**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY**

**for**

**DEH**

1. Introduction

Devon Educational Holidays Ltd operates as a for-profit organisation. The local office is situated at Exeter Business Hub, and oversight is provided by a dedicated management team (the Team). Safeguarding responsibilities are assigned to a designated liaison officer within the management team. These safeguarding children policy has been adopted by the Team and applies to all staff, managers, directors, volunteers, students, and any individuals acting on behalf of DEH Ltd.

2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy aims to protect children and young people who receive services from DEH including those whose parents or guardians may be service recipients. The organisation maintains that no child or young person should experience abuse or harm. Accordingly, this policy provides comprehensive guidance and principles for staff and volunteers regarding child protection and safeguarding practices.

3. Risks to Children

Although most children grow up in safe environments, there are circumstances where additional protection is necessary, including:

* Sexual abuse
* Grooming
* Physical and emotional abuse and neglect
* Domestic violence
* Inappropriate supervision by staff or volunteers
* Bullying, cyberbullying, and aggression within educational settings
* Victimisation
* Self-harm
* Unsafe environments and activities
* Crime
* Exploitation

4. Universality of Protection

It is recognised that:

* The welfare of the child is of utmost importance.
* All children, irrespective of race, gender, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, or identity, are entitled to equal protection from harm.
* Certain children may be at higher risk due to their circumstances, previous experiences, communication requirements, or dependency levels.
* Collaboration with children, young people, parents, guardians, carers, and relevant agencies is essential to safeguarding wellbeing.

5. Safeguarding Children at Events / Activities

There are three types of events/activities:

* Events open to both adults and children of all ages.
* Events specifically for children accompanied by a parent.
* Events for unaccompanied children, which may occur alongside other activities.

For events open to all ages, children under 16 must be accompanied throughout by an adult over 18 who is responsible for bringing and returning them. Young people aged 16 or 17 may attend independently if they provide written parental consent and a contact number. For events for accompanied children, similar supervisory requirements apply, with lone adults supervising grouped children. Unaccompanied children's events require enrolment by a responsible adult, capturing relevant personal information and parental contact details. Both events and activities are broadly defined to encompass any service provided by Exeter Homestay UK Ltd.

6. Disclosure and Barring

DEH Ltd offers activities for children, including English lessons, summer school programmes, and mini stays. Some activities may necessitate DBS and/or police checks per the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. The extent of required checks depends on the level and frequency of unsupervised access to children. Allegations of impropriety are taken seriously and must be reported immediately to C Daley, Operations Director, or the Family Welfare Officer. The Team will assess allegations and associated risks, considering appropriate disciplinary actions in accordance with company procedures.

7. Health and Safety Aspects of Safeguarding Children

Prior to commencing any event for unaccompanied children, the Team will conduct a risk assessment and implement measures to mitigate health and safety risks. Parents and children will be informed of potential risks and preventive steps. All risk assessments will be documented. Sufficient adults must be present at events to manage emergencies and supervision.

8. Adventure Activities Licensing

Occasional adventure activities are offered for members/students, such as canoeing, team building, kayaking, and swimming. Restricting participation to members/students exempts these activities from licensing under the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations.

9. Policy on the Prevention of Bullying

Bullying, whether by adults or children, is not tolerated. Incidents of child-on-child bullying result in immediate separation and parental involvement. The Team reviews all incidents to evaluate future risks and may impose bans in line with company procedures. Allegations of adults bullying children are handled as outlined in Section 6.3.

10. Photographing Children

Photography is common at many events; Exeter Homestay UK Ltd reserves the right to publish suitable images and names of attending members.

11. Managing Behaviour, Discipline, and Acceptable Restraint

Supervisors must not employ corporal punishment. Physical restraint is permitted only when strictly necessary to prevent injury or serious property damage, using minimal force. Unacceptable behaviour is addressed by separating the involved children and ensuring their supervision until parental care can resume. Disciplinary sanctions, including temporary bans from future events, may be applied following review by the Operations Director. Appeals processes are available, with final decisions resting with Exeter Homestay UK Ltd.

12. Related Policies

This safeguarding policy should be referenced alongside the following documents:

* Code of Conduct
* Risk Assessment
* Employee Check Policy
* DBS

13. Legal Framework

This policy complies with relevant legislation and guidance, including:

* Children Act 1989
* United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
* General Data Protection Regulation
* Human Rights Act 1998
* Sexual Offences Act 2003
* Children Act 2004
* Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
* Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
* Children and Families Act 2014
* SEND Code of Practice (2014)
* Information sharing: advice for practitioners
* Working Together to Safeguard Children (2017)

\*Policy approval date: 01/10/2025 Review cycle: every two years. Approved by Ms C Daley, Operations Director. \*