



CHILD AND ADULTS AT RISK PROTECTION POLICY

(also known as "CAARP Policy")

**ASCENSION EAGLES CHEERLEADERS
and
TALENT CENTRAL CHEER & DANCE**

**Last updated:
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**Trustee lead for this policy:
Peter Sharp**

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1. Introduction To This Policy

Ascension Eagles Cheerleaders/Talent Central recognises the importance of its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to its care.

This policy is called the Child And Adults At Risk Protection Policy; also referred to in this document as the “CAARP Policy” or “the policy”.

This Policy is for and applies to:

- Ascension Eagles Cheerleaders
- Talent Central Cheer & Dance.

In this document the above will be referred to as “The Group” or “We”.

Wherever this document uses the expression “parent” or “parents” this includes the responsible adult/s who is/are the principal caregiver/s for a child.

As an organisation working with children and young people, The Group has a duty to protect children from the possibility of being abused within The Group and - if abuse does come to light – to act responsibly and appropriately.

The Group recognises that, sadly, whenever human beings associate there will always be a risk of abuse and, of course, this includes - but is not limited to - cheerleading settings. Therefore, the Group is committed to providing a safe space for all its members and to supporting any member who is a victim of abuse regardless of where that abuse has taken place (eg within a familial, social, digital or institutional setting).

The Group also recognises that it has a duty to ensure employees and volunteers are well-informed about the risks and prevention of abuse, and are equipped to recognise signs of abuse. Some people (eg young or vulnerable people) may not be in a position to recognise that they are subject to abuse, regardless of whether or not such abuse takes place in connection with cheerleading.

Further, these people may not feel able to - or be capable of - sharing concerns or their experiences of abuse. These athletes are therefore reliant upon adults and responsible persons around them to recognise signs of abuse.

It is the responsibility of the AEC Board of Trustees to appoint a Nominated Safeguarding Lead and a Deputy Safeguarding Lead to oversee the implementation of this policy. These positions will be held for a one-year term and then be reviewed by the Board as appropriate.

The nominated people in these two roles will work with the statutory agencies and other organisations, as required.

The AEC Board also appoints a Trustee Safeguarding Lead who will report to the Board at each Board meeting on The Group’s safeguarding practice, including raising any concerns of which the Board needs to be aware and any incidents which have taken place (in accordance with any confidentiality/ reporting restrictions which may apply).

1.1. Monitoring And Review Of The CAARP Policy And Procedures

The Nominated Safeguarding Lead should regularly report progress, challenges, difficulties, achievement gaps and any areas where changes are required to The Director.

If it is not appropriate to report issues to the Nominated Safeguarding Lead or The Director (eg because of allegations concerning these people) then Safeguarding personnel should report any issues to the Safeguarding Trustee Lead instead, or in their absence the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

The policy should be reviewed every year, or whenever there is a major change in the organisation, in relevant legislation or relevant legislation or any changes in the cheerleading industry.

1.2. Contact Information

Nominated Safeguarding Lead:
Contact no: (10-5pm)

Robert Horton
07714 631336

Deputy Safeguarding Lead:
Contact no: (10-5pm)

Paula Brown
07866 612610 (gym mobile)

The Director:
Contact no:

Angela Green
07854 487309

Safeguarding Trustee Lead:
Contact no:

Peter Sharp
07990 561562

Chair of Board of Trustees:
Contact no:

Sue Winston
07975 688644

Board of Trustees - email:

trustees@ascensioneagles.com

Designated Officer (Newham)
Contact no:

email: lado@newham.gov.uk
0203 3733803
0203 3736706

The role of the Designated Officer, or DO, (formerly known as the Local Authority Designated Officer, or LADO) is set out in the Government's Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) and is governed by the Authorities' duties under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and London Child Protection Procedures Chapter 7: Allegations against staff or volunteers who work with children.

Newham Child Protection Team

Contact no:

020 3373 4600 from 9am - 5.15pm
weekdays or 020 8430 2000 at other
times

1.3. Mission Statement

As part of its mission, The Group is committed to:

- Making the welfare of the child paramount
- Ensuring that we provide a safe environment for all children to participate in cheerleading (and/or other activities held by The Group), regardless of their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, and/or sexual identity
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination, and degrading treatment, and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- Taking seriously and responding swiftly and appropriately to any suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse
- Making sure that all The Group employees and volunteers who work with children will be recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility, and will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and Child Protection procedures
- Working in partnership with parents and children to ensure the protection of children
- Supporting those affected by abuse
- Establishing links with statutory childcare authorities and other organisations if / when required.

1.4. The Scope Of This Policy

A child/young person is defined as a person under the age of 18 (Children's Act 1989) Where this policy refers to children, it equally applies to Adults at Risk, such as, but not limited to, persons with additional needs, regardless of age.

'Position of trust' is a legal term that refers to certain roles and settings where an adult has regular and direct contact with children.

The policy sets out what action will be taken in various circumstances to reassure parents, carers, and funders that all possible steps will be taken to protect children involved in any aspect of The Group's activities. The procedures within this policy take the following into consideration:

- The Children's Act 1989 as amended by the Adoption and Children's Act 2004
- Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR)
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Government guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019.

This CAARP policy is consistent with the London Child Protection Procedures and the London Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.

2. Promoting Good Practice

2.1. Introduction To Promoting Good Practice

To provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities in cheerleading, everyone must operate within the accepted ethical framework laid out in The Group Staff & Volunteer Code of Conduct.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is therefore **NOT** the responsibility of employees or participants in cheerleading to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place.

It **IS**, however, their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse, and to act without delay if they have concerns about the welfare of the child.

2.2. Definition Of Good Practice

All personnel including volunteers must adhere to the following principles and actions:

- Always work in an open environment (eg: avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets)
- Make the experience of cheerleading fun and enjoyable: promote fairness, confront, and deal with bullying, help build positive relationships and life skills
- Treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity
- Always put the welfare of the young person first, before winning
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with athletes (eg: it is never appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child, or to share a room with them)
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of manual/physical support is required for spotting or safety purposes for the sport, it should be provided openly and with the consent of the young person. Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the young person's consent has been given, and it is for the benefit of performing or acquiring skills for the sport
- Involve parents/carers wherever possible (eg: where young people need to be supervised in changing rooms, encourage parents to take responsibility for their own child). If groups must be supervised in changing rooms always ensure parents, coaches etc work in pairs
- Request written parental consent if The Group personnel are required to transport young people in their cars
- Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements eg: overnight stays
- Ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff
- Ensure that at away-events adults should not enter a young person's room or invite young people to their rooms
- Be an excellent role model, this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of the young person is important
- Do not risk sacrificing welfare in a desire for team, programme, or personal achievements
- Secure written parental consent for The Group to act in loco parentis – eg: to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given.

2.3. Definition Of Poor Practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all personnel:

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others
- Taking young people alone in a car on journeys, however short
- Taking young people to your home where they will be alone with you
- Sharing a room with a young person
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form

- Allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun
- Reducing a young person to tears as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon
- Doing things of a personal nature that the young person can do for themselves.

When a case arises where it is impractical/impossible to avoid certain situations (eg: transporting a young person in your car), the task should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parent/carer and the young person involved.

If, during your care, you accidentally hurt a young person, the young person seems distressed in any way, and/or if the young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, you must report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

3. Defining Child Abuse

3.1. Introduction To Defining Child Abuse

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm, it commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to any young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

Additionally, it is acknowledged that children may be at risk of abuse by another young person, as well as adults.

It is **NOT** the responsibility of those working with or volunteering for The Group to decide that child abuse is occurring.

It **IS** their responsibility to act on any concerns.

There are four main categories of abuse:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect.

The abuser may be a family member, someone the young person encounters in residential care or in the community, including sports and leisure activities. Any individual may be guilty of abuse or neglect of a young person directly or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the young person.

Abuse in all its forms can affect a young person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that, if not treated, they may follow the individual into adulthood.

Young people with disabilities (also known here as “Adults at Risk”) of any age may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse had occurred.

3.2. Types of Abuse

- **Physical abuse** occurs where adults physically hurt or injure a young person eg: hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning. Giving young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute physical child abuse.

- **Emotional abuse** means the persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve telling a young person they are useless, worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only in terms of meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of young people that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may cause a young person to be frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened, or taunted which may make the young person frightened or withdrawn.

Ill treatment of children, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse in cheerleading may occur when the young person is constantly given negative feedback, expected to perform at levels that are clearly unrealistic for their age/skill level. Other forms of emotional abuse could include but are not limited to name-calling and bullying.

- **Bullying** may come from another young person or an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves.
- There are four main types of bullying. It may be:
 - physical (eg: hitting, kicking, slapping)
 - verbal (eg: racist or homophobic remarks, name-calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages or social media posts)
 - emotional (eg: tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or
 - sexual (eg: unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

Please refer to the Anti-bullying policy for further information on our approach to preventing and responding to bullying.

- **Neglect** occurs when an adult fails to meet the young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. Refusal to give love, affection and attention can also be a form of neglect.

Neglect in cheerleading could occur when a coach does not keep the young person safe or exposes them to undue cold/heat or unnecessary risk of injury.

- **Sexual abuse** occurs when adults (male and female) use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse or fondling. Showing young people pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner are also forms of sexual abuse.

In cheerleading, activities which might involve physical contact with young people could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Also, the power of the coach over young athletes, if misused, may lead to abusive situations developing.

3.3. Indicators Of Abuse

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. For people who are not experts in recognising the signs of abuse, indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- An injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- The young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them

- Another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person
- Unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour eg: becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- Distrust of adults, particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- Difficulty in making friends
- Being prevented from socialising with others
- Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
- Losing weight for no apparent reason
- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt
- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, 'clingy', depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go training or competitions
- An unexplained drop-off in performance
- Physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching, and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing eg: on food, alcohol, or cigarettes
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

It is important to understand that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place.

Again, it is **NOT** the responsibility of those working with or for The Group to decide that child abuse is occurring. It **IS** their responsibility to act on any concerns.

4. Responding To Suspicions And Allegations

It is **NOT** the responsibility of anyone working with or volunteering for The Group, (ie in a paid or unpaid capacity) to decide whether child abuse has taken place.

However, there **IS** a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the young person.

This section explains how to respond to allegations/suspicions.

4.1. Receiving Evidence Of Possible Abuse

You may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. You may see it happening or may suspect it happening because of signs such as those listed in the [Indicators of Abuse](#) section of this document, it may be reported to you by someone else or directly by the young person affected.

In the last of these cases, it is particularly important to respond appropriately. If a young person says or indicates that they are being abused, you should:

- Stay calm so as not to frighten the young person
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell
- Listen to the child, showing that you are taking them seriously
- **Keep questions to a minimum** so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. The law is extremely strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning. Only ask questions to clarify

- Inform the child that you must inform other people about what they have told you. Tell the child this is to help stop the abuse continuing
- Safety of the child is paramount. If the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern, and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue
- Record all information verbatim and pass this to the [Nominated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead](#)
- Report the incident to the [Nominated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead](#).

If your concern or an incident you wish to report involves the Nominated Safeguarding Lead, you should report your concerns without delay directly to [The Director, the Safeguarding Trustee Lead or the Chair of the Board of Trustees](#), who will take appropriate action.

In all cases, if you are not sure what to do, you can get help from NSPCC Helpline:

- Telephone: 0808 800 5000 (open Monday to Friday 10-6pm or 10-4pm at the weekends).

IMPORTANT: If you believe that a child is in serious or immediate danger, please contact the police by dialling 999.

4.2. Making A Record

To ensure that any recorded information is as useful as possible, a detailed written record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern (ie as soon as possible after you receive a report of a concern or are aware of an issue).

In recording this information, you should stick to the facts – this means, you should be clear in your notes to distinguish what information is from what others have told you and which parts are from your personal knowledge of the situation.

Please do NOT include your own opinions – just record the FACTS.

Relevant information could include the following:

- The child's name, surname, age and date of birth
- The child's home address and telephone number
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their concern or someone else's
- The nature of the allegation, including dates, times and any other relevant information
- A description of any visible bruising or injury, location, size etc. Also, any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes
- Details of witnesses to the incidents (only record what you know already, because asking other people if they were witnesses may breach our duty of confidentiality)
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising/injuries occurred – be aware of the advice on [keeping questions to a minimum](#)
- Have the parents been contacted? If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record these details
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record these details.

4.3. Reporting The Concern

All suspicions and allegations MUST be reported appropriately. We recognise that this requirement could cause you strong emotions, particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there may be misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action you need to take.

The Group expects its employees and volunteers to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child **immediately** with the [Nominated Safeguarding Lead \(or Deputy\)](#) and subsequently to check that they have taken appropriate action.

If the Nominated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy is not available for immediate help/action, you should take responsibility and seek advice from the [NSPCC Helpline](#), the duty officer at your local Social Services department (Newham Child Protection team: 020 3373 4600 from 9am - 5.15pm weekdays or 020 8430 2000 at other times) or the police.

Where there is a complaint against an employee or volunteer, there may be three types of investigation:

- **Criminal** in which case the police are immediately involved
- **Child Protection** in which case the social services (and possibly) the police will be involved
- **Disciplinary or misconduct** in which case The Group will be involved and will conduct an internal investigation.

Social services have a legal responsibility under The Children Act 1989 (as amended by the Adoption and Children's Act 2004) to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the child and making inquiries jointly with the police.

If there is any doubt, you must report the incident: it may be just one of a series of other incidences of which you are not aware, which in combination may be a cause for significant concern.

4.4. Reporting to the Charity Regulator

The Charity Commission requires charities to report serious incidents. If a serious incident takes place within The Group it is important that there is prompt, full and frank disclosure to the Commission.

We must report what happened and, importantly, let the Commission know how we are dealing with it, even if we have also reported it to the police, donors or another regulator.

Definition of “serious”:

A serious incident is defined as an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant:

- harm to our beneficiaries, staff, volunteers or others who come into contact with The Group charity through its work
- loss of our money or assets
- damage to our property
- harm to our work or reputation.

For the purposes of this guidance, “significant” means significant in the context of your charity, taking account of its staff, operations, finances and/or reputation.

It is the responsibility of the charity trustees to decide whether an incident is significant and should be reported. The Charity Commission has [published guidance](#) to help trustees make this decision.

Who is responsible for reporting to the Charity Commission?

The responsibility for reporting serious incidents rests with the charity's trustees. In practice, this may be delegated to someone else within the charity, such as an employee or the charity's professional advisers.

However, all trustees bear ultimate responsibility for ensuring their charity makes a report, and does so in a timely manner.

When should we report to the Charity Commission?

We must report an actual or alleged incident promptly. This means as soon as is reasonably possible after it happens, or immediately after we become aware of it.

As well as reporting to the Commission, depending on the nature of the incident, we will also notify the police, the local authority and any other relevant agencies (eg the DBS service).

How to report a safeguarding issue to the Charity Commission

We should use the '[Report a serious incident](#)' online form to report serious incidents to the Charity Commission.

Summary of our approach

If something does go wrong, we will take immediate action to:

- prevent or minimise any further harm, loss or damage
- document the issue and the actions being taken
- ensure the Trustees are aware of the issue and agree the actions the need to be taken
- report it to the Charity Commission as a serious incident and update them on developments as they occur
- report it to the police (and/or other relevant agencies) if we suspect a crime has been committed, and to any other relevant agencies
- plan what to say to our staff, volunteers, members, the public, the media and other stakeholders, such as funders
- review what happened and prevent it from happening again – this may include reviewing internal controls and procedures, internal or external investigation and/or seeking appropriate help from professional advisers.

4.5. Reporting A Concern Against A Member Of Staff Or Volunteer

An allegation may relate to a member of staff or volunteer (including guest coaches and choreographers) who works with children, who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may harm a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Source: Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019, section 195)

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by an employee or a volunteer should be [reported to The Group's Nominated Safeguarding Lead](#) (or their deputy), who will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk. This will include the following:

- The Nominated Safeguarding Lead (or their Deputy) will refer the matter to the relevant Designated Officer at the Local Authority and local social services department
- Following advice from the social services department the parent/carer of the child will be contacted as soon as possible
- The Director will be notified by the Nominated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy, in order to decide who will deal with any media inquiries and to implement any disciplinary proceedings as necessary

- The Director will notify the Trustee Safeguarding Lead (and, if they are not available, the Chair of the Board of Trustees)
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will discuss with the Board whether/who will notify the Charity Commission
- If it is the Nominated Safeguarding Lead or the Safeguarding Deputy Lead or The Director that is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, extra care must be taken to ensure there is no conflict of interests with other members of the safeguarding team. In these cases, the report must be made to [the Safeguarding Trustee Lead](#), who will manage the reporting process and any internal investigation/review (as appropriate), including contacting the Social Services/Designated Officer at the local authority.

4.6. Reporting An Historic Allegation Of Abuse

Allegations of abuse might be made sometime after the event. Where such an allegation is made, you should follow the same procedures and have the matter reported to social services/Newham Designated Officer. This is because other children in the sport or outside it may be at risk from the alleged abuser. Anyone who has a previous conviction for offences related to abuse against children is automatically excluded from working with children. Reporting of historic abuse must follow the same reporting procedure as a current allegation.

4.7. Reporting That A Child Is In Need Of Support Services (Not At Risk Of Harm)

Where a child is deemed to be in need of additional support services, but is not at risk of harm, the same procedure of reporting is to be followed, and the Nominated Safeguarding Lead (or their Deputy) will make an assessment as to the most appropriate and effective course of action to provide the appropriate support.

4.8. Concerns Regarding Abuse Outside The Cheerleading / Gym Environment (eg: A Parent Or Carer)

- Report your concerns to The Group's Nominated Safeguarding Lead (or their Deputy)
- If neither the Nominated Safeguarding Lead nor their Deputy is available, the person being told about/discovering the abuse should contact their local social services department or the police immediately
- Social services and The Group's Nominated Safeguarding Lead will decide how to inform the parents/carers
- It is important to maintain confidentiality - ie discuss this information with others ONLY on a need-to-know basis.

4.9. Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis ONLY.

This includes the following people:

- The Group's Nominated Safeguarding Lead (and their Deputy)
- The parents of the child (if appropriate)
- The person/child making the allegation
- Social services/Newham's Designated Officer/police
- The Charity Regulator
- The alleged abuser, if they are an employee or volunteer ie if it is appropriate and necessary for the purposes of suspension. If the alleged abuser is a child, the parents of the abuser may be informed by the appropriate authorities)

Please be aware that before approaching a suspected abuser, you should seek advice from social services/LADO (and the police if appropriate) on who should approach the alleged abuser and when, assuming this is necessary for the purposes of suspension.

All information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with the Data Protection Act 2018(GDPR).

4.10. Record Keeping

The Group will keep a clear and comprehensive summary of the case record on a person's confidential personnel file and give a copy to the individual. The record should include details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, the decisions reached, and the action taken. It should be kept at least until the person reaches normal retirement age or for ten years if longer.

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference if the person has moved on. It will provide clarification where a future DBS request reveals non-convicted information and will help to prevent unnecessary reinvestigation if an allegation re-surfaces after a period. In this sense it may serve as a protector to the individual themselves, as well as in cases where substantiated allegations need to be known about to safeguard future children.

A copy of The Group's GDPR policy can be found at:

https://13272978-738b-a707-9cb9-fdc360e79c7f.filesusr.com/ugd/87f7e5_e0dab93020b149ce86f9b68e625ad285.pdf

5. Internal Inquiries And Suspension

- The Group's Nominated Safeguarding Lead (or their Deputy) will make an immediate recommendation to The Director and the Safeguarding Trustee Lead about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries
- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries, The Group's HR Committee will assess cases on an individual basis to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer should be reinstated and how this could be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; especially if there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases The HR Committee must reach a decision based upon the available information, which could suggest that on the balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout
- Should an individual accused of abuse be found guilty of the offence in court, the staff member will be unable to return, and the Nominated Safeguarding Lead will notify DBS; The Director or the Chair of the Board of Trustees will notify the charity regulator
- Should an individual accused of abuse be found not guilty and able to return to work, it is the responsibility of the Nominated Safeguarding Lead to ensure they are supported in their return
- Upon entering a contract with The Group, staff and volunteers are issued a code of conduct. Should a staff member or volunteer be in serious breach of the code of conduct, these same procedures will apply

Every effort should be made to reach a conclusion in all cases, even if:

- The individual refuses to cooperate, having been given a full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations to the HR Committee

It may not be possible to apply any disciplinary sanctions if a person's period of notice expires before the process is complete.

Compromise agreements **must not** be used (i.e. where an employee or volunteer agrees to resign provided that disciplinary action is not taken and that a future reference is agreed). A settlement/compromise agreement which prevents the employer from making a DBS referral when the criteria are met for so doing would likely result in a criminal offence being committed for failure to comply with the duty to refer.

The Group must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service to consider whether to add the individual to the barred list. This applies irrespective of whether a referral has been made to local authority children's social care and/or the designated officer or team of officers. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

6. Social Media

The Group reserves the right to all images connected to its name, logo, or image. The Group's copyrighted logos or associated branding should not be used on athletes' or parents' personal social media accounts.

Any images posted on social media related to/promoting The Group will be appropriate, with appropriate hashtags. If images are deemed to be inappropriate or in breach of safeguarding, we will ask for these to be immediately removed and deleted. Any employee of The Group who fails to do this (ie requesting removal or actioning removal) may be putting themselves at risk of disciplinary action.

The Group requests that athletes and parents use social media in a positive and sportsmanlike manner and not engage in negative discussions on cheerleading groups or forums: this will be treated as bullying and dealt with as such (see the relevant section of this policy).

Any activity on social media (including activity on personal accounts) which is deemed to be inappropriate, raises a safeguarding concern or could be defamatory to The Group may result in the person responsible being removed from The Group.

The Group will regularly remind parents and athletes about the importance of being safe on the internet and the need to be mindful of appropriateness when posting cheerleading-related images.

The Group operates closed Facebook groups for the purpose of sharing training and competition-related information and updates eg: videos from training sessions, stretching and conditioning plans, routine choreography and competition schedules. The Group will communicate with parents/guardians/athletes privately with any information and passwords required to join relevant closed groups. To join these groups, children must also have a parent/guardian present in the group or have express permission from a parent/guardian in order to be active in the group without them.

See also the section on [Use Of Images For The Group's Social Media](#).

7. Photography And Filming

7.1. Overview

It is important that children and young people feel happy with their achievements and have photographs and films of their special moments. Family and friends also want to be able to share the successes of their children, particularly when they have been part of a special event or activity.

However, some children, parents or carers may not be comfortable with images of themselves or their children being shared. For example:

- if a child and/or their family have experienced abuse they may worry about the perpetrator tracing them online
- children who choose not to have contact with some members of their family may decide to minimise their online presence
- families may have religious or cultural reasons for choosing not to be photographed.

It is important to be aware of child protection and safeguarding issues when taking photos of or/filming children and young people. The potential for misuse of images can be reduced if organisations are aware of the potential dangers and put appropriate measures in place.

The Group recognises that:

- sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and young people, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our organisation
- the welfare of the children and young people taking part in our activities is paramount
- children, their parents, and carers have a right to decide whether their images are taken and how these may be used, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation
- consent to take images of children is only meaningful when children, their parents and carers understand how the images will be used and stored, and are fully aware of the potential risks associated with the use and distribution of these images
- there are potential risks associated with sharing images of children online.

The Group will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- always asking for written consent from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image
- always explaining what images will be used for, how they will be stored and what potential risks are associated with sharing images of children
- making it clear that if a child or their family withdraw consent for an image to be shared, it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared or published
- changing the names of children/not using names of children whose images are being used in our published material whenever possible (and only using first names if we do need to identify them)
- never publishing personal information about individual children and disguising any identifying information (for example the name of their school or a school uniform with a logo)
- making sure children, their parents and carers understand how images of children will be securely stored and for how long (including how we will control access to the images and their associated information)
- reducing the risk of images being copied and used inappropriately by:
 - only using images of children in appropriate clothing (including safety wear if necessary)
 - avoiding full face and body shots of children taking part in activities such as swimming where there may be a heightened risk of images being misused
- using images that positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity.

We will ensure everyone involved in our organisation knows the procedures to follow to keep children safe.

7.2. Photography And/Or Filming For Personal Use

When children themselves, parents, carers or spectators will be taking photographs or filming at our events and the images are for personal use, we will publish guidance about

image sharing in the event programmes and/or announce details of our photography policy before the start of the event. This includes:

- reminding parents, carers, and children that they need to give consent for The Group to take and use their images
- asking for photos taken during the event not to be shared on social media or asking people to gain permission from children, their parents, and carers before sharing photographs and videos that include them
- recommending that people check the privacy settings of their social media account to understand who else will be able to view any images they share
- reminding children, parents, and carers who they can talk to if they have any concerns about images being shared.

7.3. Photography And/Or Filming As A Training Aid For Athletes

We recognise that The Group's staff may use photography and filming as a training aid for athletes. However, this should only be done with The Group's permission and using The Group's equipment*. Children, young people, parents, and carers must also be made aware that photography and filming are used as part of The Group's activities as a training aid and should give written consent.

**The Group employees may on occasion need to use their personal devices to record for training purposes. In these instances, all images and video will be deleted from their personal devices following the teaching application/before the end of the lesson.*

7.4. Someone Acting Suspiciously With A Camera Or Phone

All employees and volunteer staff should be vigilant for any suspicious behaviour involving cameras/filming (eg: by other members of staff, parents, athletes, or members of the public) and any concerns should be reported immediately to the Nominated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy Lead) directly.

Where possible, the person filming/taking pictures should be immediately challenged and a request to view the footage made. Should the footage be deemed inappropriate so as to raise a safeguarding concern, the device should be seized (only if safe to do so), and the police called.

Should the cheerleading images be deemed inappropriate - but not raise a safeguarding concern - they will be asked to delete it.

7.5. Working With External Photographers Or External Production Crews

If we hire a photographer for one of our events or if we agree to take part in any externally commissioned productions (eg: television or film/podcast or similar), we will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- providing the photographer/production crew with a clear brief about appropriate content and behaviour
- ensuring the photographer/production crew always wears identification when with The Group's athletes
- informing children, their parents, and carers that a photographer/production crew will be at the event
- ensuring children and their parents/carers give written consent to any images/recordings which feature their child being recorded and used
- not allowing the photographer/production crew to have unsupervised access to our children

- not allowing the photographer/production crew to carry out sessions outside the event or at a child's home without a representative of The Group being present
- reporting concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography/recording, in line with our CAARP procedures
- checking the photographer's/crew's Child Protection Policy, DBS certificate/update number and their GDPR policy regarding safe storage of images, before the photography/recording begins.

7.6. Use Of Images For The Group's Social Media

The Group will not publicly identify athletes next to their image in public spaces on social media unless express permission has been given by the parent/guardian for that specific image and with reason for it to appear.

If an athlete's image is used on The Group's official public social media accounts (including Facebook, Twitter or Instagram accounts) for publicity purposes, parents/carers and athletes will be asked not 'tag' or name the athlete in comments/sharing that post, to help us keep this policy in place and keep our athletes safe.

8. Selecting And Recruiting Personnel

8.1. Introduction To Selecting And Recruiting Personnel/Volunteers

It is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children. This applies equally to paid staff and volunteers, both full and part time. Our approach to ensuring unsuitable people are prevented from working with children is set out below.

8.2. Controlling Access To Children

- All staff and volunteers must complete an application form. This form will elicit information about the applicant's past and a request for self-disclosure about any criminal record which may be relevant to the vacant position
- Consent should be obtained from the applicant to seek information from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- Two confidential references should be obtained, including one regarding previous work with children. These references **MUST** be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact before the appointment is confirmed
- Evidence to confirm the applicant's identity must be checked and recorded (eg: passport or driving licence with a photo).

8.3. Interview And Induction

All potential employees and volunteers will be required to undertake a formal interview to explore the applicant's background, experience, motivations and expectations.

The interviewer may make written/typed notes outlining what is discussed in these interviews; any interview notes will be held on file securely, under the following protocol:

- If the applicant is unsuccessful, the records will be kept for one month after the applicant has been notified of the outcome, to allow time for any reviews/appeals. After one month these interview records will be deleted/destroyed.
- If the applicant is successful, the interview records will be added to their personnel file and held securely.

All employees and volunteers who have been appointed will receive formal or informal induction during which:

- A DBS check will be made, if applicable to the role. If a DBS check subsequently reveals that the applicant is not a suitable appointment, any offer of employment will be withdrawn
- Their qualifications should be validated (eg sight of certificates)
- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified
- They should sign up to The Group Staff & Volunteer Code of Conduct
- CAARP procedures are explained, and training needs identified eg: basic child protection awareness.

To protect our athletes, we reserve the right to withdraw any offer of employment/volunteering if our pre-employment checks reveal any issues which may affect the applicant's suitability to work with children or young adults (ie issues which we were unaware of at the point at which the employment offer was made).

8.4. Training New Staff And Volunteers

In addition to pre-employment checks, the safeguarding process includes training after appointment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against what is deemed good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice and/or abuse
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young adult
- Work safely and effectively with children and young people.

The Group requires:

- All staff and volunteers in positions of responsibility for children to undergo a DBS check
- All employees, volunteers, coaches, and Nominated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Safeguarding Lead to undertake relevant training or undertake a form of home study, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of positive culture towards best practice in child protection
- All staff and volunteers to receive advisory information outlining [good/bad practice](#) and informing them what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person
- All coaches, trainee coaches and leaders should have an up-to-date first aid qualification.

9. Declaration

On behalf of Ascension Eagles Cheerleaders, and Talent Central Cheer & Dance, we the undersigned, confirm that we will oversee the implementation of the CAARP Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Role

Print Name

Signature

The Director

Ascension Eagles Cheerleaders
Talent Central Cheer & Dance

Date:

Nominated Safeguarding Lead

Ascension Eagles Cheerleaders
Talent Central Cheer & Dance

Date:

Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Ascension Eagles Cheerleaders
Talent Central Cheer & Dance

Date:

10. Policy Update Information And Next Review Date

This policy was updated on:	1 May 2022
Updated by:	Sue Winston, Chair of Board of Trustees
Reviewed by:	Sue Winston, Chair of Board of Trustees
Other reviewers:	Peter Sharp, Safeguarding Trustee Lead
	Angela Green, The Director
Next review due:	1 May 2023
To be reviewed by:	The Nominated Safeguarding Lead and The Director
Review to be approved by:	The Board of Trustees

11. The category of this policy

This policy is categorised as:

Category	Description
1.	This document is publicly available and is published on the AEC website