



**Castlemaine Circus
Member Handbook
2024**

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1. Introduction

Our History

Castlemaine Circus Inc. is a not for profit organisation that was established in November 2013 in direct response to community demand. It has enjoyed a relatively rapid rise and growth to become an established not for profit organisation that supports the pursuits and passions of 200+ students in a weekly program of 20 classes. The establishment of Castlemaine Circus was driven by a small group of committed individuals with a broad range of skills. The establishment of the organisation's structure, the recruitment of trainers and the growth in participation rates in classes have placed Castlemaine Circus in a strong position as a provider of circus training in regional Victoria. The Circus aims to provide ongoing and accessible circus training and performance opportunities to the Central Victorian community.

'There is a growing regional circus culture and local circus community that is attracting a broad demographic of young people and community members.

This culture is pushing the boundaries of circus as an art-form to create empowering outcomes, innovation and excellence. '

Castlemaine Circus Strategic Plan 2016 - 2020

Our Purpose

The purposes of the association are

- To coach children, youth and adults in circus skills and physical theatre.
- To create a safe and positive social environment for young people to participate in performing arts activities.
- To promote healthy, physical, non-competitive activity.
- To encourage creativity and innovation.
- To provide employment opportunities for local professional circus artists.
- To partner with other community organisations to provide training and performance opportunities for broad and diverse community participation.

Our Principles

To educate, empower and entertain, through providing a training program that is:

- Fun!
- Community driven - from the people, for the people, by the people.
- Reflective and constantly improving.
- Challenging and adventurous as well as supportive and nurturing.
- Healthy and non-competitive.
- Accessible and inclusive - celebrating diversity, creating a safe, physical and social space for all ages, abilities, genders and cultures.
- Creative and innovative.
- Ethical and based in social justice.

2. Classes and Enrolment

2.1 Classes

Castlemaine Circus runs 32 classes per week with 400 + students in attendance. We run 2-3 weekly classes for each age group, from preschoolers right through to teens and adult classes. We also run workshops and specialist classes for educational institutions, community organisations and the general public.

Castlemaine Circus continues to grow to meet the needs of the community. We aim to have our classes accessible to most skill levels and abilities. We work with families, community groups and schools to provide inclusive and stimulating classes and to meet the varying approaches to learning.

If you are unsure about what class to enrol in, or would like more information, please discuss with your trainer or contact the Enrolment Coordinator.

2.2 Enrolling and Fees

Class enrolment and information is available [online](#) or by contacting the Enrolment Coordinator. Our website includes dates, times, trainers and descriptions of all classes.

Enrol:

- Contact the Enrolment coordinator via email or phone to check availability.
- Complete the online Enrolment and Membership form.
- Receive confirmation email and invoice.
- Enrolment is for the whole term.
- You may trial a class first for free before committing. If you commit you will be charged for the trial class.
- Enrolment in a class rolls over from one term to the next unless you have notified us by the deadline. At the end of the year we need to have confirmation of your enrolment for Term 1.
- A class may not go ahead if the enrolment numbers are not sufficient or a trainer cannot be secured.

Fee Payment:

- Membership fee is for the whole family and is on an annual basis.
- Class fees are based on the length of the term. Additional fees apply for required performances/rehearsals/masterclasses.
- A trial class is priced at 1 x class fee and will be included in the term fees if you proceed with enrolment. Otherwise it is free.
- Participants will be invoiced 1-2 weeks prior to the commencement of each term. Payment is made by direct deposit through our online portal.
- Payment is due before the commencement of the first class of term. We cannot confirm your spot in the class if this payment is not made.

- Students enrolled in 2 classes or more receive a 30% discount on the extra class(es). Siblings/family members receive a 10% fee discount for the sibling(s). These discounts are offered separately and are not combined.
- Payment plans can be set up, please email the General Manager for a plan.

Refunds/Invoice adjustment:

Refunds are not available for:

- Students who change their mind about participating in classes. Students may swap classes during term, if there is space available.
- Students that miss a class: A make up class can be taken in another class if there is space available. A maximum of two make up classes are available per term.
- Cancelled class - If a class is cancelled due extreme weather or trainer unavailability, participants can either do a make up class within the timetable or come to a make up day on the first Sunday of the school holidays.
- For long holidays: To hold your spot in the class you need to pay for the term. If you choose not to stay enrolled, you can go back on the waiting list and you will be put at the top of the waiting list.

Refunds/Credits are available for:

- Absence due to medical reasons 4 or more weeks eg surgery, major injury with doctors certificate. Credit your account for 50% for the rest of the term to hold your spot.
- Sudden or extreme financial hardship / Compassionate circumstances – please discuss with Enrolment Coordinator for a refund or credit
- More than one cancelled class in the term due to extreme weather

3. Rights and Responsibilities

3.1 Participant Rights and Responsibilities

- Have fun! Allow yourself time to develop and be prepared to learn and challenge yourself.
- Observe safe training practices at all times. Work safely as an individual and with other participants. Listen to trainer's instructions at all times.
- Notify the trainer and the class coordinator of any relevant injuries.
- Remain in the waiting area until class time has begun. Do not enter the training space until invited by the trainer, as that is when the space is safe.
- No devices to be used in the class, unless to call a parent. This is a physical and social space.
- Behave in a courteous and respectful manner towards trainers, fellow participants, circus staff and volunteers.
- Act in a manner that fosters a culture of support, positivity and cooperation.

- Refrain from using language or behaviour that is offensive, discriminatory or intimidating to others
- Arrive to class on time.
- Wear appropriate clothing (leggings, shorts, tshirt, tracksuit), be clean, hair tied back, no jewelry, nails clipped. Bring a drink bottle and hankie if needed.
- Respect our venue. Help keep it clean and tidy and do not eat food inside.
 - The trainer may need to temporarily or permanently remove anyone from the class who poses a safety or disciplinary problem.

3.2 Parent/Carer Rights and Responsibilities

- Behave in a courteous and respectful manner towards trainers, participants, circus staff and volunteers.
- Inform trainers and the Enrolment Coordinator of any existing medical conditions or behavioural/social issues or concerns. This information is essential to ensure all students are well supported and to maintain a fun and safe class culture.
- Pick up and drop off participants in time for class.
- Remain with your child until the class has started. The duty of care is with the parent until the class has commenced.
- Respect the venue, take all belongings with you, do not eat food inside and talk quietly while the class is on.
- Read all communications sent out.
- Pay fees on time. Notify Enrolment Coordinator of any short or long term absences.
- Do not take photos of the class.
- Be involved in Castlemaine Circus in other ways other if you can! Eg volunteer for fundraising events.
- Offer feedback about classes to the trainers or to the Enrolment Coordinator.
- Check lost property basket for any missing items. We are not responsible for any lost property.
 - The trainer may need to temporarily or permanently remove anyone from the class who poses a safety or disciplinary problem. The trainer will discuss any situation with the parent at the end of class. The parent and the trainer may need to work together on a plan to maintain a safe and respectful class dynamic.

3.3 Trainer Rights and Responsibilities

- Provide a fun, safe and challenging class that is appropriate for all skills levels in the class.
- Act in a manner that fosters a culture of support, positivity and cooperation.
- Plan classes and arrive 15 minutes early to set up and be ready to start and finish on time.

- Set up a safe space and remove all hazards. Invite the participants into the space when it is safe and ready. Supervise all participants during the class times.
- Students are not allowed to use the equipment outside of class times.
- Behave in a courteous and respectful manner towards fellow trainers, participants, families, circus staff and volunteers.
- Communicate professionally with parents and staff regarding any concerns.
- Report any medical incidents to the parent and the Enrolment Coordinator and complete the Incident Form.
- Comply with Castlemaine Circus Code of Conduct and Child Safe Policy.
- Comply with all other Castlemaine Circus Policies – including no discrimination, no offensive or inappropriate language or behaviour, no smoking or drinking alcohol or taking of drugs.
- Have current Level 2 First Aid and Working with Children Check.
- Have signed a contract of Employment.

4. Occupational Health and Safety

4.1 OHS and Risk Indemnity

Castlemaine Circus is committed to providing a safe workplace and training facility for all staff, volunteers and program participants. We are committed to ensuring reasonable care is taken at all times to avoid exposing staff, volunteers, program participants or visitors to risks of injury of any kind.

Program participants and their legal guardians are in turn expected to accept their responsibility to work and train safely, to notify the trainers and staff of any unsafe hazards and to behave in a safe and respectful manner both within the Circus space and in the immediate surrounds of the premises.

All program participants must read and understand the following:

Classes may include the following 'Scheduled Activities': solo, partner and group acro balance, acrobatics, tumbling, gymnastics, handstands, mini tramp, juggling, rope climbing, solo and double trapeze / cloud swing, tissue, hula hoops, slack line, hoop diving, pyramids, unicycle, spinning plates, diablo, devil sticks, stilts for participants over 8 years, slapstick, clowning and physical comedy, mime, games, flexibility training, strength exercises, warm up and cool down and other physical activities.

By agreeing to the Members Handbook, families acknowledge and agree:

- That intended 'Scheduled Activities' that make up the classes are inherently dangerous and may result in serious personal injury.
- To voluntarily assume all risks (including, but not limited to, those associated with activities in the Scheduled Activities) of any harm, injury, or damage suffered whether foreseen or unforeseen in connection with the Class course.

- To indemnify Castlemaine Circus Inc and coaches from any liabilities, claims, and causes of action that may be brought against the above as a result of, or in connection with a negligent act, omission, failure or error as a participant in the Class course.

4.2 Emergency and Evacuation Procedures

- In the event of an emergency, trainer/staff instructions must be followed.
- Trainers will contact emergency services and be responsible for all participants in the space.
- Emergency compliance of the venue is the responsibility of Castlemaine Hot Rods. There are three emergency exits, the front entrance and either end of the building all with fire extinguishers and hoses. The emergency assembly point is on the oval.

4.3 Medical Incident Procedures

- Castlemaine Circus is committed to preventing accidents and minimising dangerous occurrences. We endeavour to achieve a zero accident rate.
 - All injuries will be assessed by a trainer qualified in First Aid to determine whether medical treatment is required. If medical treatment is required, suitable arrangements should be made for transport of the injured person to a doctor or hospital.
- The trainer present will complete an Incident Report Form and notify the Enrolment Coordinator within 24 hours of the incident occurring.
 - If a child is injured and the trainer present during the incident deems this necessary, the legal guardian of the injured participant will be contacted immediately. Alternatively, the legal guardian may be informed of the incident at pick up time.
- There is a duty of care by the trainer to make the final decision in an emergency if an ambulance is required. Parents give permission for trainers to seek appropriate medical attention in the case of injury. Parents will indemnify the Circus of any costs incurred during the emergency.
- Participants and families must notify trainers of any incident that occurs in a class that was not noticed by the trainer at the time.
- Parents must supply a medical certificate to the Circus after any sustained injury and before returning to class.

4.4 Insurance

- The Castlemaine Circus Inc is covered by Group Accident Insurance and Public Liability Insurance. Our insurance cover is limited to \$2,000 for non-medicare rebated services.

5. Child Safe

- All children have a right to feel and be safe. The safety and well-being of the children and young people participating in the programs Castlemaine Circus offers is unnegotiable. Ensuring all children are safe and well cared for is our first priority.

Castlemaine Circus Member Handbook 2024

- We are committed to creating a child safe and child friendly environment within which all children are respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered, and are committed to pursuing our best to facilitate this.
- We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and promptly. Child protection is a shared responsibility within Castlemaine Circus and includes all employees, contractors, associates, volunteers and members of the Castlemaine Circus community. Everyone at Castlemaine Circus is responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care, and for reporting information about suspected child abuse.
- We are committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and to removing and reducing these risks. Adhering to our legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, we will investigate all concerns relating to the safety and well-being of children at Castlemaine Circus rigorously.
- Our human resources and recruitment practices for all staff, contractors and volunteers are robust and rigorous to ensure child-safety is guaranteed at all times. All trainers and volunteers must have Working with Children Checks and our lead trainers must have current Level 2 First Aid Certificates.
- We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

6. Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

- Castlemaine Circus aims to promote a positive environment that respects and values difference in all members. Our goal is for all Circus' trainers, staff, volunteers and participants to feel safe, secure and free from intimidation when they are participating in Circus programs.
- Castlemaine Circus has a legal obligation to maintain the wellbeing of its staff, trainers, volunteers and participants and to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that these individuals are not exposed to discrimination, harassment and bullying.
- Breach of these guidelines may lead to disciplinary action being taken such as exclusion from classes in serious cases. Compliance with these guidelines is mandatory for all trainers, staff, volunteers and participants of the Castlemaine Circus.
- Castlemaine Circus accepts and acts on its duty of care. We recognise that discrimination, harassment and bullying are highly distressing experiences. We will therefore investigate any reported allegations promptly, thoroughly and fairly. We will handle all complaints in a confidential and impartial manner. Where confidentiality cannot be guaranteed this will be clearly communicated to the relevant parties. We will treat all parties involved with respect and fairness at all times.

6.1 Dispute Resolution Procedures

- We encourage any person experiencing discrimination, harassment or bullying behaviour to raise the issue early. Firstly, you can raise the issue with the trainer. If necessary, the trainer may raise it with the person doing the bullying.
- If the behaviour continues, or if the complainant feels unable to speak to the trainer, they should contact the General Manager. The General Manager will provide support and ascertain the nature of the complaint and adopt a confidential, non-confrontational approach with a view to resolving the issue. If necessary, a formal investigation may be conducted by the General Manager
- On the basis of the findings, possible outcomes of a formal investigation may include, but may not be limited to a formal apology, disciplinary action, official warning, dismissal from employment or program participation

7. Privacy

- Castlemaine Circus is committed to managing information entrusted to our organisation with utmost diligence, and to maintaining privacy and confidentiality where required at all times.
- While we will place the minimum of restrictions on the information our organisation holds, we will ensure that such restrictions – where considered necessary – are observed by our staff, contractors, Board and volunteers.
We will also ensure the privacy of personal information we collect, hold and administer is always protected. We recognise the essential right of individuals to have their information administered in ways which they would reasonably expect – protected on one hand, and made accessible to them on the other. These privacy values are reflected in and supported by our core values and also reflected in this Policy, in compliance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).
- All information provided as a result of dispute procedures will be kept confidential. No information will be released to any third party except with the individual's written consent or to obtain professional or legal advice or if required by law.
- Photos will be taken of participants in class or performances by staff, trainers or a contractor. These photos will be used for promotional and documentary purposes.
- Families can indicate on the enrolment form for photos not to be used for promotional purposes.

8. Communication

All communication will be sent out via email or text from the Enrolment Coordinator or the General Manager. Please read these emails to find out all the exciting information about coming to classes, new workshops, working bees, changes to enrolments and more!

Policies

The Castlemaine Circus Member Handbook contains excerpts from some of our Policies and Procedures. If you would like to read any of our Policies or Procedures, please contact the General Manager.

Contact Us:

Old High School gym

35 ETTY St, Castlemaine

P: 0488 424 657

W : www.castlemainecircus.com.au

F : @CastlemaineCircusInc

Office Hours: Mon - Fri. 9am – 4pm

Staff:

General Manager – Kirsty Sutherland, classes@castlemainecircus.com.au

Enrolment Coordinator – Caz Walsh, enrol@castlemainecircus.com.au

School Holiday Program – Bek Connors, info@castlemainecircus.com.au

Marketing – Bron Willis, broncastlemainecircus@gmail.com

Trainers and Riggers:

Mandy Field, Flynn Patrao, Cameron MacLeman, Nichola Hall, Caz Walsh, Bek Connors, Robbie Brassington, Luke O'Connor, Luke Taylor, Armstrong Scherlies, Sam Campbell, Kaeleb Glinski, Mitch Hughes, Ez Hall and Adam Davis.

Board Members:

Jane MCCahon, Lauren Jeffreys, Kerry Bourke, Liz Stearne, Armstrong Scherlies