



Equal Opportunity Policy

At the Australian School of Performing Arts (ASPA) everyone is valued and we aim to foster tolerance, honesty, cooperation and mutual respect for others. As a treble voice choir that combines choral singing with dance, the Australian Girls Choir provides equal opportunity for all school-aged girls and people who identify as girls regardless of sexuality, disability, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. ASPA Education programs provide equal opportunity for all. We endeavour to consciously include anyone who wishes to be involved in our activities.

At ASPA we aim to promote equality, and actively promote harmonious relationships with students, staff members, parents and members of the wider community. We recognise the importance of a safe environment which encourages open and forward thinking so that our students' physical, emotional and intellectual needs can be nurtured and developed.

Students from diverse backgrounds and experiences, at ASPA, might include but are not limited to, those:

- from various religious, cultural and language backgrounds
- with differences in learning ability and learning styles
- with a physical disability or medical illness
- with differing sexual orientation or gender identities
- with previous performing arts experiences
- who suffer financial disadvantage
- with psychological disorders and mental illness
- who have suffered or suffer physical, emotional and sexual abuse
- with a dysfunctional home environment

In order to consciously include, and enable all who wish to be involved, to flourish, ASPA has a responsibility to:

- provide a secure environment in which all choristers and participants can be healthy, safe, enjoy wellbeing, achieve and make a positive contribution
- provide a learning environment where all individuals feel a sense of belonging
- actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage
- monitor the needs of each individual student and respect the various learning styles and or varying rates in which our students physically, emotionally and intellectually develop
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity
- use inclusive language
- plan systematically to improve our understanding and promotion of diversity
- take reports of harassment or bullying behaviour seriously and to investigate and respond appropriately
- respond to any allegations or suspicion of inappropriate behaviour, on the part of students, parents, staff or any other associate of the organisation in accordance with ASPA's Child Protection Policy

To achieve these aims ASPA commits to:

- publishing and sharing our policies with the ASPA community
- working with parents of individual participants to create tailored management plans
- using available information to respond to participants' diverse needs and overcoming potential barriers to learning
- ensuring that all reasonable adjustments are made to ensure equality of opportunity
- having high expectations of behaviour for and between our staff members, students and ASPA families which demonstrates respect to others
- having a zero tolerance approach to harassment or bullying of any kind

Resolution of Disputes and Issues of Concern

Inappropriate behaviour is unacceptable in the Australian School of Performing Arts. No staff member, student, parent or family member has the right to harass or bully and no staff member, student, parent or family member has to put up with being harassed or bullied.

Harassment may involve inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments or physical contact that is objectionable, causes offence or makes the victim feel offended, humiliated, intimidated, frightened and/or uncomfortable.

Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour that victimises, humiliates, undermines or threatens an individual and creates a risk to physical or mental health and safety.

A student or parent who feels they have been victimised in any way should speak with APSA venue staff, or contact the ASPA Head Office to report the incident.

Exclusions

Competitive auditions are a reality of the Performing Arts. Some aspects of involvement in the Australian Girls Choir are restricted to those who audition and successfully meet all audition criteria, which may include an assessment of vocal quality; level of independence when holding a vocal part; ability to absorb and perform complicated dance routines; general musicianship, as well as stage and presentation skills. Some aspects are based on meeting selection criteria of a part, role or engagement. These exclusions include auditions or selections for:

- Senior performance groups Camerata, Performing Choir and Bel Canto
- Specialist choirs Cantini, Cantissimo and Canto
- Specialist dance ensembles Danzare and Ballare
- National and International Touring choirs
- Stellata - special singing, dance and drama parts in AGC concerts
- Engagements and special performances
- Leadership positions and awards

In the case of public choir engagements, selection may be based on the requirements and limitations imposed by the organisation running the event as well as particular venues at which the choir performs.

Invitations to audition

Eligible choristers are invited to audition for Camerata, Performing Choir, Bel Canto, Danzare and Ballare and touring choirs. For all other exclusions listed above, the class Tutor is responsible for nominating choristers to attend the city-based audition, or for selecting choristers based on special selection criteria. We aim to be subtle in our approach to selecting girls as some feel unnecessarily nervous or confronted by the idea of an audition, especially from the junior levels of the choir.

In addition to observing and monitoring chorister participation in every rehearsal, we also hold In-Class Audition Workshops for all girls in Allegro, Avanti, Prelude and Concert Level to expose them to the process of trying out for parts, and to provide the class Tutor more information about individual girls' skills. While it isn't possible to involve every girl in each engagement, the special parts in a concert, or an award, we are committed to giving all of them an opportunity to develop solo singing and individual performing skills.

Auditions

The Artistic Director sets criteria for each part, performance or group. In every AGC audition the staff member leading the audition will explain the criteria to the participating girls and coach them on how to deliver their best possible audition with those criteria in mind. Any auditioning chorister with disabilities or impairments will receive assistance in order to complete the audition where possible.

We invite any student, or parent or guardian of a student, enrolled in the AGC or an ASPA Education program to contact us to discuss equal opportunity and diversity, and to develop an individual inclusion plan if applicable.



Nicole Muir
CEO

This policy will be regularly reviewed.
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