



Equal Opportunity Policy

When referenced in this document Australian School of Performing Arts (ASPA) includes the Australian Girls Choir and ASPA Education.

At the Australian School of Performing Arts (ASPA) everyone is valued. We aim to foster tolerance, honesty, cooperation and mutual respect. As a treble voice choir that combines choral singing with movement, the Australian Girls Choir (AGC) provides equal opportunity for all school-aged girls and people who either identify as girls or are non-binary or gender non-conforming, regardless of sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy, 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 positive relationships between 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.

At ASPA, our students come from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Our community seeks to include people:

- from various religious, cultural and linguistic backgrounds;
- with differences in learning abilities and styles;
- with different physical abilities;
- with physical or mental health conditions;
- with differing sexual orientations;
- with differing gender identities;
- from diverse home, family and financial circumstances; and
- with different levels of previous performing arts experiences.

In order to include those who wish to be involved and to help them to flourish, ASPA will endeavour to:

- provide a secure environment in which all students, staff and participants can be healthy and safe and feel comfortable to 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 student and respect their individual learning styles and rates of physical, emotional and intellectual development;
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- use inclusive language;
- take reports of harassment or bullying behaviour seriously and to investigate and respond appropriately; and
- 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 and Child Safe Code of Conduct.

To achieve these aims, ASPA commits to:

- publishing and sharing our policies with the ASPA community;
- working with parents, students and teachers to create tailored support plans where appropriate;
- using available information to respond to a student's 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 our staff members, students and ASPA families; and
- having a zero-tolerance approach to harassment or bullying of any kind.

Resolution of Disputes and Issues of Concern

ASPA will not tolerate bullying, harassment or other inappropriate behaviour from staff, students, parents, guardians or other family members. 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, parent or guardian who feels they have been victimised in any way should speak with ASPA venue staff or contact the ASPA Head Office to report the incident.

Australian Girls Choir

ASPA is committed to the principles of diversity and to supporting all members of our community. We aim to provide an environment that is conducive to the wellbeing and happiness of all choristers and staff.

The AGC is an all-female treble-voiced choir. We welcome non-binary and gender non-conforming members.

If a chorister chooses to transition their gender identity or otherwise brings to ASPA's attention any matter concerning how they self-identify, ASPA will work with the chorister with utmost respect and care. ASPA will initiate a collaborative process with that chorister and their parents or guardians. ASPA will assess each matter on its merits and address all concerns and questions fairly. If a chorister chooses to transition to male, or use he/him pronouns, or it is otherwise no longer possible for that chorister to remain with the AGC, ASPA will endeavour to provide to that chorister all reasonable assistance that is in ASPA's power to provide.

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; and
- stage and presentation skills, including navigating low lighting and multi-level stages.

Some aspects of involvement are based on meeting selection criteria of a part, role or engagement. These criteria include auditions or selections for:

- senior performance groups Camerata, Performing Choir and Bel Canto;
- specialist choirs and dance ensembles Cantini, Cantissimo and Canto, Danzare and Ballare;
- national and international touring choirs;
- Stellata – special singing, dance and drama parts in AGC concerts;
- engagements and special performances; and
- 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

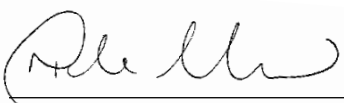
Eligible choristers are invited to audition for Camerata, Performing Choir, Bel Canto, Danzare and Ballare and touring choirs. For all other exclusions listed above, the class tutor is responsible for nominating or selecting choristers based on special selection criteria. We recognise that girls may feel anxiety or concern about an audition process, and aim to be subtle and considerate in our approach to selecting girls.

In addition to observing and monitoring student 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 all activities, we are committed to giving all girls 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 specific support needs will receive assistance to complete the audition where possible.

We invite any student, or parent 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.
Date: September 2024