises the safety of yourself or any other student. This behaviour can be verbal as well as physical.
- ⇒ Take time to debrief with students should the class be exposed to an incident which could upset or concern students.
- ⇒ Follow the safety policies for notifying parents and studio administration about any incidents which compromise student health and safety.
- ⇒ Come prepared to each lesson with the appropriate materials you need to run a successful lesson.
- ⇒ Avoid using gender based phrases such as 'you guys' or 'good boy/girl' and refer to all students by their preferred name and pronouns.





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- ⇒ Consider how your own speech, body language and presentation models the correct behaviour for students.
- ⇒ Ensure students finish eating before they enter the classroom.
- ⇒ Encourage students to use their drink bottle and have a rest on hot days.
- ⇒ Ensure students are respectful of personal space.
- ⇒ Ask questions of the studio director and raise concerns with them rather than ‘taking matters into your own hands’.
- ⇒ Remind parents of studio policies to ensure the health and safety of your students.
- ⇒ Encourage students to use the bin and leave the facility as they found it.
- ⇒ Report to the studio director any accidents which have caused damage to the facility or any property belonging to the studio.
- ⇒ Review your classes and participate in self-evaluation by considering how well your measurable lesson plan objectives have been met (including social and educational objectives).
- ⇒ Use these insights to inform teaching strategies and content for preceding lessons.
- ⇒ Use positive terminology to frame ‘feedback’ which is constructive not critical. For example, where you can see an area for ‘improvement’ you should articulate it as an ‘opportunity’ for the student or the studio to try something different. All constructive feedback should also be accompanied by a suggested alternative course of action.

Don't:

- ⇒ Present texts or media with inappropriate language or subject matter. When selecting material for senior classes with adult themes these should be submitted to the studio director for review.
- ⇒ Collect personal information from students or seek to contact them outside of class except through means that have been approved by the studio and, in the case of children, are utilising the appropriate guardian contact details.
- ⇒ Yell at students in a way which could be deemed aggressive, highly emotional or out of control.
- ⇒ Use your classroom like an ‘old fashioned school room’ in which children do not feel free to move about, express themselves or relax.
- ⇒ Make personal remarks towards students or staff that are negative, degrading or discriminatory.
- ⇒ Make executive decisions that could impact on child health and safety or service delivery without consulting the studio director.
- ⇒ Allow students to leave your supervision before being collected by a parent.





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- ⇒ Insert your own bias into class discussions or shut down ideas.
- ⇒ Frighten or intimidate any member of the Grace Studios community.
- ⇒ Bring food into group classes where children may have allergies.
- ⇒ Communicate with parents in a way that could be deemed unprofessional or compromising for the professional reputation of the studio.
- ⇒ Leave the facility in an unacceptable manner with chairs not packed away, lights on, rubbish or doors unlocked.





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Dorothy Heathcote Teaching Methodology

I will enable purposeful learning by providing the opportunity to solve real world problems.

“In every case, the curriculum tasks were framed as professional tasks. For example, instead of producing some persuasive writing as part of a “lesson” called “literacy”, students in Lynette’s room were asked to take a position, in writing, as part of writing a professional report for sharing at a company meeting. In Mantle of the Expert, the purpose of learning is clear and immediate. This is not learning for its own sake, nor for the teacher or “for your own good”. Neither is it learning for some time in the future or for a test. Rather, it is learning because someone actually needs it done now, and needs it done well. In other words, each task is purposeful and occurs within a real-life context.”

I will facilitate cross-curricular / holistic approaches to education by encouraging the use of multiple skill or knowledge sets and inquiry learning.

“It can be seen, too, how, in every case, the teachers used a combination of teacher-led tasks and student inquiry to pursue learning goals, and that curriculum learning was approached in an incorporated way rather than within discrete boxes of time labelled as “maths” or “science” lessons. In each example from our project we can also see how *this approach* was used to explore multiple perspectives.”

“Curriculum is encountered in the same way as in real life: not as a set of separated “subjects” or “learning areas”, but as landing points within an holistic ongoing experience. Mantle of the Expert, then, is an approach to curriculum integration. Abbott prefers the term “curriculum incorporation”, because it resists seeing curriculum as Learning in Mantle of the Expert has a strong element of inquiry, in that students may pursue their own directions and interests within the bounds of the wider commission.”

I will position the student as an ‘expert’ by making them accountable for deliverables, looking to them for new solutions and asking them questions I don’t know the answers to, so that they can critically evaluate a number of perspectives (as opposed to simply reproducing content).

“‘Expert framing’, which involves children/*students* as being positioned as adult experts. This reframing asks the children/*students* to “frame” or think about their learning in a new way. It





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also involves a conscious repositioning of power within the student and teacher relationship.”

I will utilise a student centred approach that enables students to be confident co-creators by mapping (developmental and contextual) needs, interests, skills and intelligence types.

“The teacher’s role is to create the conditions whereby a mantle of leadership, knowledge, competency and understanding grows around the child/*student*. The child/*student* centrism begins in the planning stages, with the teacher starting from the children’s/*students* interests and needs, alongside the curriculum objectives, and continues in the classroom interactions, where the teacher consciously positions the children as competent co-constructors of the learning.”

*Source and recommended reading - Quotes paraphrased from Viv Aitken’s work - Dorothy Heathcote’s Mantle of the Expert Approach to Teaching and Learning:
https://www.mantleoftheexpert.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/MOTE-Chapter-3_Aitken_Pages-from-Connecting-Curriculum-Fraser-v3-220213.pdf*





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Energy as a substitute for 'discipline' : A short introduction to teaching methodologies Anna-Grace Millward 2016

Energy levels dramatically impact on the way that students act and interact in the drama space. It is essential that students respect their teacher, and that the teacher is able to control the energy of the class. FREEZE is the magic word of every drama teacher. We know that we have respect and that we are in control because when we call out our magic word, the room becomes silent and still. When students are required, they should sit patiently, listen to instructions and be able to find stillness and calm. HOWEVER, it is important that we do not replicate the 'classroom' (classroom meaning students sitting and listening – teachers speaking / lecturing) energy that students experience all day at school. For the student who comes to class with an excess of energy, as well as the other who lacks enthusiasm, the 'classroom' experience will not work. Potentially, this kind of environment will enhance what the student is already feeling; one will become even more agitated and disruptive, while the other will become withdrawn and despondent.

So what should our approach be? When the energy of the class is strong (meaning that students are focused and highly engaged) the teacher is able to maintain the connection with the student. There is no need to tell students to 'sit still' or to 'wake up' because, like you, they are invested in the task.

Remember, you must lead / communicate. DO NOT Lecture. Do activities WITH students to demonstrate involvement. When explaining an activity, initiate discussion. For example, break up instructions with questions - "Now we are going to be an astronaut. What's an astronaut?" (students respond) or, rather than saying, "A good speaker uses pitch, pace, pause and volume to modulate their voice," you would simply ask, "Who can remember what makes a good speaker?" We can also use this approach as a substitute for 'discipline' – "Tell me, why was it not a good idea to do that?" When giving instructions it is best to situate them in the context of a conversation between you and the students. Remember, drama is a place of DOING! Do not diminish the quality of discussion, but limit its duration and reinforce it with action. Often the task itself will enrich the discussion that follows (as discussion should not just be something that happens before an activity but also after).

One other, and arguably most important, way that we can maintain energy levels and connection is by paying close attention to the structure of our class. Please use the following as a guide to inspire you!





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Remember, this structure is merely intended as a guide. A good teacher is able to read the energy of their class and follow teachable moments. We must constantly reflect on how the activities we initiate are received by students and make modifications (by enhancing or shortening an experience) when they are needed.

Lesson Structure

Game:

A whole group activity that lifts the energy level and is simple enough for every student to feel confident to be involved in, regardless of their skill level. This is important because the students won't feel like they are entering a 'classroom' where they will be judged on their ability to 'perform'. Students are welcomed by friends and act instinctively and intuitively as they join in. The game is an important opportunity for students to gain or release energy. Because drama is 'an extension of play' all drama should begin with play.

Warmup(s):

These are short, fun, skill based activities. Warmups are a fun way to teach **technique** and should complement the class which follows: e.g. vocal warmups focus on vocal modulation - pitch flexibility, volume / projection, articulation, pause, breathing, intonation and pace. Physicalisation warmups focus on posture, relaxation, tension in the body, facial muscles and awareness of self, others, and space. The warmup should not, as much as possible, be given as an 'instruction' (the teacher lecturing). It should be set in the context of an activity which has a clear outcome and links to the thematic approach of the class. For example, tongue twisters could be said as magic spells which the students cast over each other – followed by an improvised reaction to the spell.

Short Experience(s):

This is usually a teacher lead experience which focuses on introducing students to the **concepts and skills** they will need to complete the core experience. A short experience is a totally different activity to the core experience, but serves as a prelude, in that it gives students time to ask questions and be 'led' by the teacher – there is no pressure for them to work independently. For example, students (and the teacher) may move as a class around the room practising leading with different parts of the body (the nose, head, chest etc.). This exercise could be followed by a discussion about who each person might be (the person





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leading with the nose is a snobby young girl... the person leading with the chest is a police officer). The experience establishes a connection between body and characterisation and helps students build the skills they may need for their core activity. Without this prelude, your core activity may not be well received as students cannot easily see how they should approach the task. This is an opportunity for you to offer students lots of positive reinforcement and to allow them to trial these skills as a collective (which involves less risk taking / fear of failure).

Core Experience:

The core experience is a more detailed activity that may require students to work in small groups or with a partner to prepare work that can be performed for the class. Even though this is a student led exercise, the teacher should view / offer feedback to each group prior to them performing for the class. This ensures that students are not taking unnecessary risks by performing work with avoidable problems (for example, the students might not have fully grasped the exercise – teachers can assist further and personal / more specific feedback can be given privately before students perform). The core experience allows for planning and reflection. This experience is an opportunity for students to extend themselves and polish skills because it is planned. Work can be rehearsed more than once before it is performed. Students will feel proud when presenting something they have created independently. General feedback should be offered to each group at the end of each performance – all positive and some constructive. Try not to make the feedback specific to each student but offer it as advice to the whole group. Individual feedback should have been offered during the workshopping time (not in front of the whole class).

Warm Down:

This is usually the opposite of what the name suggests. The class energy level does not go down, but rather, up! A warm down is all about leaving a class on a high note so that everyone feels energised. This should be fast paced, high action and easy for everyone to get involved in. It will seem like a 'game' to the students, but should still reinforce a skill that has been enhanced during the lesson (for example, 'crazy walks tip' is a good way to let the students play tag while still getting them to use their body in an imaginative way – as they must change the crazy walk every time they are tagged).





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Appendix C: Medical Plan

Student's name:

Parent's name:

Contact number:

Email:

Listed allergy:

Symptoms:

Hazards to avoid:

In the event of an emergency the teacher will need to implement the following action plan:

Medications carried by the student:

Located in – e.g. front pocket of school bag:



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Appendix B: Incident Report

Name of the reporting teacher:

Date the report is lodged:

Date of the incident:

Time of the incident:

Name of class:

Student(s) involved:

Parent(s) involved:

Other teachers involved:

Please describe what happened:

What are your core concerns?

Do you have a suggested course of action you would like to recommend for the Studio's consideration?

What, if anything, do you feel could have been done to prevent this incident?

Was a student physically hurt?

Has the student's guardian already been notified of the incident?

What, if any, comments or feedback did the guardian give?