



The Dust Palace Culture Code

INDEX

1. Mission and values
2. Core behaviours
3. Inclusion and diversity
4. Taking care of our space
5. Health and Safety policies and Safeguarding
6. Consent and Boundaries Zero tolerance policy
7. Feedback culture and content warnings
8. Communication

Welcome! If you're joining us at the Dust Palace for work, creation, volunteering, or training, please read this document carefully and familiarise yourself with our culture. This is how you can expect to be looked after and, in turn, how we expect you to behave when you're part of our team. We understand there is a lot here to take in - we do not expect perfect accordance to everything instantly, but we appreciate frequent efforts to be made in respecting our culture code.

1. Mission, aims, values

Our company mission is to present fun, exhilarating circus theatre that is intimate, visually stunning and brave in its frankness about human nature.

As a circus company, we value quality, audacity and humanity. Connecting communities, sharing skills, challenging, engaging and delighting audiences through narrative works in a genre bending blend of circus and physical theatre.

We aim to foster growth for the circus arts, circus practitioners in Aotearoa and to create tour-worthy circus theatre - taking Aotearoa's stories to the world!

2. Core behaviours

When we come together to create, work, and train, we honour our mission and values with core behaviors which build and maintain a respectful, brave, and compassionate community in which we can all thrive. We assume the best of everyone we work with and endeavour to be kind and



respectful in our actions and language. We have a sharing mindset, strongly upholding the non-competitive nature of circus as an art form.

3. Inclusion and diversity

We recognize people from many walks of life that may enter the building. We are aware that different marginalised groups of people have different needs, and we are always open to feedback from groups who are under-represented in circus about how we can better welcome them. We believe in an equity-based approach, and do our best to use our privilege to better create space for others where we can. Everyone is entitled to their beliefs and opinions, as long as those beliefs do not cause harm to others.

Some ways in which we incorporate inclusivity into our culture, is through respecting and affirming the takatāpui / lgbtqi+ community. It is also important to note many members of the The Dust Palace community are queer. Our language delivery strives to be all inclusive; there is to be no discrimination based on gender or sexuality.

Our space recognises we live on Māori land. We recognize Māori as tāngata whenua, and we uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) as part of our core values in the Dust Palace.

We also understand acrobatic forms of circus have often favoured able-bodied people, and we work to consider these needs and the needs also of those who have disabilities but appear non-disabled. Likewise, we work to consider the needs of neurodiverse individuals, including those who may also appear more neurotypical.

We incorporate mana wāhine into our practice. This means that we centre women when it comes to their safety, and ensure that they state what is safe for them on their own terms, whether in the creation space or otherwise needed.

4. Taking care of our space / kaitiakitanga / environmental sustainability

It is a privilege to work and train in our beautiful, purpose built circus studio, we value our space by leaving it clean and tidy. This includes putting our possessions neatly in the cubbyholes and tidying all equipment away after we use it. If we see something out of place, we take a moment to fix it or be sure to tell the relevant person.

When we are at events or other venues we are respectful visitors and we always leave our space better than we found it, especially our dressing rooms and greenroom.



The Dust Palace desires for best practice in terms of looking after our planet and mitigating the effects of climate change. We encourage the principles of : reduce reuse, recycle - in The Dust Palace Circus School, as well as in the creation and production of performances for The Dust Palace Productions.

We encourage carpooling to The Dust Palace Circus School with others in the same class.

Public Transport options:

Information is correct at time of writing, however for updated information please see www.at.govt.nz

Southern Line Train to Penrose train station, then a 20 minute walk to The Dust Palace
Buses from CBD - 321 from Quay St then a 13 minute walk to The Dust Palace

5. Health and safety / physical, mental, and safeguarding

We are committed to the health and safety of everyone involved with the dust palace in every way and committed to always using industry best practice. We have a detailed health and safety policy in our contractor handbook which allows us to provide everyone with a safe environment to train and create in. We use mats, spotters, and/or safety lines whenever necessary and we speak up if we see anything that is off.

We acknowledge the important relationship between mental and physical health and safety and endeavor to make sure the whole person, in whatever their current state is, is being looked after in every aspect. We are mindful of our own health and encourage and aid others to make safe choices for them. No one is encouraged to train or perform through injury or sickness.

At the Dust Palace we are committed to the welfare of all and we take extra precautions to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Dust Palace has a dedicated safeguarding policy in place which reflects our responsibility to ensure that all vulnerable individuals are free from all types of harm or abuse. It is given to all employees, contractors, and volunteers. It is also available for other space users. In short, the safeguarding policy lays out best practice for our staff and ensures all staff and volunteers are able to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns.

6. Consent, boundaries and overtraining + Zero tolerance policy

No form of bullying, harrasment, assault, or discrimination is tolerated at the Dust Palace

We respect boundaries on an individual level and as a group. Our respect extends to people's current state and health, recognizing that this might be different day to day. This also applies to all roles within the building. We encourage a supportive environment, where all people must be



free from peer-pressure to overtrain. No-one will be encouraged to train or perform through injury or sickness. We also encourage personal responsibility for one's own tolerance to training. We want people to have boundaries around time commitment, pay, availability and expectation.

7. Feedback culture and process, content warnings

Feedback is a valuable and important part of our creation and teaching process at the Dust Palace. Due to the sometimes personal and sensitive nature of works and processes it is important that all feedback is constructive, grounded and appropriate.

Before giving feedback we consider the following:

- We always ask if feedback is wanted and if this is an appropriate time before giving feedback.
- Unless a person is at risk of serious injury we wait until they have finished teaching, training, or rehearsing before approaching to give feedback privately.
- We recognise that our feedback is coming from our own unique perspective.
- If it is a work in development which we are not involved with, we are aware that we may not understand the full context for what is being explored.
- We are aware that others have the right to take on or ignore any feedback given.

Content warnings should be made available if working with sensitive material at times when others will be present. Adult themes and music will never be explored or played when there are youths in the building.

8. Communication and Empowerment

We acknowledge that there are power dynamics inherently in action at the Dust Palace; between coaches and students, various staff members, and depending on age and experience level. We endeavour to always be aware of our influence. When you find yourself in a position of influence, we advocate for using that influence to prioritize growth and uplift others. Be sure to be listening for quieter voices or people who may not feel empowered to speak up to you.

We take a collaborative approach to teaching, directing, and working with others. We acknowledge that the individual is the expert of their own body and boundaries. In terms of circus technique, we know that there are multiple techniques that can get results and we work with the student or collaborator to find the way that works for them. We understand that everyone, even those with less experience still may have valid knowledge or experience to share. Our teaching staff will strive to always meet people where they are at in our delivery of



teaching. We always aim to ensure that our education and creative processes uphold a humanistic and respectful approach.

We don't feel pressure to know everything. We take initiative and personal responsibility; checking correspondence, relevant calendars and emails and asking questions if we think anything has been missed. If we need something we ask for it knowing our request will be welcomed.

9. Further Reading

Please find our Safeguarding Policy and our Te Tiriti o Waitangi Policy here:
www.thedustpalace.co.nz/policies