



CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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Developed by: War Child UK

THE POLICY

1. *Introduction*

War Child UK's (referred hereafter as "War Child") mission is to support and improve the protection and care of children and young people who live with a combination of insecurity, poverty and exclusion in fragile and conflict-affected areas where there are very few services or resources available.

Our work with children to keep them safe is the most important thing we do and therefore this policy has universal and global application across all those who represent War Child in whatever capacity and that their responsibility is taken seriously to ensure compliance.

We believe that children have a right to their survival, development, protection and participation and these rights are streamlined through our programmes that include child protection, education and livelihoods.

2. *Definitions and terminology*

1. For the purposes of this policy a child is defined as any person under the age of 18. This policy applies to all children regardless of their background, age, class, gender, ethnicity, religion, ability or sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT). Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse eg. LGBT and children with disabilities.
2. "Child safeguarding" refers to the responsibility of those who are in positions of trust to protect children from the risk of harm and abuse caused by those who have a duty to protect and care for them.
3. "Child protection" refers to child protection programmes that War Child implements directly or through partners to provide children and their families living in difficult circumstances with services and support.
4. The different forms of abuse and neglect are defined can be found as "[Appendix A](#)".

3. *Key principles*

This Policy sets out our commitment to ensuring children's based on the following principles:

- All children have equal rights to protection from risk of harm or abuse;
- Everyone has a responsibility to prevent the risk of harm and support the protection of children;
- War Child has a duty of care to children with whom we work with, are in contact with, or who are affected by our work and operations.

- War Child has a responsibility to support partner organisations comply with this policy and procedure and develop one of their own.
- All actions on child safeguarding are taken in the best interests of the child, which is of paramount importance.

Child Safeguarding must have three elements:

- **Accountability and transparency** - The creation of a culture and environment in which children are valued, listened to and their right to be safe is upheld and safeguarding concerns are reported and dealt with quickly and appropriately.
- **Prevention** - The reduction and management of risk where War Child staff and associates have direct or indirect contact with children involved in our activities and services.
- **Response** - Taking immediate steps to prevent further harm to children, investigating and dealing with concerns appropriately including working together with other organisations that have a responsibility to safeguard and protect children.

4. Policy Statement and Application

This Policy seeks to ensure that the protection of children is paramount in every area of work which War Child is involved in such as fundraising, programmes, policy and advocacy, communications (internal and external), human resources, IT and finance and should be reflected in other organisational policies. Whilst this policy relates to child safeguarding, any concerns about safeguarding risks to vulnerable adults should comply with same principles and procedures.¹

The policy applies to all War Child trustees, staff including those who are unpaid and/or volunteer, ambassadors, donors and funders, visitors, media, journalists, consultants and third party contractors (named from now on as “staff and associates” in the document). We also expect that all partner agencies working with War Child will comply with its processes.

Managers, (including recruiting and project managers) within War Child are expected to promote this policy and are accountable for its implementation, including ensuring newcomers undergo thorough induction and refresher training in order that staff understand fully the expectations around behaviour, how to manage risks and how to report and respond to any child safeguarding allegations.

The reporting of suspected or actual abuse is a professional and legal obligation. Failure to report concerns to the Child Safeguarding Officers can lead to disciplinary action or dismissal. This applies to staff even those who have no direct contact with children in the course of their work.

¹ A vulnerable adult is someone aged 18 or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

This Safeguarding Policy and Procedure is based on international and UK legislation: The Children Act 1989, Working Together to Safeguarding Children (HM Government 2015) and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006. It is in compliance with War Child's commitments under the Core Humanitarian Standards (2014) and Keeping Children Safe Safeguarding Standards (revised 2014) and reflects the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 and all other child-related UN Conventions and Declarations.

Where there is discrepancy between national and international standards then this policy will prevail.

5. Implementation of the Policy

The implementation of this policy is set out in a clear plan that will be rolled by Senior Management and overseen by the Child Safeguarding Officers (CSO's). As part of War Child's commitment to child safeguarding we will ensure that:

- All our recruitment and human resources management procedures are robust including arrangements for appropriate checks on new staff and associates. (**Section 1 of the Procedures**)
- Staff are inducted and trained properly in this policy and procedures. (**Section 2 of Procedures**)
- All staff and associates will be required to sign the Statement of Commitment form and abide by the Code of Conduct (**Appendix B**) as a condition of their engagement with War Child.
- Everyone is clear of the procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against War Child staff and associates and those of partner agencies.
- Each team/department or location has a named child safeguarding focal person that they can refer child safeguarding concerns onto London-based Child Safeguarding Officers.
- There are agreed protocols for all media and communications where children are featured comply with **Section 4 of the Procedures**.
- Guidance is provided on how to work together to help keep children safe online by being adequately equipped to understand, identify and mitigate the risks of new technology through our e-safety guidance (**Section 5 of the Procedures**).
- Partner agencies are informed of War Child's expectations of them around child safeguarding policy and procedures and that arrangements are in place to safeguard and respond to any safeguarding concerns, including arrangements for sharing information (**Section 6 of the Procedures**).

6. Expectations of Behaviour

War Child's Code of Conduct (CoC) takes the best interest of the children with whom we work as its primary consideration and outlines appropriate and expected standards of behaviours of adults towards all children.

War Child have developed a code of conduct to:

- Specify appropriate behaviour required of staff and associates while they are engaged in working for, or on behalf of, War Child.
- Reduce the risk of inappropriate behavior to prevent the risk of misplaced allegations
- Ensure that children feel safe when in contact with War Child staff and associates

It is a policy requirement that all staff and associates adhere the Code of Conduct while undertaking any activity on their behalf and sign the child safeguarding commitment form.

All partner agencies should be made aware of the Code of Conduct and War Child expects them to comply with it. This should be included in MOU's and other partnership arrangements.

Any breach of the Code may result in consequences for the individual; these will vary depending on the position of the individual and the nature of the work/volunteering that they perform and may result in:

- An internal or external investigation
- Disciplinary action or dismissal
- Ceasing volunteering/trustee activity
- Cancellation of the contract or partnership

Where appropriate it will also result in information being passed onto relevant regulatory bodies, UN agencies, humanitarian standards, law enforcement, and child protection agencies.²

War Child's Code of Conduct should be interpreted in a spirit of transparency and accountability. War Child staff must make an attempt to understand the local norms around physical contact between children and adults.

7. Revision

This policy will be revised every 2 years to ensure compliance with international standards and updated legislation as well as taking into account lessons learnt.

²<http://www.corehumanitarianstandard.org/files/files/Core%20Humanitarian%20Standard%20-%20English.pdf>