

The Circle Studio

Code of Behaviour

For Staff, Tutors, Contractors and Volunteers

Version	1.0
Date Adopted	28 May 2026
Review Date	28 May 2027
Applies To	All staff, freelance tutors, contractors and volunteers

1. Introduction

The Circle Studio is committed to providing a safe, respectful and positive environment for all children and young people in our care. This Code of Behaviour sets out the standards of conduct expected of everyone who works or volunteers with us.

This Code must be read alongside our Child Safeguarding Statement and Child Protection Policy. All staff, tutors, contractors and volunteers are required to sign a declaration confirming they have read, understood and agree to abide by this Code before commencing work.

Breach of this Code may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of engagement, and referral to relevant authorities where appropriate.

2. General Conduct

You MUST:
• Treat all children and young people with dignity, respect and fairness at all times
• Act as a positive role model in language, behaviour and attitude
• Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with all students at all times
• Report any concern about a child's welfare to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) immediately
• Maintain confidentiality about students and their families, except where there is a duty to report
• Be punctual, prepared and professional in all sessions
• Follow all The Circle Studio policies and procedures
• Raise concerns about unsafe practices with the DLP or studio management

You must NEVER:

- Use physical punishment or any form of corporal discipline
- Use language that is demeaning, humiliating, sarcastic, threatening or discriminatory
- Shout at, intimidate or belittle a student
- Show favouritism or treat any student unfairly
- Share personal opinions about a student's ability, appearance or home life with other students
- Discuss child protection concerns with anyone other than the DLP
- Ignore or minimise a concern raised by a child or colleague

3. Physical Contact

In drama and physical theatre, some physical contact is a normal part of teaching (e.g. guiding posture, demonstrating movement). The following rules apply at all times:

Physical contact rules:

- Physical contact must always have a clear, educational purpose
- Always explain the reason for any physical contact to students beforehand
- Never make physical contact with a student who has asked you not to or who appears uncomfortable
- Physical contact must never be in areas that could be considered intimate
- Avoid prolonged physical contact that goes beyond what is educationally necessary
- Never engage in rough or physical play that could cause injury
- All physical exercises and contact work must take place in a group setting, never one-to-one

4. One-to-One Situations

Wherever possible, one-to-one situations with children should be avoided. Where one-to-one tuition or coaching is educationally necessary:

- It must take place in a clearly visible space (e.g. room with a window or open door)
- A second adult should be present in the building
- Parents or guardians should be informed in advance
- The session should be logged
- Under no circumstances should one-to-one sessions take place in a car, private home, or any location outside the studio premises without prior written parental consent and management approval

5. Digital Communication & Social Media

You must NEVER:

- Contact students directly via personal social media accounts, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Instagram DMs, TikTok or any personal messaging platform
- Accept friend or follow requests from students on personal social media accounts
- Share, post or publish photographs, videos or identifying information about students without written parental consent
- Engage in group chats with students on personal devices
- Send messages to students outside of official studio communication channels

You MUST:

- Use only official The Circle Studio communication channels (e.g. studio email, class management platform) to communicate with students
- Copy in a parent/guardian on all direct communications with students under 18
- Report any unsolicited contact from a student on personal channels to the DLP immediately
- Keep all digital communication professional, appropriate and relevant to studio activities

6. Photography and Recording

- Photographs or video recordings of students may only be taken using The Circle Studio equipment and for The Circle Studio purposes
- Written parental consent must be obtained before photographing or filming any student under 18
- No images or recordings of students may be taken on personal devices
- No images or recordings may be shared publicly, on social media or with third parties without written parental consent
- Consent for photography and recording does not imply consent for any other use

7. Change Rooms and Toilets

- Staff must never be alone with a student in a changing room or toilet
- Students must be given adequate privacy when changing
- If a student requires assistance (e.g. due to a disability), this must be agreed in advance with parents/guardians and must never occur in a one-to-one situation
- Any concerns regarding inappropriate behaviour in these spaces must be reported to the DLP immediately

8. Gifts and Personal Relationships

- Staff should not give individual gifts to students; group prizes or rewards as part of studio activities are acceptable
- Staff should not accept significant gifts from students or their families
- Staff must not socialise with students outside of studio-sanctioned activities
- Personal relationships (romantic or otherwise) between staff and students under 18 are strictly prohibited and may constitute a criminal offence

9. Health & Safety

- All staff must familiarise themselves with the studio's emergency procedures, including fire evacuation and first aid arrangements
- Staff must not carry out activities for which they are not trained or insured
- Any injury or accident involving a student must be reported and recorded using the studio's incident report form
- Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance while working with students
- Any health condition that may affect your ability to work safely with children must be disclosed to management

10. Confidentiality & Reporting

All information relating to students and their families is confidential and must be treated with sensitivity. However:

- Confidentiality is not absolute, it cannot be maintained where there is a risk to a child's safety or welfare
- If a student discloses abuse or makes a child protection concern known, you must report this to the DLP immediately; do not investigate yourself
- Do not promise a child that you will keep what they tell you a secret
- Do not discuss child protection matters with other staff, parents or third parties; direct everything to the DLP

11. Garda Vetting & Training

- You must not commence any work involving unsupervised access to children until a clear Garda vetting disclosure has been received
- You must complete the Tusla Children First e-learning module before commencing work
- You must disclose immediately any criminal conviction, charge or caution received after your vetting disclosure was issued
- Failure to disclose subsequent convictions may constitute a criminal offence

12. Breaches of This Code

Any breach of this Code will be taken seriously and may result in:

- Formal disciplinary action
- Suspension from work pending investigation
- Termination of employment or engagement
- Referral to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána where appropriate
- Referral to a professional regulatory body where applicable

Concerns about breaches of this Code should be raised with the DLP or studio management immediately.

Declaration

I confirm that I have read, understood and agree to abide by this Code of Behaviour. I understand that any breach of this Code may result in disciplinary action and/or referral to relevant authorities.

Full Name: _____	Role: _____
Signature: _____	Date: _____

Signed copy to be retained by The Circle Studio. A copy will be provided to the signatory.