



Cascade Dance Equal Opportunity Policy

Written: October 2008

Last Updated: 5 September 2024

Next Review: September 2026

1. Introduction

Cascade Dance is committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive, safe and supportive environment in which all individuals are treated with dignity, fairness and respect.

We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to experience the power of self-expression through dance, movement and the arts, regardless of their background, identity or personal circumstances.

We recognise that diversity strengthens our organisation and that an inclusive environment enables students, teachers, staff, artists, volunteers and participants to fulfil their potential. We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination and fostering a culture in which everyone feels valued, respected and able to participate.

For the purposes of this policy, *Cascade Dance staff* includes artists, administrative staff, company dancers, teachers, contracted freelance teachers and volunteers.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion throughout all areas of Cascade Dance.
- Prevent and address unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation.
- Ensure fair and equitable access to opportunities, activities, employment and services.
- Identify and, where reasonably possible, remove barriers to participation.
- Ensure that individuals are treated with dignity and respect.
- Promote an inclusive culture in which differences are recognised and valued.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals involved with or engaging with Cascade Dance, including:

- Teachers and artists

- Students and participants, including children and adults
- Parents and carers
- Staff and volunteers
- Freelancers and contractors
- Trustees or management, where applicable
- Visitors
- Audiences and event attendees
- Partner organisations
- Venues and external settings

The policy applies to activities undertaken in person and online, including classes, rehearsals, performances, workshops, events, auditions, meetings, email, social media and other digital communication connected with Cascade Dance.

4. Our Commitment

Cascade Dance is committed to ensuring that no individual is treated less favourably, disadvantaged or excluded because of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race, including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

These are known as *protected characteristics* under the Equality Act 2010.



Cascade Dance also recognises that individuals may experience disadvantage or barriers because of other circumstances, including socioeconomic background, caring responsibilities, language, immigration status or other personal circumstances. While not all of these are protected characteristics under equality legislation, we will seek to promote fair and inclusive participation wherever reasonably possible.

We also recognise that individuals may experience discrimination or disadvantage based on a combination of characteristics and experiences.

5. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by relevant legislation and guidance, including:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Safeguarding and child protection legislation and guidance, where applicable
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

Cascade Dance will keep this policy under review to reflect changes in legislation, guidance and best practice.

6. Key Principles

Cascade Dance will:

- Treat all individuals fairly, equitably and with respect.
- Provide equal access to opportunities wherever reasonably possible.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled people and individuals with additional needs where required and appropriate.
- Identify and seek to reduce barriers to participation.
- Use inclusive teaching practices that recognise different abilities, learning styles and support needs.
- Promote diversity in dance, creativity, programming and artistic practice.
- Encourage respectful discussion and understanding of difference.
- Challenge discriminatory language, behaviour, bullying, harassment and victimisation.

- Take concerns and complaints seriously and respond appropriately.
- Maintain confidentiality where possible, while recognising that information may need to be shared where there is a safeguarding, legal or other legitimate requirement to do so.

7. Equality of Access and Participation

Cascade Dance aims to make its classes, workshops, rehearsals, performances and events as accessible and inclusive as reasonably possible.

We will seek to:

- Consider accessibility when selecting venues and planning activities.
- Discuss individual requirements with participants or, where appropriate, their parents or carers.
- Make reasonable adjustments to support participation.
- Adapt teaching approaches where appropriate.
- Provide information in accessible formats where reasonably possible.
- Consider physical, sensory, learning and communication needs.
- Review practices that may unintentionally create barriers.

Dance is a physical activity and some activities may involve specific physical, technical or safety requirements. Where an adjustment cannot reasonably be made without compromising health and safety, the safety of others or the fundamental nature of an activity, Cascade Dance will discuss alternative ways of supporting participation where possible.

8. Inclusive Teaching and Learning

Teachers and staff are expected to create a positive learning environment in which participants feel safe, respected and encouraged.

This includes:

- Using respectful and inclusive language.
- Recognising and responding to different learning styles and needs.
- Avoiding assumptions about an individual's identity, ability, background or experience.



- Providing constructive feedback fairly and appropriately.
- Considering appropriate adaptations to activities.
- Promoting positive representation and diversity in artistic and educational practice.
- Encouraging participants to respect and value one another.

Cascade Dance will seek to provide teachers and staff with appropriate training, guidance and professional development relating to equality, diversity and inclusion.

9. Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation

Cascade Dance does not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

This includes behaviour that takes place:

- During classes, rehearsals and workshops.
- At performances, competitions, events and social activities.
- In venues and external settings.
- Through email, messaging platforms and social media.
- At any time where an individual is representing or acting in connection with Cascade Dance.

Concerns will be taken seriously and addressed promptly and appropriately.

No individual should be treated adversely because they have raised a concern, made a complaint, supported another person in making a complaint or participated in an investigation.

10. Recruitment, Employment and Engagement

Cascade Dance is committed to fair recruitment and selection practices.

Teachers, staff, freelancers and volunteers will be recruited or engaged on the basis of relevant skills, experience, qualifications and suitability for the role.

Cascade Dance will:

- Provide equal opportunities throughout recruitment and engagement processes.
- Consider reasonable adjustments for applicants where required.

- Seek to ensure that selection processes are fair and free from unlawful discrimination.
- Encourage applications from individuals from a wide range of backgrounds.
- Make decisions based on legitimate role requirements and organisational needs.

Where lawful and appropriate, Cascade Dance may take positive action to encourage participation or applications from groups that are underrepresented or disadvantaged.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

Management and Artistic Directors

Management is responsible for:

- Promoting and implementing this policy.
- Ensuring that concerns are addressed appropriately.
- Considering equality and inclusion when making organisational decisions.
- Supporting staff and teachers in meeting their responsibilities.
- Reviewing the policy regularly.
- Taking appropriate action where this policy is breached.

Teachers, Staff and Volunteers

All teachers, staff and volunteers are responsible for:

- Treating others with dignity and respect.
- Creating inclusive and supportive environments.
- Following this policy and related procedures.
- Challenging inappropriate behaviour where it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- Reporting concerns, discrimination, harassment or bullying to management.



Students and Participants

Students and participants are expected to:

- Treat others with respect.
- Avoid discriminatory, bullying or harassing behaviour.
- Follow Cascade Dance's Behaviour Policy and other relevant rules.
- Raise concerns with a teacher, member of staff or management where appropriate.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Support respectful and inclusive behaviour.
- Raise concerns appropriately through the relevant Cascade Dance procedures.
- Treat students, teachers, staff and other parents with dignity and respect.

12. Raising a Concern or Making a Complaint

Any individual who believes that they have experienced or witnessed discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation or unfair treatment is encouraged to raise their concern.

Concerns may be reported to:

- A teacher or member of staff.
- A member of the management team.
- An Artistic Director.

Where a concern relates directly to a particular member of management, the concern should, wherever possible, be raised with the other Artistic Director or another appropriate senior person who is not involved in the matter.

Concerns will be considered as promptly, fairly and impartially as possible. Information will be treated sensitively and confidentially, although complete confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed where an investigation, safeguarding concern or legal obligation requires information to be shared.

Appropriate action may be taken in accordance with Cascade Dance's relevant policies, procedures, contractual arrangements or disciplinary processes.

13. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside other relevant Cascade Dance policies and procedures, including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy procedures

14. Monitoring and Review

Cascade Dance will review this policy regularly and at least every two years, or sooner where there are significant changes to legislation, guidance or organisational practice.

The effectiveness of the policy may be monitored through:

- Feedback from students, parents, teachers and staff.
- Complaints and concerns received.
- Participation and accessibility considerations.
- Staff and organisational review.

Where appropriate, changes will be made to improve equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility across the organisation. **Next Review Date:** September 2026

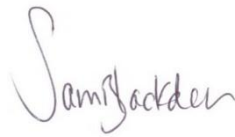
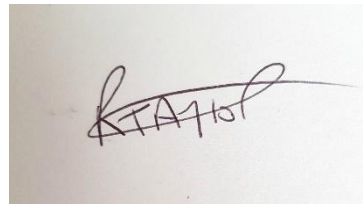
Signed:

Samantha Blackden, Artistic Director

26th August 2026

Ricia Taylor, Artistic Director

5th September 2024

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Samantha Blackden".A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "RTaylor".