



INFINITY CHEER AND DANCE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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INFINITY CHEER AND DANCE

<https://infinitycheer.co.uk/> 07904817944

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LADOS – Local Authority Designated Officer

The LADO **must** be contacted when you have received any allegation or concern about any person who works with children who may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed 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
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

These procedures may also be used where concerns arise about:

- The person's behaviour with regard to his/her own children
- The behaviour in the private or community life of a partner, member of the family or other household member
- A person's behaviour in their personal life, which may impact upon the safety of children to whom they owe a duty of care.

The LADO for Lancashire can be reached by phone at:

01772 536694

Or through a referral form using the link [here](#) which will be sent straight to the LADO team.

This number is specifically for concerns about professionals who work with children in Lancashire.

If a child is in immediate danger contact the emergency services (police) on 999 or call Children's Social Care on 0300 123 6720 or 0300 123 6722 out of hours.

1. Introduction

Infinity Cheer and Dance is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment in which children can grow in confidence through athletic endeavours. In operating a cheerleading gym, Infinity Cheer and Dance recognises the importance of its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to its care. As an organisation working with children and young people Infinity Cheer and Dance has a responsibility to act if abuse comes to light and, as far as possible, to protect children from the possibility of being abused within Infinity Cheer and Dance's care. It is the responsibility of Sian Thorley to appoint a designated Safeguarding Lead to oversee the implementation of this policy. This position will be held for a one-year term and then be reviewed by Sian Thorley when appropriate. As and when required, the named nominated person will work with the statutory agencies and other organisations.

1.1 Monitoring and review of the policy and procedures

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. A policy review may also be conducted in response to the following:

- a. Changes in Legislation or guidance
- b. Changes in governance of our sport
- c. Changes in the nature or size of Infinity Cheer and Dance
- d. Changes to the named Safeguarding Lead for Infinity Cheer and Dance
- e. A procedural review following a significant case or incident

1.2 Who to contact?

In the case of an emergency where a child is in immediate risk, please dial 999

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Laura Redfearn laura@infinitycheeruk.co.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Hannah Connolly hannah@infinitycheeruk.co.uk

(phone numbers located at the gym entrance)

If you need immediate assistance please contact Head Coach Sian Thorley
[07904817944](tel:07904817944)

Coaches/Athletes can report directly to Laura Redfearn

1.3 Mission Statement

As part of its mission Infinity Cheer and Dance is committed to the following:

- The welfare of the child/Adult at Risk is paramount

- All children/Adults at Risk, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in cheerleading and/or other activities held by Infinity Cheer and Dance in a safe environment
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children/Adults at Risk from harm, discrimination, and degrading treatment, and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All Infinity Cheer and Dance, employees or volunteers who work with children/Adults at Risk will be recruited with regards to their suitability for that responsibility, and will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and Safeguarding procedures
- Working in partnership with parents/carers and children/Adults at Risk is essential for the protection of children/Adults at Risk
- Supporting those affected by abuse
- Make links with statutory childcare and social care authorities and other organisations if / when required.

All staff and volunteers employed by and associated with Infinity Cheer and Dance are expected to abide by the Safeguarding Policy.

1.4 Policy description

A child/young person is defined as a person under the age of 18. Where this policy refers to children, it equally applies to Adults at Risk. An Adult at Risk is any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and support:

Adult at risk of harm is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) Personal characteristics which may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain. and/or
- b) Life circumstances which may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

Adult in need of protection is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) Personal characteristics AND/OR
- b) Life circumstances AND

c) Who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests; AND

d) Where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

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 Infinity Cheer and Dance activities.

2. Promoting Good Practice

2.1 Introduction

To provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities in cheerleading, everyone must operate within the accepted ethical framework laid out in Infinity Cheer and Dance's Code of Conduct for Staff Members and Volunteers. 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 act if they have concerns about the welfare of the child/Adult at Risk, as explained in section 4. This section will help you identify what is meant by good practice and poor practice.

2.2 Good Practice

All personnel including volunteers should adhere to the following principles and action:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets) This means all 1-2-1 coaching sessions should have other staff present in the building.
- Make the experience of cheerleading fun and enjoyable: promote fairness, confront and deal with bullying, help build positive relationships and life skills.
- Treat all Children/Adults at Risk 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 (e.g., it is never appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child / a student of any age, 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 in cheerleading, 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/cares wherever possible, e.g., where children/Adults at Risk need to be supervised in changing rooms, encourage parents/carers to take responsibility for their own child. If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure parents/carers, coaches etc work in pairs
- Request written/typed parental consent if Infinity Cheer and Dance staff are required to transport children/Adults at Risk (in cars)
- Gain written/typed parental consent for any significant travel arrangements e.g. overnight stays
- 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/typed parental consent for Infinity Cheer and Dance to act in loco parentis, 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

In addition to these key principles of Good Practice, where Infinity Cheer and Dance work with 3rd parties (schools and community groups) the additional standards of requirement will be made:

- For sessions that are arranged for a third party at their own venue (e.g. schools, community groups where an Infinity coach is a visiting guest teacher) it is the responsibility of the third party to register participants.
- All Infinity Cheer and Dance staff are given clear established roles for their work as a visiting guest teacher
- Workshops should be conducted in the presence of a teacher from the school, who will be responsible for discipline, hold medical records etc
- Children are supervised at all times during sessions, including breaks by the school (not Infinity Cheer and Dance)
- Infinity Cheer and Dance will request that any children participating in workshops with SEN, disabilities or relevant medical concerns are noted and accommodated for prior to the commencement of a workshop/s.

- Coaches are required to ensure that Health and Safety and Duty of Care requirements are met in the working environment during sessions, and any policies etc from the school are issued ahead of time.

2.3 Poor Practice

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

- Allow allegations made by children/Adults at Risk to go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon
- Take unnecessary risks
- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with children/Adults at Risk away from others
- Taking children/Adults at Risk alone in a car on journeys, however short, without prior parental consent
- Taking children/Adults at Risk to your home where they will be alone with you
- Sharing a room with a child/Adult at Risk
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Allowing children/Adults at Risk to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Making sexually suggestive comments to children/Adults at Risk, even in fun
- Patronise or belittle children or young people
- Reducing a child/Adult at Risk to tears as a form of control
- Do things of a personal nature that the child/Adult at Risk can do for themselves
- Smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- Make inappropriate promises to children and young people
- Let the children or young people have your personal contact details (phone number, email or postal address)
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive When a case arises where it is impractical/impossible to avoid certain situation e.g., transporting a young person in your car, the tasks 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 child/Adult at Risk, the child/Adult at Risk seems distressed in any

manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions and/or if the child/Adult at Risk misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, 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

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 a 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 Infinity Cheer and Dance to decide that child abuse is occurring. It IS their responsibility to act on any concerns.

There are four main types of abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and 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 abuse or neglect a young person directly or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the young person. Abuse in all of its forms can affect a young person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated may follow the individual into adulthood. Young people with disabilities (and 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.

Different types of abuse that a child may encounter are detailed further on the NSPCC website, information can be found at the following link: [Types of Abuse](#)

3.2 Spotting Signs of Child abuse

The signs of [child abuse](#) aren't always obvious, and a child might not feel able to tell anyone what's happening to them. Sometimes, children don't even realise that what's happening to them is abuse.

There are different types of child abuse and the signs that a child is being abused may depend on the type. For example, the signs that a child is being neglected may be different from the signs that a child is being abused sexually.

Common signs of child abuse

Some common signs that there may be something concerning happening in a child's life include:

- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- becoming withdrawn
- seeming anxious
- becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
- poor bond or relationship with a parent
- knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- running away or going missing
- always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.

These signs don't necessarily mean that a child is being abused, there could be other things happening in their life which are affecting their behaviour – but the NSPCC can help you to assess the situation.

You may also notice some concerning behaviour from adults who you know have children in their care, which makes you concerned for the child/children's safety and wellbeing.

4. Responding to Suspicions and Allegations

4.1 Introduction

It is not the responsibility of anyone working with or volunteering for Infinity Cheer and Dance, in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not 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 child/Adult at Risk. This section explains how to respond to allegations/suspicions.

4.2 Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse

We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. We may see it happening, we may suspect it happening because of signs such as those listed in section 3 of this document, it may be reported to us 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 very 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 have to 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 is in immediate danger, call the police. 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 Safeguarding Lead
- Report the incident to Safeguarding Lead

4.3 Recording Information

To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed written record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. In recording you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish what is your personal knowledge and what others have told you. Do not include your own opinions. Information should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth
- 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
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising/injuries occurred
- Have the parents been contacted? If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details

Reporting forms can be found in the main office at Infinity Cheer and Dance. A form should be filled out, following an admission from a child/Adult at Risk.

4.4 Reporting the Concern

All suspicions and allegations MUST be reported appropriately. It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take. Infinity Cheer and Dance expects its members and staff to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child/Adult at Risk immediately with the Safeguarding Lead and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken.

If the Safeguarding Lead or deputy are not available for immediate help/action, you should contact another senior director.

As mentioned previously in this document, Infinity Cheer and Dance personnel and volunteers are not child protection experts, and it is not their responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. All suspicions and allegations must be shared with professional agencies that are responsible for child protection. If there is any doubt, you must report the incident: it may be just one of a series of other incidences which together cause concern.

Safety of the child is paramount. If the child is in immediate danger, call the police. 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.

5. Social Media

Infinity Cheer and Dance operates public Facebook, Instagram and TikTok accounts to promote the business. They are official business pages and are run by a member of staff who has been DBS checked. The senior teams are also allowed to operate a team personal Instagram account; this is run by a designated social media individual(s) for each team and monitored by the lead coaches.

Parents are asked to give consent for their child/children to be photographed and shown on these different social media accounts. Athletes over 18 can give their own consent.

Infinity Cheer's copyrighted logos or associated branding should not be used on athletes' or parents' personal social media accounts without permission. We reserve the right to all images connected to our name, logo or image. Any images posted on social media related to or promoting Infinity Cheer will be appropriate, with appropriate hashtags. If images are deemed to be inappropriate or in breach of safeguarding, we will ask that they be removed and reported. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. Infinity Cheer requests that cheerleaders and parents use social media in a positive and sportsmanlike manner and not engage in negative discussions on

cheerleading groups or forums, which will be interpreted as bullying and dealt with appropriately. Any activity on social media (including activity on personal accounts) deemed to be inappropriate, alert a safeguarding concern or defamatory to Infinity Cheer may result in removal from the programme. Infinity Cheer will communicate with parents/guardians/athletes using the app BAND. To join the team's BAND children must also have a parent/guardian present on the group, or express written permission from a parent/guardian to be on without them.

6. Photography and use of images on social media

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 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's 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.

6.1 Keeping athletes safe

Infinity Cheer 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
- 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
- not using names of children whose images are being used in our published material

- 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)
- using images that positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity.

6.2 Photography and/or filming as a training aid for athletes

We recognise that our staff may use photography and filming as a training aid for athletes and this will only be done with Infinity Cheer's permission. Staff will only use an Infinity Cheer issued phone in these instances.

Photos/videos used as a training aid will be used and then deleted from the phone. Images used for social media/marketing will be stored for the season and then deleted.

Parents/ guardians sign a waiver at the start of the season to give consent to these images being used and staff will ensure any children without permissions will not appear in any photos/videos taken.

7. Recruiting and Selecting Personnel

7.1 Introduction

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. To ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children the following steps should be taken when recruiting.

7.2 Controlling Access to Children

- All staff and volunteers should complete an application form.
- All staff and volunteers over 18 will hold an up to date DBS

7.3 Interview and Induction

All employees and volunteers will be required to undertake an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees and volunteers should receive formal or informal induction during which:

- A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full and a DBS check if applicable to their role on staff
- All qualifications should be substantiated
- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified
- They should sign Infinity Cheer and Dance's staff code of conduct

- Child Protection Procedures/Safeguarding is explained, and training needs identified e.g. basic child protection awareness

7.4 Training

Infinity Cheer requires:

- All staff and volunteers over 16yrs in positions of responsibility for children to undergo a DBS check
- All employees, volunteers, coaches and Safeguarding Lead to undertake relevant training to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of positive culture towards good practice and 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 over 16 should have an up to date first aid qualification

7.5 Disciplinary procedures

The disciplinary procedures for Infinity Cheer are encapsulated within the code of conduct signed, annually, by all staff and volunteers.

Minor First-Time Incident: If you behave in a way that does not follow our behaviour code, our staff or volunteers will remind you about it and ask you to comply with it. They will give you the opportunity to change your behaviour. This gives you the opportunity to think and to plan how you could behave differently, with support from staff and/or volunteers.

Formal Warning: If you continue not to follow the code of behaviour after your first reminder, or if your behaviour is more serious, you will be given a formal warning by the person in charge during the session. They will make a record about what happened and inform your parents or carers if this is appropriate. They will also talk with you about what happened and agree what support you need in order to improve your behaviour in future. We may also decide that a sanction is appropriate such as stopping you from taking part in training sessions for a period of time.

Final Warning: If the support we have put in place isn't helping you to change your behaviour, we may need to give you a final warning. Again, this will be recorded and we will inform you parents/carers as appropriate. At this point, we will call a meeting between our staff, yourself and your parents/carers in order to discuss further support services you may need.

Child Protection Procedures In the case of a child protection concern, the procedure will be followed as outline in this policy.

8. CCTV - Recording and storing

CCTV is used across the building, both inside and out, to ensure the safety of our athletes, staff, families, visitors and their possessions. The areas covered by CCTV are; the front door, Reception area, main gym, homework room and merchandise office. Recorded images are stored for 30days before being deleted from the system. Recordings are stored safely and accessible by Sian Thorley, should another member of staff need to see a recording they can request this footage directly.

9. Obtaining and Storing Data

Personal information such as DOB, medical needs and N.O.K. are stored on the secure Coacha programme. This is only accessible by coaches, using one of the Director's Infinity phones. Information is stored there until an athlete leaves the programme, at which point the data is archived on the system and not accessible to staff.

Details of First Aid received is written in a First Aid book which is stored in the staff only office. Upon completion, these books are stored in a secure place and athlete records kept until 3 years after they turn 18 years old.

10. Declaration

On behalf of Infinity Cheer and Dance, we the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to. It is outlined here

Signed: *Laura Redfearn*

Role: Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date: 25/07/25

Signed: *Hannah Connolly*

Role: Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Date: 26/07/2025

Additional Contact Details

- Sport Cheer England Safeguarding Lead (Marie-Claire Gane):
scsafeguarding@gmail.com
- [NSPCC](#) helpline: 0808 800 5000
- [Childline | Childline](#): 0800 1111
- [Samaritans](#): 116 123
- [Barnardos](#)
- [The Children's Society](#)
- [Action for Children](#)
- [The Lucy Faithful Foundation](#) (charity dedicated to tackling child sexual abuse)
- [Marie Collins Foundation](#) (for children suffering sexual abuse via the internet or mobile phone technologies)
- [Young Minds](#) (mental health support for children and young people)
- [The Mix](#) (for young people under the age of 25): 0808 808 4994
- [The Disabled Children's Partnership](#)
- [Mermaids](#) (organisation for gender diverse children and young people)