



Teacher update

January 2026

Hi everyone

2026 is off to a flying start – meaning time is going so quickly and January is almost over. I am finally getting the time to send you all our latest news.

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1. Team updates

Welcomes and changes across the team

A few updates to the teaching and business services team as we head into the year:

- **Alannah Talbot** has decided not to teach regularly this year, but will remain available to cover classes when needed.
- **Millie Garard** has decided not to teach this year and will continue her role in Business Services. She's also looking forward to doing more dancing for herself this year.
- **Amy de Halyn** is back in Adelaide and teaching while she's here. She's currently teaching Wednesday and Friday mornings, as well as Saturday Level 6 ballet and experienced pointe.
- **Louise Durrans** has been covering my jazz and contemporary classes on Wednesday nights and may continue in this capacity for a bit longer, as my body is still not recovering as quickly as hoped and I may need more rest.
- **Stefaan Morrow** will be joining the teaching team from February. Stefaan taught advanced ballet and contemporary at Dragonfly pre-COVID and has spent the past few years focused on performance work, including with Lewis Major. He's returning to teaching and will take the Tuesday night ballet classes for the upcoming six-week cycle.
- **Camila Saraia** and **Stella Page** have both taken January off and we're expecting them back soon.

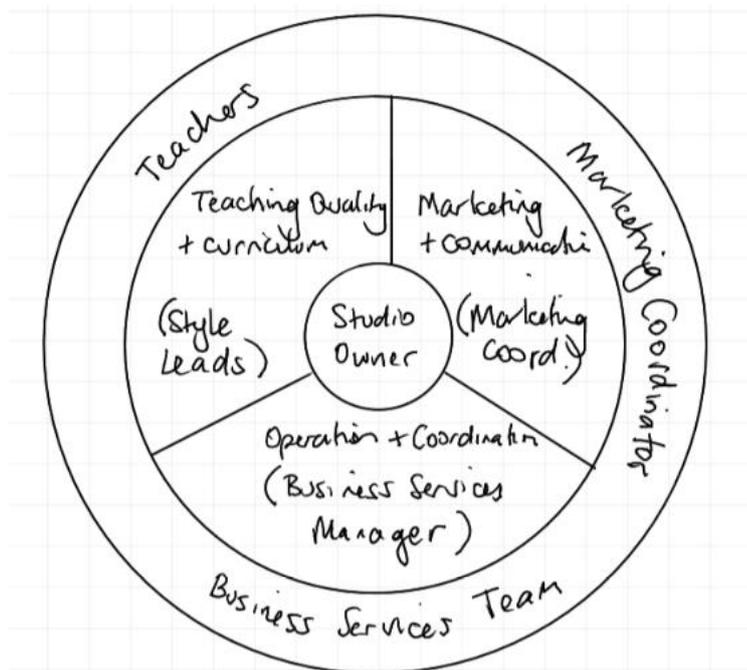
A change in structure

Late last year, I spent time thinking carefully about how to manage our growing team, client base, and my own workload. The studio is now too big for one person to be across everything I've been holding, and there's still more I want our community to offer. For that reason, I've decided to **pilot a different way of working**.

This sits within **Metamorphosis 2026**, which is less about growth for its own sake and more about sustainability. That includes making sure I'm focusing my energy where it's most effective, and handing over some responsibilities so the studio can be supported more consistently.

The pilot involves increased support from **Business Services**, with **Anne** coordinating that work, alongside the introduction of a **Style Lead for each dance style**.

The diagram below shows how the roles connect and support one another without creating hierarchy.



How the roles fit together

- **Dance Style Leads** support teaching quality and curriculum within their dance style. They focus on standards, alignment, class observation and feedback, and contributing insight to the ongoing development of the Dragonfly method and curriculum. This is not a supervisory or line-management role and does not include contracts, rostering, or employment matters.
- **Business Services**, led by Anne, supports the logistics that allow this work to happen reliably. This includes coordinating class observations and recordings, managing rosters and cover, communicating schedules to teachers, and supporting the practical systems around teaching quality and curriculum processes.
- **I remain the Studio Owner and central decision-maker.** All teachers still report to me. The Style Leads and Anne are supporting this role, not replacing it, so that quality, clarity, and follow-through don't rely on one person holding everything at once.

Style leads

The current Dance Style Leads are Krystal (Tap), Effie (Jazz), Belinda (Contemporary), with Ballet currently covered by me. Their role includes contributing to curriculum and method development within their style, supporting teaching quality through observation and feedback, and liaising with teachers working in that genre.

I've chosen this structure rather than appointing supervisors, as many teachers work across more than one style, and a traditional reporting model doesn't make sense in that context.

I'll share more information about this shortly, as I've got a lot of ground to cover in this missive.

2. Curriculum and method

An area I am planning to give a lot more attention to this year is the development of our curriculum and teaching method, including fleshing it out, and providing better training and resources to support teachers in working in this way.

The **curriculum framework** is the *what*.

It sets out the skills and knowledge we want dancers to develop as they progress, and provides a shared structure that sits underneath each dance genre. This central framework is then applied to ballet, contemporary, jazz, and tap to create detailed, style-specific curricula.

The **method** is the *how*.

It's about how we support dancers to build those skills in class and through learning resources, including how material is introduced, reinforced, layered, and revisited over time.

The framework is organised into a set of eight domains that reflect the full scope of dance training. These include:

- movement vocabulary
- technique
- conditioning
- proprioception
- pattern recognition
- memory
- temporal skills, including rhythm, musicality, dynamics, expression, and artistry
- theory, which is a knowledge domain, alongside the skill-based domains above

Many of you will recognise that you already cover much of this in your teaching. The value of the framework is not in changing good practice, but in **making it more visible and intentional**. It helps us teach with greater clarity, and helps dancers understand the breadth of skills and knowledge they're developing through their training.

We'll be unpacking this further in our first team meeting for the year. In the meantime, please read through the full curriculum framework (available on the Team Hub webpage – www.dragonflydance.com.au/team-hub), reach out with any questions, and start noticing how these domains show up in your own classes.

In addition, we will run training sessions throughout the year for practical training.

3. Working arrangements in 2026

Employment update

As you are aware, our regular teaching team has now transitioned from contractor arrangements to employment, and contracts have been issued. This shift supports the way the studio now operates, particularly with planned rosters, training, meetings, and shared standards. Having our regular teachers as employees allows us to provide clearer structure, consistency, and advance planning, while also meeting our obligations under the Fitness Award.

Fill-in and short-term cover teachers will generally continue to be engaged as contractors, as this model is more appropriate for occasional or ad hoc work.

Roster system

This year, we are trialling a 6 week rostering cycle, with two cycles per quarter. Rosters will be released around two weeks before the next cycle starts, wherever possible.

This doesn't mean classes or teachers will automatically change every six weeks. Many classes will stay consistent across cycles. However, the structure gives us flexibility to make short-term changes when useful, for example for 4 or 6 weeks, so:

- dancers have the opportunity to learn from different teachers, and
- teachers can work with a wider range of students and levels, within the dance styles they're qualified to teach.

Rosters will be sent by Anne, and developed in collaboration with me and the Style Leads.

A key part of Metamorphosis 2026 is shifting our team culture from me chasing responses, to shared responsibility for timely communication. It's essential that teachers respond to roster-related messages by the requested deadline. If you don't respond, you won't be rostered for that cycle.

To support this, we'll aim to provide as much advance notice as possible, including an annual calendar covering rosters, meetings, training, and key communications, so everyone can manage their time more easily.

The rotating system also supports teacher development, helping build confidence working across different levels over time. To make this work well for dancers, it's very important that progress sheets are kept up to date, so any handover between teachers is smooth and dancers experience continuity and progression, rather than feeling like things are disjointed or inconsistent.

4. Team meetings and training

This year, I'm changing the rhythm of team meetings to better support connection, learning, and follow-through. Instead of **3-hour meetings every 12 weeks**, we'll move to **90-minute**

team meetings every 6 weeks. The aim is to stay more connected, reduce information overload, and make meetings easier to attend and more useful.

Because the Fitness Award requires a minimum **3-hour paid shift**, each meeting day will also include a **90-minute training session**. These training sessions will be practical and skills-based, and may be run by me or by Style Leads within their dance genre. The focus will be on deepening our shared understanding of the **curriculum framework and teaching method**, rather than relying only on written materials. From time to time, we may also run training that isn't curriculum-related, including sessions led by external presenters (for example first aid, inclusivity, or other professional development areas).

Format and timing

1.00–2.30pm – Team meeting
2.30–3.00pm – Break
3.00–4.30pm – Training session

This timing allows teachers starting classes at 5.30pm a clear break before teaching.

Meetings and training are paid at the rates outlined in your contract.

Virtual attendance

If you're unable to attend in person, we'll set up **Microsoft Teams** so you can join by video. This is particularly important for teachers like **Belinda**, who work full time and can't attend weekday meetings in person.

2026 meeting dates

Meetings will run every six weeks on Tuesdays:
17 Feb, 31, Mar, 12 May, 23 June, 4 Aug, 15 Sep, 27 Oct, 8 Dec

I'll aim to share a draft schedule for the year soon. This will be flexible, but will give everyone a clearer sense of what's coming. In the meantime, please let me know if there are specific areas you'd like support with through training this year.

5. Classes update

When I released the 2026 timetable late last year, it included a small number of new classes. As we moved into the start of the year, it became clear that we hadn't had the chance to properly promote those classes, which meant launching them immediately didn't make sense.

The intention was then to start them when schools went back in the last week of January. However, with a number of other priorities in play, that promotion still hasn't happened. Rather than rushing a launch without giving the classes the best chance of success, I've decided to delay them again until the next 6-week cycle.

This allows us to:

- promote the classes properly
- support teachers and students with clearer communication
- launch new offerings in a more considered and sustainable way

Existing classes continue as scheduled, and I'll share updated information about the new classes and their start dates closer to the next cycle.

I'll be in touch directly with any teachers who are teaching beginner classes that haven't started yet.