

# Wildfire Cheer Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



Wildfire Cheer acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and relevant safeguarding guidance.

This policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children:

- have a positive and enjoyable experience of cheerleading in a safe and child centred environment.
- are protected from abuse and bullying whilst participating in cheerleading.

Wildfire Cheer acknowledges that some children, including disabled children and young people or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

As part of our safeguarding policy Wildfire Cheer will:

- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- Prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals by requiring all coaches and volunteers to possess an enhanced DBS certificate, which must be within the last 3 years.
- Ensure that all lead coaches have attended a local authority approved safeguarding course and have an appropriate and up to date first aid qualification.
- Ensure that all lead coaches have attended an appropriate cheerleading coaching course; are aware of the risks of injury involved in cheerleading and do their utmost to keep this risk to a minimum.
- Provide an induction and appropriate training for all coaches (assistant and lead) to make sure they understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and are provided with appropriate guidance to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people.
- Not require or allow any coach – lead, assistant or volunteer, to coach skills which are beyond their ability and training. Assistant coaches and volunteers will always be supervised by a lead coach.
- Avoid any situation where an adult is alone with a child under the age of 18.

If a child or younger person within the club makes a disclosure of abuse, or shows signs of abuse:

- We will listen to the child affected and/or the person making the disclosure, take their concern seriously and provide them with support.
- Report the allegation of abuse to the appropriate authority. If a child is in immediate danger this would be the Police (999). If a child is not necessarily in immediate danger but there are concerns of abuse or neglect, this would be Leicestershire First Response Children's Duty Team (0116 305 0005). If the allegation relates to an adult coach or volunteer at Wildfire Cheer, this should be reported to the LADO (0116 305 4141).
- In the event that an allegation of abuse is made against a coach or volunteer, they should be suspended pending further investigation by the LADO / other relevant authorities.

- Make confidential, detailed, and accurate records of all safeguarding incidents and store this data securely (see Data Protection & Privacy Policy).

Wildfire Cheer C.I.C. recognises that the online world also has the potential to expose children and young people to abuse, bullying and harm. To minimise this risk relating to the club, we will:

- Avoid communicating with under 18s online. Communication relating to club activities should be with parents and adult members only.
- In the case of necessary communication between adult coaches and coaches aged 16-17, adults should avoid using personal accounts and keep all conversations professional.
- Always avoid private messages between coaches and under 16s online.
- Deal with any instance of online bullying between athletes by addressing this swiftly and making parents aware.
- Make sure images of under 18s are not shared by the club online without parental permission (see Photography & Image policy). Any images shared should be relating to club activities only.

The policy and procedures above will be promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in Wildfire Cheer C.I.C. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

## **Monitoring**

The policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- as required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, UK Sport and/or any future UK Sport recognised cheerleading NGB.
- as a result of any other significant change or event.

(Last reviewed August 2022)

Signed: Hannah Babaleva  
Director and Head Coach, Wildfire Cheer