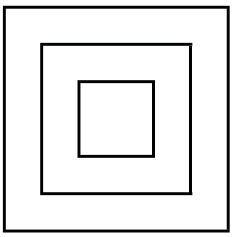
Guidelines
22 September 2026



These guidelines were approved for use at the meeting of the Board of Vapaan Taidekoulun Kannatusyhdistys ry (Free Art School Support Association) on 20 October 2026.

SAFER SPACE PRINCIPLES

In its action plans, the Free Art School has committed to being an inspiring learning environment where people thrive. We invest in the occupational well-being of artists and in building team spirit. We emphasise the importance of an encouraging, respectful and energising atmosphere, and we do not tolerate bullying.

We understand that individuality, difference and diversity are strengths. We do not force anyone to be an extrovert against their nature; ultimately, we support each student in developing as a painter in a way that suits them. We value artistic freedom.

These guidelines explain what inappropriate treatment and behaviour are, and how to act if you have been treated inappropriately, have witnessed inappropriate treatment, or have been accused of inappropriate treatment.

We also set out our principles for the responsible use of intoxicants.

In addition, the guidelines outline general principles for the use of the school's premises and property.

Responsible use of the school's premises and property is also an important part of a safer space atmosphere. More detailed instructions on the use of the premises, waste management, and questions related to teaching, health and safety can be found in the Free Art School's general guidelines.

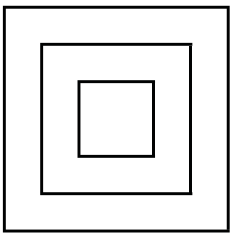
1. WHAT IS INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENT?

Every member of the school community is, for their part, responsible for the atmosphere and well-being of the whole community.

However, individuals experience situations differently, so it can sometimes be difficult to determine when behaviour is appropriate and when it is not. In general terms, inappropriate treatment means behaviour towards others that goes against accepted standards of conduct – it can take the form of bullying, discrimination or harassment.

In a school environment, it must also be remembered that a teacher is always in a position of power in relation to a student. Teachers must use their position of power responsibly.

Bullying, discrimination and harassment are not accepted at the Free Art School. Anyone experiencing inappropriate treatment is encouraged to raise the matter immediately and will be supported in doing so. Situations brought to the attention of the school administration are investigated promptly and appropriately.



Discrimination means treating a person or group of people differently from others in a comparable situation without an acceptable reason.

An employer has an obligation to intervene when it becomes aware of possible inappropriate behaviour in the workplace, even if it is only suspected.

Drastic measures are not always necessary. It is perfectly normal for disagreements, misunderstandings and/or conflicts to arise between people in a community from time to time. The school recommends that the parties address conflicts between themselves as soon as they arise, and apologise even for unintentional offence, so that the working relationship remains one of trust. This is often enough to resolve the matter.

2. IN SERIOUS CONFLICT SITUATIONS

If a more thorough investigation of the matter is needed, the following procedure applies:

1. We seek to establish what actually happened and record it in writing: what, where, when, and who was involved. Did the situation recur, and if so, in what form?
2. We discuss with the parties what happened and how each of them experienced it.
3. If there has been disruptive behaviour, we draw up the necessary agreements on work and conduct between the parties and record them in a memorandum. We agree with the parties on how the matter will be communicated within the school community. After this, we monitor how the situation develops.
4. If it is not possible to reach an agreement, or if previously established inappropriate treatment continues, we initiate disciplinary proceedings or take management measures.

In the case of an employee: The Free Art School handles suspected breaches by an employee of obligations arising from the employment relationship in accordance with the legislation governing employment relationships and occupational safety. If an agreement to end the inappropriate treatment cannot be reached, or the act is otherwise such that it requires more serious intervention by the employer, the employee may receive a verbal reprimand or a written warning. If the inappropriate treatment is serious and/or ongoing, the employment relationship may be terminated by dismissal with notice or by summary dismissal.

In the case of a student: A student who behaves violently or threateningly, or who otherwise seriously defies the community's rules (theft, negligence, breaches of occupational safety rules), may be given a warning and suspended from the school for a fixed period. If the inappropriate behaviour is very serious and/or repeated, the student may be permanently expelled from the school.

The Free Art School does not investigate events that are more than two years old, nor does it reinvestigate cases that have already been dealt with unless something new has emerged.

3. RESPONSIBLE USE OF INTOXICANTS

A substance-free working and study environment contributes to the well-being of the Free Art School's staff and students.

Studying, working or being present at the Free Art School while intoxicated is not permitted. If a student or employee is suspected of being intoxicated, the situation must be addressed by reporting it to staff.

The consumption of alcohol is permitted only at events and occasions for which separate permission has been granted. Alcohol consumption must not cause a disturbance at such occasions. Anyone behaving disruptively must be asked to leave the event.

The possession and use of narcotics, as well as working or acting under their influence, during the school's study or exhibition activities or otherwise when representing the Free Art School, are prohibited. The Free Art School's premises are smoke-free, and smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes, is permitted only outdoors in designated areas.

4. THE FREE ART SCHOOL AS A PUBLIC SPACE

During its opening hours, the Cable Factory (Kaapelitehdas) is a public space where anyone may move about and spend time freely, provided they do not disturb others. However, access to the school's premises, such as teaching studios and staff or student workspaces, is restricted both during and outside the school's opening hours.

Outside opening hours, all school premises are accessed with a personal key, and outsiders must not be let into the premises. Access rights are granted only to Free Art School staff and to students from the second year onwards, or to persons in an equivalent position, to the extent required by their work and studies. Access rights are managed by the Free Art School administration.

Filming or other audiovisual recording of teaching is permitted only with the permission of the teacher and the student group concerned.

The Free Art School's premises may be photographed freely for personal or journalistic use during the school's opening hours, provided that the photography does not interfere with the school's activities, damage its property or disturb the school's students, staff or other users of the premises. Photographing people always requires the consent of those concerned.

The permission of the persons concerned is also required to publish images. Nothing may be shared on social media that violates the privacy of other students or staff.

5. USE OF THE FREE ART SCHOOL´S PREMISES AND MOVABLE PROPERTY

The school's premises and property (furniture, machines, equipment, supplies) are intended for studying, artistic activity and other school-related work. Staying overnight on the school premises, even on a temporary basis, is prohibited as a rule. Any use for other purposes must always be agreed with the school in advance. The Free Art School may restrict the use of its premises and property for justified reasons.

The Free Art School is a religiously and politically non-affiliated organisation. Political, religious and other campaigning or proselytising activity is prohibited. Commercial activity organised by the school itself, such as book sales, is permitted, as are art sales organised by the student union. Any other commercial activity requires permission.

Everyone must do their part to keep the premises clean and pleasant.

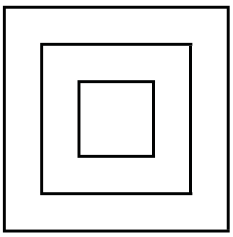
6. PROPERTY OF THE FREE ART SCHOOL

The school's property must be handled with care and caution. The separate operating and maintenance instructions for machines and equipment must be followed. Any faults, deficiencies, safety hazards or hazardous activities observed must be reported without delay to the school's producer, the teacher in charge of the course, the study coordinator or another member of the administration.

Everyone is liable for any damage they cause, intentionally or through carelessness, to the school's property or premises.

7. CONTACT INFORMATION

The primary contact person for reporting inappropriate behaviour is the study coordinator, Ilse Rossander, but you are always welcome to contact any member of the administration, however small the matter may seem. Up-to-date contact details can be found on the school's website: The Free Art School | Vapaa taidekoulu



SUMMARY: SAFER SPACE PRINCIPLES IN OUR ACTIVITIES

These principles apply to all activities carried out in the name of the Free Art School. They can be used as they are or supplemented to suit teaching and other situations. It is important that both members of our community and visitors to our events commit to following the principles. Together, we can create a safer space for everyone to study, work, and make and experience art.

I see all people as equally valuable

- I respect everyone's identity, background and right to self-definition. I do not make assumptions based on appearance, behaviour or other characteristics. I use the name and pronouns that each person uses.
- Every member of the community is responsible for creating a safer space for others.
- If I notice inappropriate behaviour in the community, such as bullying, discrimination or harassment, I intervene. I offer support if someone else is being treated badly.
- If I do something wrong, I take responsibility. I apologise and learn from the feedback I receive.

I approach situations with an open mind

- I strive to welcome new people, topics and perspectives without prejudice.
- I see the things and situations I encounter as opportunities to learn and grow.
- I respect and make room for the thoughts and suggestions of others. Through my own actions, I make sure that everyone's voice is heard and that everyone can participate.
- I take responsibility for shared spaces. I do my part to keep the premises pleasant and always leave the room tidy.

Safer space principles for events and teaching

- I respect those who make art and those who experience it.
- I recognise that almost all of our exhibitions and other events are part of students' studies. It is important that I treat these events with respect and follow the instructions given.
- I arrive at teaching sessions on time. If I am late, I wait for instructions from the teacher and do not interrupt teaching in progress.
- Each exhibition has separate instructions on which works may and may not be touched. I follow the instructions displayed in the exhibition spaces.
- During teaching, I keep my phone on silent and out of sight.
- I do not film or photograph teaching sessions without specific permission.
- I step in when I see disruptive behaviour and report it to staff. By stepping in, I also set an example for others.