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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY – Updated February 2019

Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) :

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The Dani Harmer Academy Ltd (also known as DHA) values young people and children as being a vital part of the organisation and desires to see them grow, mature and be challenged in a healthy and safe environment.

The name of the child protection officer (also known as Designated Safeguarding Leader – DSL, details above) for the group will be displayed on our Notice Board during Academy hours and copy of this child protection policy will be kept with the DSL and Administration Team. A copy will also be placed on our website and displayed at the performance venue.

Purposes:

The purpose of DHA is a children and young people's programme in performing arts and to offer the children a safe and welcoming environment with fun activities where the children can grow and learn in dance, singing and drama. Whether this be through DHA's activities or through other independent groups working in partnership with other amateurs' and professionals in performing arts

Aims:

- To encourage, nurture children and young people in all aspects of performing arts, to include social skills and self-confidence.
- To assist the children in integrating into the community.
- To help children/young people appreciate the diversity of their cultures.

DHA – The Organisation:

1. Each child and young person should be formally registered within the group. The information includes an information/consent form which their parent/guardian must complete. These forms have vital information about health and emergency contacts and should be kept securely and brought to each session. (see Appendix B)
2. Attendance register: a register should be kept for each session.

Child Protection Representative:

DHA . has appointed a child protection representative also known as the Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL), whose name is displayed on the Notice Board at DHA during Academy hours and on their website.

If any worker has any child safety concerns, they should discuss them with him/her. He/she will take on the following responsibilities:

- Ensuring that the policy is being put into practice;
- Being the first point of contact for child protection issues;
- Keeping a record of any concerns expressed about child protection issues;

- Bringing any child protection concerns to the notice of the Management Committee and contacting the Local Authority if appropriate;
- Ensuring that paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate supervision;
- Ensuring that everyone involved with the organisation is aware of the identity of the Child Protection Representative.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is meeting its aims.

Chaperones:

- Chaperones registered with their local authority, will be appointed by the organisation for the care of children during the production process. The chaperone is acting in loco-parentis and should exercise the care which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give to a child. The maximum number of children in the chaperone's care shall not exceed 12.
- Potential chaperones will be required to obtain a chaperone registration from their local authority and to supply this registration to the organisation once the local authority has approved them as a chaperone.
- Chaperones will be made aware of the organisation's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Chaperones may have unsupervised access to children in their care consequently a criminal record disclosure will be sought as a requirement of the local authority, before the grant approval for the chaperone
- Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the producer. If changes cannot be made satisfactorily the chaperone should consider not allowing the child to continue.
- If a chaperone considers that a child is unwell or too tired to continue, the chaperone must inform the producer and not allow the child to continue.
- Under the Dangerous Performances Act no child of compulsory school age is permitted to do anything which may endanger life or limb. This could include working on wires or heavy lifting. Chaperones should tell the producer to stop involving children in dangerous performances, and should contact the local authority.
- During performances, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the stage door and signing them into the building.
- Children will be kept together at all times except when using separate dressing rooms.
- Chaperones will be aware of where the children are at all times.
- Children are not to leave the place of performance unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parents.
- Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets.
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms.
- Chaperones should be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the venue, and will ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger.
- Chaperones should ensure that any accidents are reported to and recorded by the organisation.
- Chaperones should examine accident books each day. If an accident has occurred, the producer is not allowed to use that child until a medically qualified opinion has been obtained (not just the word of the parent or child).
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances. If someone different is to collect the child, a telephone call should be made to the parent to confirm the arrangements.
- Children should be signed out when leaving and a record made of the person collecting.
- If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child until arrangements have been made to take the child home.

Unsupervised Contact

- The organisation will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children.
- If possible there will always be two adults in the room when working with children.
- If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimise risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area or in a designated room with a door open.
- If it is predicted that an individual is likely to require unsupervised contact with children, he or she may be required to obtain a criminal record disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service
- All children will be chaperoned at all times.

Gifts made to the children

- Gifts of any sort, including sweets and chocolates given to the children must be made via the chaperone and with consent of the parents

- Chaperones will be mindful of any allergies/food intolerances in the group before accepting gifts for the children
- Favouritism of any child(ren) is not appropriate
- All gifts should be made to all the children rather than any specific child(ren)

Physical Contact

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children.
- Adults will only touch children when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.
- Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

Managing sensitive information

- The organisation has a policy and procedures for the taking, using and storage of photographs or images of children.
- Permission will be sought from the parents for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes.
- The organisation's web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use.
- The organisation will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as criminal record disclosures.

Trips/Outings:

1. When organising a trip/outing make sure a trip/outing slip is completed. This includes details about the trip and a section for parents to give their consent. These slips must be returned before the event takes place and must be brought on the trip with the completed group information/consent forms. (If a group information/consent form has not already been completed for a child or young person, then it will need to be completed).
2. Ensure that there is adequate insurance for the work and activities.

Personal/Personnel Safety:

- A group of children or young people under sixteen should not be left unattended at any time.
- Avoid being alone with an individual child or young person for a long time. If there is a need to be alone with a child or young person (e.g. first aid or he/she is distressed) make sure that another worker knows where you are and why.
- At no time, should a volunteer or worker from any external organisation arrange to meet a young person away from the activity without someone else being there.
- As such meetings, should be planned and have the approval of a member of the Committee (this must be someone other than the organiser themselves).
- Teenage assistants should always be supervised.

Child Safety:

1. Make sure that the area you are using for activities is fit for the purpose, with no hazards causing injury.
2. Make sure that all workers and assistants know:
 - Where the emergency phone is and how to operate it
 - Where the first aid kit is
 - Who is responsible for First Aid and how to record accidents or injuries in the incident book
 - What to do in the event of a fire or another emergency
3. Once a year there should be a fire practice
4. Do not let children go home without an adult unless the parent has specifically said they may do so. Never let a child go with another adult unless the parent has informed you that this will happen.

5. If private cars are used for an outing, the drivers must be approved by the committee, be properly insured, have rested before driving, and should have clean licenses. There should always be at least one other responsible person (16 or over) in each vehicle. All vehicles should be fitted with full seatbelts, not just lap belts. Full seatbelts should always be used.

Under normal circumstances, workers should only give a lift home to a young person from group activities if the parents of the young person have specifically asked for them to do so. (If workers are asked to give a young person or child a lift home, they are not obliged to do so, it is left to their discretion).

In the case of trips or outings, it should be made clear if workers' cars will be used and where the children or young people will be returned to.

E-Safety

- Most of our children will use mobile phones and computers. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some men, women and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings.
- The organisations e-safety policy explains how we try to keep children safe by not communicating with children via their phone, but with their parents.

Cyber-bullying by children, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying

New Workers:

Workers and assistants are by far the most valuable resource the group has for working with young people. When recruiting, and selecting paid workers and volunteers the following steps will be taken:

- Completion of an application form;
- Identifying reasons for gaps in employment, and other inconsistencies in the application;
- Checking of the applicants' identity (passport, driving license, etc);
- Taking up references prior to the person starting work;
- Ensuring criminal record checks have been carried out through relevant local agencies approved by the Criminal Records Bureau;
- Taking appropriate advice before employing someone with a criminal record;
- Allowing no unaccompanied access to children until all the above have been completed;
- A probationary period of 3 months for new paid workers and volunteers;
- On-going supervision of paid workers and volunteers;
- Ensuring good practice is followed in working with children and young people by providing appropriate training and guidance;
- A nominated child Protection representative on the Management Committee.

Training:

It is a great benefit if workers undertake regular training for this type of work. The committee should keep workers informed of relevant courses.

What is child protection:

Child protection is the response to the different ways in which a young person's or child's physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual health are damaged by the actions of another person.

What you should do:

1. Listen to the child/young person
2. Look at them directly and do not promise to keep any secrets before you know what they are, but always let the child/young person know if, and why, you are going to tell anyone
3. Take whatever is said to you seriously and help the child/young person to trust his/her own feelings. Take notes of exactly what is said to you avoiding assumptions and conjecture.
4. It is not the role of the worker to investigate any allegations (this would contaminate evidence if a situation went to court). Any disclosure by a child/young person must be reported to the named child protection officer.
5. Speak immediately to the Local Authority or NSPCC for further advice and guidance.

What you should *not* do:

1. Project workers/volunteers should not begin investigating the matter themselves.
2. Do not discuss the matter with anyone except the correct people in authority.
3. Do not form your own opinions and decide to do nothing.

Things to say or do:

- ‘What you are telling me is very important’
- This is not your fault’
- ‘I am sorry that this has happened/is happening’
- ‘You were right to tell someone’
- What you are telling me should not be happening to you and I will find out the best way to help you’
- Make notes soon after the event. Try to write down exactly what the young person or child said. Avoid assumptions or conjecture.

Things *not* to say or do:

- Do not ask leading questions – Why? How? What?
- Do not say ‘Are you sure?’
- Do not show your own emotions e.g. shock/disbelief
- Do not make false promises

Appendix A

List of Addresses, Telephone and Fax numbers

Appendix B

Suggested Record Form

This policy was adopted by the **Dani Harmer Academy Ltd** on 13th February 2019

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee by:

Signature.....

Name in Capitals.....

Position:

The policy has been reviewed by the Management Committee on:

Date.....