

Child Protection Policy

Hellcats fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection. Our policy applies to all staff that work with the company. There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting children who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the regular contact with children, staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. Hellcats will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to communicate, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults whom they can approach if they are worried.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills to:

- Ensure the planning of activities so as to minimise situations where abuse of children may occur.
- Risks assess the activity so that appropriate steps are taken to safeguard the welfare of children or vulnerable adults at the event.
- Ensure that there is no physical contact by any staff or volunteers with children or vulnerable adults, unless the nature of the activity requires it.
- Have a nominated person to act as Children Protection Officer and to be a point of contact for any child or parent of a child to raise any welfare concerns
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the company and staff for child protection.
- Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.

- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from other files.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The activity or club they are attending may be the only stable, secure or predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When partaking in activities lead by Razzle Dazzle Cheer and Dance, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. We will endeavour to support the child through:

- The content of the Class, or Workshop
- The class ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives children a sense of being valued.
- The behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable children. Razzle Dazzle Cheer and Dance will ensure that the child knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the child such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.