

Child
Safeguarding
Policy

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The LandCode Initiative believes that it is unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and therefore recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by commitment to a culture which protects them.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Child Safeguarding Policy and its procedures, which apply to all operations and activities conducted by, or on behalf of, the Landcode Initiative throughout our work at the Secretariat and field offices in the local communities.

The policy reaffirms and strengthens our commitment as an organisation towards keeping children safe and protecting them from all forms of harm and abuse. This is an issue of critical importance for the Landcode Initiative and we strongly believe that the protection of children, the promotion of their wellbeing, and upholding children's rights as a cornerstone for the success of our work.

Purpose of the Policy

The aim of the policy and procedures is to regulate how we work as an organisation so that the children with whom we come into contact (either directly or indirectly) are safeguarded and have their wellbeing promoted, and that our actions, while implementing programmes or institutional activities, do not cause any harm to children.

To support staff, partners, interns and volunteer groups in applying and promoting the policy at various organisational levels, guided by a range of strategies, resources and tools some of which have been included in the List of Appendices.

While the Safeguarding Policy aims to be comprehensive, given the diverse range of settings and operations carried out by the Landcode Initiative, it is likely that there may be circumstances which are not covered or where there is a question about the application of the policy and procedures. In such situations, the Executive Director at the Secretariat (mail.ed@landcode.org) should be contacted for further advice.

Definition of Safeguarding

Child Safeguarding is the responsibility that the Landcode Initiative takes upon itself as an organisations to make sure the staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children, through enforcement of measures and guidelines that avert exposure of children to the risk of harm and abuse, so that any concerns one has about children's safety within the communities in which we work, are reported to the appropriate authorities.

This responsibility involves preventive actions to minimise chances of harm from occurring, and responsive plans to ensure that incidents which may still happen (irrespective of the preventive actions taken) are appropriately handled.

Safeguarding implies a wider duty of care towards children rather than just upholding their right to protection (as defined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989) – but it is primarily concerned with avoiding harm and ensuring wellbeing, rather than with the promotion and protection of child rights generally.

Principles underpinning our Safeguarding Policy

Our Safeguarding Policy is based upon a number of principles and beliefs, including:

1. All the children have equal rights to protection and their participation and wellbeing must be promoted.
2. All actions regarding child safeguarding must be taken in the best interest of children. This includes an understanding that in all our programmes and activities we must ensure that we respect children's rights and do not cause harm.
3. Everybody has a shared responsibility for safeguarding. This policy is mandatory to all those who work for or on behalf of the Landcode Initiative, including the staff, partners and volunteers. Where training, advice and support may not be provided, everyone should still actively participate so as to carry out their responsibilities towards safeguarding children.
4. We work in a transparent and open way where child safeguarding is a priority, recognising that situations of abuse and harm are able to flourish when staff, volunteers, partners, children, families and community members are not able to raise their concerns.
5. All reports of concern regarding the safety and protection of a child will be taken very seriously and always handled without delay. Appropriate steps will be taken to protect the child and, where necessary, action will be taken against the alleged perpetrator. This may include (but not limited to) referrals to law enforcement and child protection agencies. In relation to allegations against staff, volunteers and partners, action may also include the suspension or termination of engagement or any type of cooperation.
6. We work very closely with a number of organisations, state departments, agencies and ministries with a mandate to protect children including any other appropriate organs within the informal sector.
7. We maintain high levels of confidentiality and not disclose personal details or names of those involved in child protection cases, unless it is necessary to pass on such critical information in order to ensure that a child is protected (for example where a child may need specialist services or where a criminal offence may have been committed).
8. We raise awareness and influence others to know the importance of safeguarding children, using our policy and procedures as a way of highlighting our commitment and explaining our values. We will share our policy and procedures with others, and be open to continued feedback regarding its application and relevance.
9. We embrace international and national laws, policies, and regulatory frameworks relating to safeguarding children.
10. There is no one particular approach of safeguarding children and promoting their rights. Solutions to protecting children may need to reflect the culture and operating environment and the nature of activities being undertaken. However, we hold that culture can never be used as an excuse for abuse. While staff, volunteers and partners in particular local communities where we work may make some modifications in the procedures to suit specific contexts, it must be within the framework of requirements set down within this policy. It will not be acceptable to compromise any standards needed for safeguarding children.

1. Preventive procedures

This chapter of the Policy identifies specific steps and concepts which translate the vision of safeguarding children into action.

Child safeguarding runs across the whole organisation and is not just associated with programmes and projects or Human Resources. The concept of thinking about safeguarding - and reducing risk - shall be embedded in everything that we do, from recruiting a staff member or volunteer, to selecting a partner, through to running an activity and designing and implementing a programme or other institutional activity (such as promotion, influencing, and fundraising).

Throughout the policy, a number of situations have been highlighted which specifically call for a risk assessment – such as when conducting an activity or when concerns are raised about a staff member's lifestyle or record. However, this does not mean that risk should only be considered at those times. Safeguarding risks must be regularly reviewed at all levels.

It should be remembered that although we normally think of safeguarding issues when an adult is mistreating a child, also children themselves can be the perpetrators of abuse. This normally occurs where one child is in a position of power or influence (for example because the child is older or the child being abused comes from a marginalised group) and is often referred to as 'bullying.'

In such cases while action is necessary to support the child being bullied, it is critical to remember that the perpetrator is also a child, and therefore interventions should be in the best interest of both children in terms of how to not only support the abused child but also respond to the abusive child by undamagingly preventing any reoccurrence.

1.1 Human Resources

1.1.1 Board, staff, and consultants

This section sets out the specific obligations and responsibilities for all those working with/for the Landcode Initiative, whether paid or unpaid, full or part time.

- a) By agreeing to work with/for the organisation, it shall be implied that the terms and conditions of the Safeguarding Policy have been accepted as a condition of involvement.
- b) All persons working with/for the organisation (including interns and volunteers) shall be obliged to sign and abide by the Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) as a condition of their involvement. This sets out specific expectations of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
- c) It shall be further required that those in a governing capacity on the Board sign the Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) and primarily set the highest standards of behaviour in this respect.
- d) All occasional visitors shall also be required to abide by the Guide for Visitors (Appendix 2) as a condition of their involvement with the organisation especially in the field offices.

While orientation on the policy together with any necessary additional training regarding responsibilities and duty of care (particular to specific roles) will be provided, all persons working with/for the organisation have a personal responsibility to seek further clarification and advice where they are not clear about what is expected of them.

Breaching the Code of Conduct or contravening the Guide for Visitors may lead to express suspension and termination of any type of engagement. This will be determined on a case by case basis, ensuring observance of applicable employment conditions and legislation, while allowing for the privacy and confidentiality of those concerned in the course of conducting any internal investigation. In addition, after a thorough consideration of the facts, we will decide whether the case needs to be reported to law enforcement authorities or be handled the executive committee in full conformity with the law.

The Child Safeguarding Policy focuses on contact with children taking place during work under the responsibility of the organisation. Nevertheless, any misconduct that may happen outside the work environment of those associated with the organisation may contravene the principles and values of the Child Safeguarding Policy. If an issue of such a nature arises, it will be carefully considered for investigation and any decision making processes involved will place utmost importance on the child's best interests.

1.1.2 Education, advice & support

This section sets out the mentorship and supervisory efforts that will be undertaken to support the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy.

- a) Within their probationary period, and no longer than three (3) months after appointment, all staff shall be given guidance as to the Child Safeguarding Policy, and their responsibilities towards safeguarding children. Standing volunteers should also be included in such training.**
- b) Staff, interns and volunteers shall be given the opportunity for regular updates on safeguarding children – either formally, such as through training or supervision, or more informally, through discussion at periodic staff meetings or team building events.**
- c) Depending upon the nature of work being undertaken, the role, background and experience of the staff, additional training shall be provided on child wellbeing, protection and safety.**
- d) Accurate and updated records shall always be kept on HR files of the attendees of all training and/or guidance meetings conducted – with the date and name of mentor.**

While all persons working with/for the organisation have a responsibility for safeguarding children, no one should have to do this alone and unsupported.

The lead member of staff for this policy will be appoint Focal Points primarily responsible for providing advice and support on child safeguarding concerns and the implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy. He or she will in turn be supported by the Executive Committee which comprises of the senior management team.

The Board will closely monitor actions taken by the Executive Committee to ensure that all persons are supported during their work with/for the organisation in safeguarding children, the Executive Director being ultimately responsible for implementing this policy.

Whenever support or advice is sought regarding child safeguarding it will be handled expeditiously and taken seriously. At no time must seeking advice or support be considered indicative of someone lacking capacity or knowledge. Where those working with/for the organisation are involved in child protection incidents – either as subject of an investigation or as witnesses – appropriate support must be duly provided. This may include additional supervision or counselling. (Further guidance is given on reporting and managing cases of concern and child protection incidents under sub section 2.1 below).

1.1.3 Raising awareness

This section sets out how the required level of knowledge and understanding will be raised regarding the Child Safeguarding Policy.

- a) Staff (including interns, and volunteers), as well as partners, communities, families, children and other stakeholders and all those working with/for the Landcode Initiative shall be made aware of the Child Safeguarding Policy, and how to report a concern. This shall be done in ways that are appropriate and accessible in every given context of employment or engagement.
- b) A simplified version of the Child Safeguarding Policy – including local adaptations – shall be translated and made available in local languages whenever possible. Depending on the context, this should be provided in a variety of suitable formats, and may include posters or booklets using pictures.

Special consideration must be given on how to raise awareness with children about the safeguarding policy and ways in which they can help keep themselves safer. This could include developing with children a child friendly version of the policy.

1.1.4 Safer recruitment

This section focuses on how those working with/for the Landcode Initiative are selected (staff and volunteers). Individuals who are intent on abusing children often target organisations where they can gain access to children. While no recruitment processes can ever be 100% safe, by having stringent recruitment processes in place, the likelihood of engaging someone who is not suitable to work with children can be dramatically reduced.

- a) Conformity to a combination of safety-driven recruitment procedures shall be enforced to provide a level of assurance that proper attempts have been made through competence tests, due diligence processes, and background checks which can identify those who may pose a risk.
- b) All recruitment procedures during pre-selection, selection and post-selection shall be based on a detailed analysis of each job or volunteer task and the likely level of contact with children in order to ensure that there are as many existing safeguards as possible which follow a detailed guidance provided by the Safer Recruitment Checklist in Appendix 4. Work shall not commence until all safer recruitment processes have been followed and background checks completed.

While safer recruitment may be desirable, it is also recognised that in some exceptional circumstances there may be a long delay, or for operational reasons it may be necessary to start work at short notice. In such situations, additional measures must be put in place like provision of further supervision to ensure the person in question does not work alone.

1.1.5 Child Safeguarding Focal Point

This section sets out the obligation of each department and field office to nominate someone to act as Child Safeguarding Focal Point (CSFP).

- a) The CSFP shall provide a point of contact to advise, support and assist staff teams in implementing the Child Safeguarding Policies. See Appendix 5 - Child Safeguarding Focal Point.
- b) At the Secretariat, the Programme Manager shall act as the Child Safeguarding Focal Point who shall ensure that Focal Points at field level ideally have child protection/safeguarding knowledge.

However, in specific circumstances, the role can be given to anyone who is committed and has the respect of the team. It should be understood that the sole responsibility for child safeguarding rests with everyone.

The ultimate responsibility for safeguarding rests with the Executive Committee.

1.1.6 Partners

This section considers how to work with partners in order to promote the implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy. If there is any doubt about how to best apply the Policy with partners in specific contexts then the Executive Committee can be consulted.

- a) In selecting partners, emphasis shall be put on the potential partner's suitability and track record for working with children – including if they have or can develop their own child safeguarding policy and procedures (which they may refer to as a Child Protection Policy).
- b) In all partnership relations, strong attention shall be given to issues related to child safeguarding by including specific references to child safeguarding measures in agreements and contracts.
- c) Partnerships shall be used as an opportunity to raise awareness on the need for institutional policies on child safeguarding through training, guidance and support while emphasising the responsibilities that partners have for safeguarding children as related to the scope of work involved.

Where the Landcode Initiative is the lead partner (i.e. can exert more control over the terms of the contract) then reference in the contract must be made to the commitment to keeping children safe and our Child Safeguarding Policy. Where we are not the lead partner, then attempts should be made to include safeguarding within the agreement. In either case, partners should be given a copy of the Child Safeguarding Policy and where required guidance provided on the contents.

Partnerships should also be pursued which aim at advocating governments to develop standards of child safeguarding, with support for the required resources and expertise to implement such standards across the targeted sectors.

Where child safeguarding concerns arise in relation to a partner, in addition to involvement of appropriate authorities, consideration must be given to suspension of the partnership and/or withdraw of funding and support but also taking into account the reaction of the partner regarding their commitment to addressing the situation.

1.1.7 Visitors to field offices

This section specifically considers issues of safeguarding in relation to occasional types of child or community-based support and visitors to field offices.

- a) Official guests shall visit a field office or project beneficiaries with prior permission, written or otherwise, from the Programme Manager in cognisance of the Executive Director.
- b) Unofficial guests, such as a parent or an acquaintance of a staff member, may visit without formal permission from the organisation but must be guided by the respective hosting staff about the extant child safeguarding policy and procedures applicable in any given visiting arrangement.
- c) The guests, official and unofficial, to the Secretariat may not interface with children but shall also be made aware of and understand the principles of the Guide for Visitors (Appendix 2) in specific scenarios so that they agree to its terms and conditions in cases where any child contact is likely.
- d) It is the responsibility of the hosting staff member to ensure that their guests, including persons giving occasional child or community-based support, are properly briefed and supervised throughout the activities or visit, and have signed the Guide for Visitors (Appendix 2).

All guests, including persons giving occasional support, must be accompanied at all times and in no circumstances should they be left unattended with children, unless there are clear reasons for doing so. This arrangement is only possible for official visitors or where express permission is granted by the Executive Director in advance.

Any grant of permission to a guest for meeting a child without being attended to should only be granted in rare circumstances with the Executive Director seeking approval from Executive Committee or other appropriate reference whenever he or she cannot entirely guarantee that the person in question does not pose a risk to children.

1.2 Media & Communication

1.2.1 Media materials

This section considers the actions that need to be taken to ensure that safeguarding is included in strategies of working with journalists and the media.

- a) The use of images and references by the Landcode Initiative in media activities or materials shall respect the Child Safeguarding Policy and its procedure.
- b) The staff coordinating media activities shall obtain permission from the child and the person who is responsible for looking after him or her.
- c) The projects involving use of media materials shall have strategies to ensure that safety of a child is not compromised if certain images and personal descriptions are disseminated.
- d) The journalists and media shall be accompanied by an employee of the organisation at all times while covering a report for activities involving children.

- e) The staff coordinating media activities shall ensure that children do not pose in any inappropriate manner (e.g. creating sexual connotations etc.).**
- f) Journalists and media shall be cautioned against taking or publishing any photos of children who are completely naked or dressed inappropriately.**
- g) Images of children which are exploitative or offensive shall not be used by the organisation.**

While it may be necessary to amplify voice for the plight of children, it is more important to respect their dignity. The media activities must not represent the children as victims (weak, desperate etc.) but rather choose images that present children in a 'positive way.' Similarly stories about children should aim to report not only the negative aspects of children's lives, but also their strengths rather than sensationalising the child's experience.

Taking pictures or videos must be reserved for strictly professional use. The staff, volunteers and visitors are encouraged to 'like' and 'share' photographs or chats published on official websites and social media sites. In this way, officially approved photographs may be distributed more broadly on personal social media sites. It is very highly recommended that unofficial photographs must not be posted or uploaded on personal pages.

The practice of never publishing any information that could endanger the child victim of abuse (title, metadata, captions etc.) is encouraged. When publishing/distributing photos, images, stories etc., personal information must be removed to ensure privacy (i.e. names and addresses must not be included and if necessary other identifying features such as school name, parents, home/village, community should also be omitted). It will always be opted to use those photos only available for public use (verified and validated).

1.2.2 Online protection and safety

This section provides the key policies on the use of social media and technology in addition to other separate guidance or training that may be given.

- a) The Executive Committee shall ensure that sufficient guidance is provided to the board, staff and consultants about the appropriate use of technology – including internet, mobile phones and social media with regard to child safeguarding.**
- b) The staff in charge of information and communication shall install filters and blocking software to ensure that unsuitable/offensive sites cannot be downloaded as well as update the blacklist of sites that generally promote the abuse of children or contain harmful images and information.**
- c) In the event that offensive material or unsolicited messages/chats are received by any staff, he or she shall be obliged to pass such information to the Child Safeguarding Focal Point who must report to the lead member of staff for implementing the policy.**

The staff must also report to their supervisors even where offensive material is received or accidentally downloaded. In the event that offensive material, such as child pornography, is received or accidentally downloaded and a report is made to law enforcement, the materials must not be sent with the referral. The transmission of images is considered a crime under international law. Guidance should be sought from the law enforcement agency as to how to arrange for images to be transferred appropriately.

1.2.3 Information, communication & technology

This section provides major rules on the use of computers, information, and other technology or communication gadgets provided to staff in the course of their duties.

- a) All the required ICT equipment shall only be provided to the intended staff for the planned business purposes, and their eventual use is subject to the Safeguarding Policy.
- b) The use of computer and technology resources for private purposes shall only be allowed provided that this does not prevent employees from exercising their professional activities, and that it is not prejudicial to the reputation and image of the organisation.

While the privacy of staff is respected, this is not guaranteed. In specific cases arising out of safeguarding concerns, the organisation may exceptionally grant access to private files in order to facilitate investigation processes. This may be, for example, if there was a suspicion that IT equipment had been used in violation of the Code of Conduct.

Any voluntary non-professional access to websites detrimental to the reputation of the organisation (and in violation of the Child Safeguarding Policy) is strictly forbidden and can justify a dismissal with immediate effect. Any unintended access to harmful data by staff should be immediately reported to their supervisors to avoid any misunderstanding.

1.3 Programming strategy & framework

1.3.1 Programme design

This section guides on how programmes and all type of actions across all sectors, not just child protection programmes, should 'think safeguarding' at all times and across all activities – and not consider safeguarding as a separate activity, but rather a theme that runs through all the work of the organisation.

- a) A separate checklist shall be made available to help staff teams evaluate safeguarding requirements in their day to day work referred to as a "Risk Assessment Template for Activities Form."
- b) Safeguarding shall be considered right from the project/programme design stage and reviewed regularly as part of the monitoring progress of activity implementation.
- c) A risk assessment shall be undertaken to identify any potential dangers and a plan put in place to minimise these risks when planning to conduct specific activities, such as consultations with children or a community-based activities. Copies of the risk assessment undertaken must be kept on file.

In all project/programme design processes, where the assessment concludes that there are too many risks that cannot be reduced to an acceptable level then the activity should not proceed. If necessary, additional guidance must be given to staff, volunteers, partners, children and communities to ensure that spirit of the Safeguarding Policy is met for specific activities or programmes, for example, to highlight particular dangers or concerns.

1.3.2 Programme implementation

This section stipulates policies on how the organisation is committed to ensuring a safe environment for children through programme implementation by investing the necessary resources needed to apply the procedures contained in this policy.

- a) In implementing projects/programmes, the organisation shall enforce strategies that keep children safe, guard those working for/with it from possible false allegations or from operating within an unclear framework, protect its reputation, and prevent infiltration of its work by child abusers.
- b) The organisation shall integrate components in its work that prevent and protect children from physical, sexual, emotional, and any other form of abuse or neglect including such acts as bullying, corporal punishment, child grooming and exposing them to, or using them for pornography, witchcraft and ritualistic abuse, spiritual abuse and harmful traditional practices.
- c) Before activities are conducted, the written permission of parents, (or guardians and care givers in residential institutions), and children shall be obtained. In circumstances where parents and/or children are illiterate, a staff member or standing volunteer shall sign on their behalf in their presence, so long as the form has been discussed. See Appendix 3 - Parental Consent Form.
- d) Staff and other support persons who work with children shall be supervised on a regular basis, and given the opportunity to participate in discussions about safeguarding issues – for example in meetings, informal discussions or through considering case studies.
- e) Staff and other support persons working with the children who are likely to need the use of physical intervention shall be appropriately trained in the Positive Options technique.
- f) A record of known bullying incidents which includes all forms e.g. cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying shall be maintained whenever they are reported.
- g) Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by children/young people or staff shall always be challenged and where appropriate, managed under any relevant policy across the organisation.
- h) All activities shall be implemented with a view of involving children as active participants who can make choices as a matter of their right, give proposals that most suitably address their interests, and take guided decisions on what can effectively improve their wellbeing.
- i) Regular consultation shall be made with children after activities e.g. through feedback questionnaires asking them to report whether they have had a happy/sad visit/workshop/mealtime.
- j) Safeguarding cases shall be reviewed regularly throughout activities and at the end of activities, so that the lessons learned can be fed into future activities and necessary adjustments made.

All persons working with/for the organisation should be made aware of their duty to raise child safeguarding concerns, where they exist, during programme implementation, which may include the attitude or actions of their colleagues.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child safeguarding or disciplinary procedures but this must only be used as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

2. Responsive systems

This chapter of the Policy identifies specific tools and procedures which complement the preventive actions in the event of a safeguarding concern.

There are two distinct ways in which the safeguarding concerns and child protection incidents may arise: (1) Where the occurrence relates to potential, actual or suspected abuse of a child by the family/community - such reports can be managed at field level and handled by the respective Focal Point with the support of the Lead Member of staff for implementing the policy, in conformity with national and international law. (2) Where the incident involves a staff, volunteer, visitor, implementing partner, or a representative of a significant stakeholder (e.g. a donor) - such reports must be expressly forwarded to the Lead Member of staff for implementing the policy who will work closely with the Executive Committee at the Secretariat level to determine the appropriate action necessary.

This process is not intended to delay or avoid taking action, but to ensure that action taken does not jeopardise organisational or individual reputation, and to further ensure that every appropriate support is given with the assistance of various stakeholders.

2.1 Point of contact

2.1.1 Safeguarding concerns

This section focuses on safeguarding concerns (i.e. reports that the given procedure in the child safeguarding policy is not being implemented) and gives a point of first contact to respond to their occurrence while minimising the likely harm to children.

- a) Safeguarding concerns identified at field level shall be received from numerous sources – including staff, volunteers, partners, children and families/community members through the designated focal persons who are required to take all the reported cases seriously and handle them promptly.
- b) All designated focal points shall be required to display a notice carrying their email addresses and telephone contacts in conspicuous places at the field offices and/or in public places seeking reports about any safeguarding concerns assessed in relation to the organisation's work.
- c) All cases received by telephone communication shall be formally documented indicating the nature of concern raised, the specific policy area affected, extent of risk posed, the available proof of occurrence, the details of staff involved, and any other relevant information to support investigation.
- d) The secretariat and field offices shall periodically open their respective suggestion boxes so as to assess those messages that may pose safeguarding concerns and quickly provide the required support through appropriate procedures in place at the time of receiving the report or complaint.

While sufficient information is need to inform investigations, it is very crucial to maintain the highest level of confidentiality and not openly disclose personal details of those involved in safeguarding concerns, including the names of those raising concerns unless it is necessary to pass on such information to ensure best interests of a child. But safeguarding concerns must be treated with caution as they may largely arise from mistaken belief.

2.1.2 Child protection incidents

This section focuses on child protection incidents (i.e. reports that a child may be or is at risk of abuse requiring to take safeguarding actions) and gives a point of first contact to respond to their incidence while addressing the likely harm to children.

- a) Every child protection incident at the field level shall in the first instance be referred to the Child Safeguarding Focal Point while those received by the secretariat shall be handled by the Lead Member of staff for implementing the policy (with assistance from the Executive Committee unless otherwise deemed to be more appropriately resolved by the respective field office).
- b) All designated focal points shall be required to display a notice carrying their email addresses and telephone contacts in conspicuous places at the field offices and/or in public places seeking reports about any child protection incidents identified in relation to the organisation's work.
- c) Child protection incidents at the field level that involve criminal allegations shall be referred by the Child Safeguarding Focal Point to the relevant authorities with support of the Lead Member of staff for implementing the policy and cognisance of any person on the Executive Committee.

The point of first contact is mainly at field level but referrals should involve the Lead Member of staff to ensure that action/plans are managed in a more systematic way and lessons are learned in terms of the implementation of the policy. This does not mean that specific staff members are solely responsible for child safeguarding/protection but rather to ensure more consistency, better practice, and discretion during decision-making processes.

Decisions about child protection incidents must not be made by the individual staff in isolation. However in exceptional circumstances – such as a life threatening situation – staff or volunteers may take whatever action they deem necessary to protect a child at immediate risk, but this must be reported as soon as possible in accordance with the reporting procedure (i.e. in the first instance to the Child Safeguarding Focal Point).

The contacts with child protection agencies and law enforcement should be identified in advance to enable referrals if required to protect the child. These contact details should be shared and updated so that referral can be made quickly and efficiently.

2.2 Reporting Procedure

This section stipulates the reporting process/framework which identifies how the reported concerns and incidents should be managed.

- a) The designated focal persons shall have overall responsibility for ensuring effective implementation of this policy while all the board members, staff, partners and consultants have individual responsibility to comply both with the spirit and wording of this policy.
- b) The focal persons and/or the Lead Member of Staff (i.e. Programme Manager) shall be the first point of contact in the event of reporting a given concern/incident.
- c) A complaint involving a safeguarding concern/child protection incident shall be reported immediately or a written report sent to the appropriate channel in less than 24 hours.

d) A report shall be made where a person working for/with the Landcode Initiative observes another person attached to the organisation's work acting inappropriately towards a child; or he/she fears that their own actions have been or may be misconstrued; or a parent, guardian, care giver or young person is observed to act inappropriately towards another child; or any other situation interpreted to pose a safeguarding concern or child protection incident in relation to this policy.

e) On receipt of the report, the focal persons and/or the Lead Member of Staff shall take immediate steps to reduce the likely risk scenarios by ensuring safety of the child.

f) Cases involving external parties in the community shall be referred to the local child protection agencies/law enforcement while those involving persons working with/for the organisation shall be coordinated by the Lead Member of Staff for implementing the policy.

g) Consideration on whether to refer a child to an arrangement outside their family for protection shall always be made within the existing national policy, legal and regulatory frameworks with particular emphasis on promoting the best interests and respecting the wishes of the child.

h) The Lead Member of Staff for implementing the policy shall seek the intervention of the Executive Committee for cases involving persons working with/for the organisation where further investigations are needed beyond the written report so as to ascertain cause of the concern/incident.

i) The Executive Committee shall make a decision as to whether there is no cause for complaint and therefore close the case, or take a decision to treat the matter as a violation of the policy requiring disciplinary action, or reach a decision to refer the complaint to law enforcement or other child protection agency on determining that it is likely to be complex or criminal in nature.

j) A decision made by the Executive Committee shall be revisited by the Board on appeal or where another competent authority has made such a recommendation.

When concerns/incidents are reported, importance must be placed on CONFIDENTIALITY, of the child, referrer and every person other involved. The information must be shared strictly on a need-to-know basis as necessary to ensure that the child is kept safe and that proper assistance is given in order to address the actual concern/incident.

Where concerns/incidents are raised, even if these are not substantiated, there will be no punitive action taken against the person making the report provided he or she does not exhibit any malicious intent. In such cases, the Landcode Initiative will observe its Whistle Blowing Policy which ensures that reports can be raised safely. This guiding principle also applies when reporting child protection incidents or safeguarding concerns.

Written records of all reports received (even if the report is vague) must be kept and maintained in a secure and confidential location by the focal point.

In some cases, such as where a given programme/project specifically requires evidence relating to child protection and safeguarding actions taken by the intervention, as an accountability measure, the records may be kept by the field office. When the report relates to a concern about staff, volunteers, partners or a significant stakeholder then a copy must also be given to the Lead Member of staff to be kept at the secretariat.

Written records are ordinarily to be kept confidentially at the secretariat. The cases handled must be shared in the annual activity report and among various stakeholder audiences without specific mention of any facts that can disclose identity.

3. List of appendices

Appendix 1: Code of conduct

The Code of Conduct must be signed by all board members, staff (including interns and volunteers) and consultants BEFORE commencing their duties.

The Landcode Initiative considers all forms of abuse towards children to be unacceptable, and recognises that it has a duty to safeguard children – that is to keep them safe, promote their wellbeing and protect them from abuse and harm exhibited in various forms such as neglect, discrimination, physical, psychological/emotional and sexual violence.

Our **Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures** set out the measures we will take to safeguard children. This includes proactive actions to prevent situations of abuse and harm occurring and reactive actions to respond to situations where a child is, or may be, suffering abuse.

A child is any human under the age of 18 as stipulated by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989. As part of our Child Safeguarding Policy, it is a requirement that all members of the board, staff (including paid employees, consultants, volunteers and interns), whether full or part time, agree to abide by the Child Safeguarding Policy and specifically to agree to work in accordance with this **Code of Conduct** which sets out responsibilities for safeguarding children and expected behaviour of staff. **THIS IS A MANDATORY REQUIREMENT.**

Any form of unacceptable behaviour which breaches this Code of Conduct must be reported. In the case of situations which are not covered by the Code of Conduct, the organisation expects persons with/for it to apply common sense whilst focusing on the “*child’s best interests*”.

This code is founded on the following five principles:

I. Children’s rights:

All board members, staff and consultants must respect and promote children’s rights. Above all, they must protect the right of each child to live in safety, without posing any risk of abuse or exploitation and must act, at all times, in the child’s *best interests*.

II. Zero tolerance:

The Landcode Initiative will not tolerate any form of abuse or exploitation and will take all necessary measures to implement the Child Safeguarding Policy.

III. Risk management:

The Landcode Initiative ensures that potential risks are identified, measured and addressed from planning through to the implementation stage of all the organisation’s activities.

IV. Everyone’s responsibility:

The successful implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy is based on the individual and shared responsibility of persons working with/for the organisation including the board, staff, and consultants. The Landcode Initiative will seek to ensure that the programmes of implementing partners and actions of service providers or key support persons comply with international safeguarding standards.

V. The duty of notification:

Any suspected violation or actual violation of the current Code of Conduct must be reported immediately to the Child Safeguarding Focal Point and/or Lead Member of Staff designated for implementing the policy. Confidentiality will be kept throughout the entire procedure for child safeguarding.

BY SIGNING THE CODE OF CONDUCT, I explicitly agree that:

I will always:

- **Treat children with respect and equally**, regardless of their age, sex, language, religion, opinion or nationality, ethnic or social origin, status, class, or any other personal characteristics.
- **Help children to take part in decisions** which concern them according to their age and their level of maturity.
- **Maintain a culture of communication** and create trust with children and their families, communities, other staff and volunteers and representatives of partner organisations so that concerns may be identified, shared discussed and acted upon.
- Use **non-violent and positive behaviour** methods when supervising children.
- Encourage children and communities to **speak openly about their interactions** with adults and with each other.
- **Inform** children and communities of their right to report any worrying situations and how they can raise a concern.
- **Empower children** so that they are in a better position to protect themselves.
- Make sure that another adult is present or **try to be visible** when I am in contact with a child.
- Try to **preserve the child's autonomy** and make sure that I do not do things that a child can do for herself/himself.

I will never:

- **Engage in any form of sexual relations** with anyone under 18 years old, regardless of the legal age of sexual consent, the law and local customs. *Mistaking a child's age is not to be used as a defence.*
- **Exchange money, job, goods or services or humanitarian aid** for sexual favours or subject the child to any other kind of humiliating, degrading or abusive behaviour.
- **Touch children or use language or make suggestions** in an inappropriate manner, to provoke, harass or degrade the child or show disrespect for cultural practices. This includes acting in a manner which is likely to have a negative impact on the child's confidence and feelings of self-worth.

- **Plan activities** and organise the work place in such a way so as to minimise the risk of harm taking into account the age and development of the child.
- Ensure that information concerning children, families and communities **remains confidential**.
- Behave in a way that sets a **good example** (avoid smoking, showing disrespect towards colleagues, etc.).
- **Obtain permission** from the child and their parents before taking a photograph, recording or using the child's image, what they have said or their history. This includes explaining to children and their parents how the photos or messages will be used.
- Ensure that the child does **not pose in a degrading manner** or in a way that may be interpreted by others as having sexual connotations.
- Raise **concerns, incidents and queries** concerning the Child Safeguarding Policy with my director/manager/supervisor or the Child Safeguarding Focal Point.
- Immediately report any suspicions or allegations to the Child Safeguarding Focal Point of behaviour which goes against the principles of the Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct including any form of child

- **Exploit a child** for any form of labour (for example through domestic work).
- **Discriminate** against, unequally or unfairly treat children, or exercise any given form of favouritism and exclude others.
- Invite a child or their relatives to **my home** or develop a relationship with a child and/or their family which may be considered or interpreted outside normal professional boundaries.
- **Work with or transport a child alone** without the prior authorisation of my manager, unless absolutely necessary for the safety and best interests of the child.
- Be under the influence of **drugs or alcohol** while working with children or introduce such substance to them.

- Take photos or videos of the beneficiaries for **use that is not strictly professional** unless the Executive Director gives permission.
- Watch, produce, or share any **pornography** showing children, and/or show such indecent material to children.
- **Show faces** of children who are exploited sexually, victims of trafficking or abuse, those in conflict/contact with the law, linked to armed groups or who can easily be located even if their identity has been modified.
- Take or publish photos of children entirely **naked or dressed in a manner which is not adapted** to the situation in which they are represented.
- Represent children as **victims** (e.g. weak, powerless, poor, unassisted, and desperate)

- or even publish a story or image which may **endanger** the child, their family or community.
- Use photos which have **not been checked and approved** by my manager and/or supervisor
- Post unofficial pictures or information about children on personal websites or social networks (such as Facebook).
- Maintain contact with children and their families via **social networks**, unless a specific work-related project requires me to do so under given express permission.
- Close my eyes to, ignore or fail to report to the Child Safeguarding Focal Point or Lead member of staff any concern, suspicion or incident of violating the Child Safeguarding Policy and the Code of Conduct.

I clearly understand that, in the event of suspicions or allegations of my violation of this Code of Conduct the organisation will take any action deemed necessary, which may include, but is not limited to:

- Providing **assistance for the victim** and taking immediate steps to protect and support the child.
- Attempting to **establish the facts** in the most objective manner possible (the presumption of innocence prevails) while protecting the reputation and confidentiality of the adults involved.
- Undertaking **disciplinary actions** that may result in suspension or termination of my contract or any form of engagement.
- Initiating **judicial proceedings and/or reporting** to the competent authorities any violation of the Code of Conduct which may breach national legislation.
- Taking **appropriate measures** in order to ensure that such incidents do not occur again, for example, informing other organisations which may apply for professional references regarding the termination of contract due to violation of the principles of the protection of children (within the legislative framework applicable to the protection of information).

Declaration of commitment

I, the undersigned,
 declare that I have received, read and understood this Child Safeguarding Policy and I commit to know and agree to work in accordance with it. I understand that any failure to uphold the Code of Conduct may result in the termination of my engagement with the Landcode Initiative, or further disciplinary or judicial proceedings as mentioned above.

Furthermore, I declare that I neither have criminal records regarding an offence towards a child (which I have not previously declared) nor know of any reason why anyone would deem me unsuitable to work with children. I allow the Landcode Initiative to reserve the right to inform other institutions which may apply for professional references in the event of the termination of my contract for serious violation of the principles of the protection of children within the legislative framework applicable to the protection of information.

Date at

Signature

Appendix 2: Guide for visitors

The Guide for visitors must be introduced to formal and informal guests of the organisation who are likely to have contact with our beneficiaries including children, their families and communities especially through the field offices.

Children have a right to safety and protection. The Landcode Initiative is committed to safeguarding the children we work with – that is to keep children safe, promote their wellbeing as well as uphold their rights to protection. It is the responsibility of all persons working with/for the organisation to ensure that visitors (suppliers, relatives, journalists, supporters, etc) protect children *“from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse”* in accordance with Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

For this reason we adopt policies and systems in place to prevent abuse and harm and to safeguard children (detailed in our Child Safeguarding Policy). These measures protect formal and informal visitors from actions that could be misconstrued and lead to false or malicious accusations. Visits to projects, partners and communities are opportunities to see our work first-hand.

We would like you to enjoy your visit and at the same time help us to keep the children safe by introducing to you the key elements of our policy that affect you as an occasional visitor. If you have any questions you should refer to your main point of contact within the Landcode Initiative (as all our staff are trained in safeguarding) or to the Child Safeguarding Focal Point. You can also request to see a full copy of our Child Safeguarding Policy.

What is child safeguarding?

Child safeguarding is the obligation placed upon organisations (such as the Landcode Initiative) who work with children or are likely to come into contact with children through their work – either directly or indirectly to keep them safe. This includes both having preventative procedures in place to minimise the chances of an incident occurring and responsive systems to respond if an incident occurs. Specifically, in safeguarding, we are particularly concerned with ensuring that children are kept safe from abuse (physical, emotion, sexual and neglect) and are protected. Our policy clearly states that all children have equal rights to protection when in contact with adults. Children are protected only when open and honest environments are created and exist in projects, partner organisations and activities.

Communications and child safeguarding

To ensure that we minimise the risk that harmful relationships develop, correspondence between visitors and children is discouraged, and should the need arise it should be guided and monitored rather than allowing the visitor to be directly connected to the child. Visitors must avoid developing special relationships with children and except outside of the normal work environment.

Similarly, the visitors must not exchange contact details when meeting children and all visiting arrangements to projects must be officially permitted of the Executive Committee.

Guidance on Responsible Behaviour

This information is designed to protect children first and foremost but also to minimise the risk to visitors of being wrongly accused of inappropriate behaviour or abuse. By agreeing to be an occasional visitor you are agreeing to abide by this guidance on the understanding that if you do not adhere to it your visiting experience will be continually interrupted or expressly ended.

Good practice relating to Photographs, video and other images

- Obtain consent of the child, his/her parents, relative, guardian or caregiver before taking photographs and images.
- Take and use photographs and images of children that are dignified and respectful.
- Ensure children are adequately dressed in photographs and images and not in poses that could be interpreted as sexually suggestive.
- Protect the safety and privacy of the children visited in the field projects and their families by not using their images in media activities or on the internet without explicit knowledge and approval from the organisation, or using them in any way which reveals identity or location of the child and their family without their prior documented consent.

As an occasional visitor to the Landcode Initiative, I will:

- Always officially arrange my visit through the staff of the Landcode Initiative.
- Follow the directions and instructions of the staff member assigned to supervise my work or accompany me on the visit.
- Treat the beneficiaries (i.e. children, their families and communities with equality and respect their privacy.
- Take photographs, videos and images in line with the good practice outlined in this guide.
- Discuss any concerns I have regarding the wellbeing of a child with designated staff/Focal Point of the Landcode Initiative.
- Ask the assigned staff member when I am not sure of what is acceptable behaviour.

I will never:

- Use language, make suggestions or offer inappropriate, offensive or abusive advice.
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative. For example: fondle, hold, hug, kiss or touch children in a manner deemed as inappropriate or culturally insensitive.
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves.
- Condone or participate in illegal, unsafe or abusive behaviour with children.
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade or abuse a child in any form of emotional or physical way.
- Discriminate against, show some preferential treatment to, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.
- Develop physical and/or sexual relations with children or their family members.
- Develop such a relationship with children as to be questioned or that could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive.
- Spend time alone with children away from others without prior permission.
- Assist a child to leave their community, even with the consent of parents/caregivers, or offer children false hopes about their situation in return for their affection.
- Exchange personal contact details with children through formal visits.
- Arrange to stay overnight with a beneficiary (i.e. a child or their family).
- Introduce other visitors to the community without knowledge and prior clearance from the Landcode Initiative.
- Return to the community without going through the standard visit process with the Landcode Initiative.

I confirm that I have read and clearly understood the Guide for occasional visitors and fully agree to abide by all its contents as stipulated.

Date at

Name and Signature.....

Appendix 3: Parental Consent Form

The Parental Consent Form must be signed by the parents, guardians, or caregivers in case of involving their child in the activities of the organisation.

Children have a right to safety and protection. The Landcode Initiative is committed to safeguarding the children we work with – that is to keep children safe, promote their wellbeing as well as uphold their rights to protection. We are proposing different activities involving your child. Before starting this collaboration, we need your consent, and also some important information from you to ensure that your child can participate safely and their welfare can be promoted.

All information will be kept confidential and only shared with adults who need to know to make sure that your child is properly cared for. For the purposes of all trip and events **a child is defined as anyone who is under 18 years old**. Our guiding principle is that in all situations **the best interests of the child are of the utmost importance**. This means that in all actions and decisions we must consider the needs and rights of the child as the critical issue.

Part A: Travel Consent (Please tick as appropriate):

- I/we give my/our consent for my/our child by the name to travel to and participate in activities of the Landcode Initiative.
- I/we authorise the Landcode Initiative to be responsible for my/our child during these activities and authorise them to make decisions concerning any emergency medical treatment for my/our child which may be required during this trip.
- I/we affirm that I/we have full authority to give the consent provided for in this document.

Part B: Media Consent (Please tick as appropriate):

- I/we give my/our consent for my/our child to take part in media activities which may include photographs, films, videotapes audiotapes, or other forms of recording and which may appear in print (such as newspapers) or online.
- I/we DO NOT give my/our consent for my/our child to take part in media activities.

I/we confirm that I/we have read and understood the Parental Consent Form, and agree to abide by its contents.

Name of the child

Date at

Name and Signature (names of parent(s)/caregiver(s))

.....

.....

Part C: Medical history

The information in this form will be kept confidential. Only medical professionals and the organisers of the event will be allowed access to it.

Name of child
(including given names):

Type of Identification (Please tick): Student ID National ID Passport Other

Date of Birth: | | Identity Number:

Specify any known allergies (e.g. to beef, milk products, insect bites, fabric): No Yes

Currently on medication: No Yes If yes, please state which type/dosage:

.....
.....
Please bring copies of prescriptions (medication or eyeglass) and enough medication for the duration of the event, including travel time

Please state any existing conditions (e.g. asthma, epilepsy, sickle cell disease, etc) :

.....
Please state any previous major surgeries and hospitalisation (in the last 3 years):

.....
Please provide details of any medical insurance

Name of insurance company:

Insurance policy number:

Please let us know if there is anything else that you think we need to know in order to ensure that your child is safe, protected, well cared for able to participate fully:

Part D: Contact details

Name:

Address:

Contact Number: Alternative Contact:

If at any time you are concerned about the safety or protection of your child, please contact

Name: **Telephone:**

Permission to Administer Common Drugs (Please tick as appropriate):

Please indicate below if you give your consent to your child being administered common drugs such as Advil, Tylenol, and Aspirin etc. for common ailments (headaches, stomach aches etc.). For more serious illness, your child will be taken to a qualified doctor.

I/we give my/our consent for my/our child to take common drugs such as Advil, Tylenol, Aspirin etc. if in need for common ailments.

I/we DO NOT give my/our consent for my/our child to take any common drugs for any common ailment.

Appendix 4: Safer recruitment checklist

The Safer Recruitment checklist is designed to be followed for all stages involved during the enrolment of staff (including interns and volunteers) for the organisation.

It is recognised that recruitment can never be totally 'safe.' However, the aim of following a safer recruitment process is to put in place a number of actions that, together, aim to reduce the chances of employing the 'wrong' person.

In some instances it may be difficult to fully comply with all areas of the safer recruitment checklist, for example, getting references may not be feasible, or police checks may be easily forged. There are other cases where obtaining copies of qualifications may be impossible, particularly if credentials have not yet been issued, or have been lost and replacements still pending approvals.

Not being able to comply with an aspect of the checklist does not mean that the appointment cannot proceed. An overall assessment of the information available needs to be made. In case of doubt, the person concerned must not be hired. Where the checklist cannot be complied with then this must be recorded on HR files. Copies of all checks and references must also be retained.

Recruitment & Selection

Develop a job description

Establish what mainstream roles, safeguarding duties and child protection responsibilities will be performed to effectively contribute to achievement of the key result areas.

Create a required profile

Determine the work experience, academic qualifications, personal character, acquired skills and professional knowledge or affiliations needed to safely work with children.

Post an advertisement

Include a clear statement about the organisation's commitment to safeguarding children.

Design interview questions

Include at least one question that relates to child safeguarding. Obtain satisfactory explanations for gaps in employment (e.g. maternity leave, sick leave, disciplinary action).

Conduct interview session

Demonstrable accomplishments: Seek for information about previous achievements and how these have included a focus on promoting the wellbeing and best interests of children.

Career direction: Assess how the previous undertakings, current engagements and future career development path have a bearing on safeguarding children.

Motivating drive: Determine the commitment to safeguarding children particularly showing concern about everyone's responsibility of ensuring that children and young people are kept safe from abuse (physical, emotion, sexual and neglect) and are protected.

Value addition: Ascertain the ability to innovatively contribute to preventive actions that can minimise chances of harm from occurring, and responsive plans to ensure that incidents which may still happen (irrespective of the preventive actions taken) are appropriately handled.

Pre-Appointment

Reference Checks

Two references must be provided including one from the current or most recent employer, or most recent academic referee. All references should always be sought and obtained directly from the referee using only a business email address, postal address or landline number and written from a supervisor. Open references (e.g. candidate providing a written reference) are not sufficient.

Proof of identification

Verify a candidate's identification as predatory offenders may provide false information - including a false identification - to secure a job.

Qualification & registration checks

Verify that candidates have actually obtained all qualifications or professional registrations claimed in their application by asking to see original certificates, to make sure that there is no attempt to hide any professional qualifications and experience.

Police Check

The decision to request a police check needs to be made with regard to whether the post requires access to children. Note that some justice institutions have a database of offenders/people who are not suitable to work with children. If this exists then it should be checked. If a police check returns with a conviction then the Executive Director, in consultation with the Human Resource Committee of the Board, needs to decide whether to proceed with the appointment. Having a conviction does not necessarily mean that the person cannot be appointed; it depends on the offence (although any conviction for mistreatment/abuse of a child will lead to a decision not to hire the person). It is further recognised that it may be difficult to obtain police checks and references in some operating contexts, or their level of reliability may be questionable.

In addition, it must be noted that no one check will ever be a total guarantee of someone's suitability for working with children. Recruitment processes need to adopt numerous ways to have a pragmatic view and put in place additional steps when background checks cannot be obtained.

Where the police checks/references raise concerns about the suitability of someone to work with children, this needs to be carefully considered by those involved before opting to proceed with the appointment. Explanations for the decision to proceed with an appointment in all cases must be thoroughly recorded in HR files. **In case of doubt, the candidate must not be hired.**

Self-Declaration and Code of Conduct

All candidates (prior to their recruitment) must sign the code of conduct, including the section confirming that they are safe to work with children.

Post-Appointment

Probationary period

This provides a trial period which should be used to actively assess the employee's suitability for the job or voluntary activities. Terms and conditions including the duration of the probationary period will depend on subsisting employment laws, but should ideally be at least three months.

Induction

There must be a briefing/orientation on the Child Safeguarding Policy (including contact details of the Child Safeguarding Focal Point) among other subject matter.

Appendix 5: Child Safeguarding Focal Point

The Child Safeguarding Focal Point enforces measures and guidelines that avert exposure of children to the risk of harm and abuse within the communities where we work.

Specific duties:

- Act as the main point of contact within the communities to support the field operations with the day to day implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy
- Support the Executive Committee, staff, consultants and partners with the implementation of the safeguarding policy – including risk assessments
- Establish links with local child welfare specialists, health and law enforcement contacts in order to have information available if an incident occurs and/or external advice is needed
- Ensure that his or her name and contact details are made available so that people in the community know how to raise a concern/where to seek advice
- Provide a first point of contact for concerns regarding child protection incidents and safeguarding concerns in order to raise such issues as appropriate.
- Keep an accurate record of any incidents while supporting the monitoring and evaluation of the Child Safeguarding Policy to inform learning and adaptation of required action plans for further improvements in entrenching the Child Safeguarding Policy at field level
- Report to relevant law enforcement agencies or any other external body within the local community setting if the matter is criminal in nature
- Make effective child protection referrals or connect deserving children to various support services that can address their safeguarding concern and those of their families
- Appoint and delegate the investigation to an investigating task force if the matter is in breach of the policy and therefore requires further enquiry
- Monitor the progress of the investigation and give guidance as well as liaise with the Executive Committee in preparation of a holding statement or press release if necessary

Skills and attributes:

- Have knowledge and experience about child safeguarding and child protection
- Have respect and authority within the field office so that their opinions are valued
- Be approachable, with good communication skills among adults and children
- Ability to keep calm when a concern is raised, especially if a child needs assistance
- Capability to work with others so as to ensure that the policy is implemented, and respond where a child protection incident occurs
- Commitment to safeguarding and upholding the rights of children – together with the ability to advocate for and defend safeguarding
- Training and presentation skills as well as ability to keep information confidential about the reported concerns and incidents in the community
- Capacity to closely liaise with the Lead Staff Member in implementing the policy so as to provide the support and advice needed.