
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Last Updated: June 2026

Next Update: June 2027

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Street Child's Policy.....	2
3. What is a Child Protection Policy at Street child?.....	3
4. Requirements of the Street Child's Child Protection Policy	3
5. Accountability to the Affected Population	8
6. Child Protection Mainstreaming.....	8
7. Child Friendly Feedback Mechanisms.....	9
8. Glossary of Terms.....	9

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Introduction

Street Child ensures children are safe, in school and learning — even, and especially, in low-resource environments and emergencies. We specialise in working with local-level organisations for lasting impact.

Street Child believes that all children have the right to be free from abuse and exploitation and therefore operates a *firm zero-tolerance policy* in relation to any form of abuse as defined in this policy. Therefore, Street Child operates a firm 'Zero Tolerance' principle in relation to any form of abuse or exploitation as defined in this policy.

Street Child is committed to the UN Convention on Rights of Child (UN CRC) and believes that empowering children to defend themselves against all forms of abuse or exploitation is the best form of child protection in accordance with the UN CRC:

"Protection... from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has the care of the child." Article 19

2. Street Child's Policy

All children have a right to protection from intentional and unintentional harm regardless of the form of discrimination. In this policy, protection applies to the duties of Street Child towards children in its care. Street Child works to create a safe environment for vulnerable children benefiting from our interventions.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Street Child's Safeguarding Policy, which as the overarching policy for ensuring that we fulfil our duty of care to everyone who comes in to contact with the organization. This additional policy recognizes the need for additional and specific protection for the group who are the main target of our work, children, while engaging with the local authorities where required.

It is recognised that children are a particularly vulnerable group with differentiated needs, and for this reason, a separate policy is required that clearly outlines Street Child's position on child protection issues as it affects our operations. It applies to all personnel, affiliates, partners and visitors in all Street Child's operational areas.

Children and young people need protection and safeguarding for many reasons. They may need protection from the effects of poverty, disadvantage, gender, ethnic or religious discrimination, exclusion, economic, social and sexual exploitation and violence. But in addition to these economic, social, and political problems affecting large numbers of children, individual children may also be at risk from specific forms of abuse by adults or other children.

In this policy, Street Child is concerned with all incidents of maltreatment against children who come in contact with Street Child's personnel or affiliates, as per 'Definitions' below. It is essential that all staff,

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

volunteers, supported communities, visiting partners, and the general public are aware of its central messages and any duties or responsibilities required of them by this policy.

This policy has been developed so that the best interests of the child can be systematically taken into account by Street Child and to ensure the integration of child protection at the wider community level in order to promote the maximum protection of children against all forms of ill-treatment and negligence.

It is the responsibility of Street Child to refer all investigated and proven forms of abuse to the appropriate authorities within the given locality and within the prescribed time frame, where it is safe to do so. Street Child and its management team commit to upholding a professional approach toward child protection issues and demonstrating awareness of matters of abuse.

This policy will be reviewed once a year or wherever appropriate, specifically following any Serious Incident (as defined in the Safeguarding Policy).

3. What is a Child Protection Policy at Street child?

A Child Protection Policy provides a framework of principles, standards¹ and guidelines on which to base individual and organizational practice in relation to areas such as:

- Creating a 'child safe' and 'child friendly' organisation (in relation to environmental safety as well as protection against physical, psychological and sexual abuse and exploitation)
- Prevention of abuse
- Guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour/attitude
- Personnel recruitment and training
- Recognizing, reporting and reacting to allegations of abuse
- Guidelines for communications regarding children

This policy is not solely directed towards sexual abuse, but rather encompasses all aspects of child protection including, but not limited to disciplinary measures, health and safety measures, physical harm, emotional harm, working with information about children, proper recruitment and managerial procedures, and the ramifications of misconduct.

4. Requirements of the Street Child's Child Protection Policy

We aim to ensure that only staff who are suitable, work within the agency, that they receive training and management in line with this policy and they are clear about the standards and principles of behaviour that we apply. We do this in the following way:

Personnel Recruitment

The thorough and standardised processes outlined below applies to the recruitment of all Street Child employees, formal advisers, trustees, interns and volunteers whether unpaid or paid, full-time or part-

¹ Standard; A common approach to Child Protection for International NGOs. Standard 1 (Policy)

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

time, temporary or long-term, having direct or indirect contact with children:

- At least two employment references (excluding family members and personal relations who have known the applicant for less than two years) with names, addresses and telephone numbers shall be taken up for each candidate before an employment offer is made. One of these should be a former employer and (if possible), one who can comment on the applicant's work with children, if applicable.
- Street Child is part of the Inter-Agency Misconduct and Disclosure Scheme.
<https://misconduct-disclosure-scheme.org> As such Street Child will seek a 'Statement of Conduct' for all new hires reflecting the previous 5 years of employment history.
- All personnel coming into direct or indirect contact with children must submit to a criminal records check such as CRB² or DBS³ check in the United Kingdom, or the national equivalent in their country of usual residence:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>
- All potential personnel and affiliates shall read, accept and sign the Code of Conduct, Street Child's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Each job description shall be accompanied by a candidate specification. The job description shall include specific statements of responsibility towards safeguarding and child protection.
- All job interviewing processes shall be standardised and based on the job descriptions. However, where employees are likely to be in direct or indirect contact with children, specific question/s and/or written tests on safeguarding and child protection issues shall be included as standard;
- Advertisements for vacancies shall clearly state that a child protection policy, including screening procedures, is in place, and that staff are expected to adhere to this.

Education and Training

- There shall be an induction process for all Street Child representatives on child protection and safeguarding issues in order that they understand Street Child's guidelines on contact with children, on safeguarding of vulnerable populations, and to exercise appropriately at all times duties of care and responsibility towards children and vulnerable populations.

² Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)

³ Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

- Street Child shall provide opportunities for its existing staff, volunteers, and trustees to receive training in child protection and shall be free to question and learn about child protection issues, and budget accordingly. There should be refresher training on child protection on an annual basis.
- Child-friendly versions of Street Child’s Child Protection Policy, Safeguarding Policy and procedures will be made available in all communities Street Child actively works for.
- Employees, trustees, officers and volunteers who have access to information about children such as personal contact information including their addresses, specific cases or incidents, photographs or any other details of a child’s personal life must be trained to fully understand what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable sharing of information regarding children.
- Emotional or counselling support will be available whenever child protection issues are being discussed.
- An annual review of training, policy and policy implementation will be carried out by the Global Safeguarding Focal Point and national child protection leads - ensuring an up-to-date awareness of child protection issues within the organisation.

Management Structure

- The Management of Street Child, specifically the Safeguarding Complaints Committee and the Senior Management Team of Street Child, will endeavour at all times to encourage and give confidence to those working within the organization to raise confidential issues concerning the protection of children. The Whistleblowing Policy sets out how concerns may be raised, including with anonymity.
- The Global Safeguarding Focal Point will be responsible for the implementation of the Child Protection Policy, together with the Country Safeguarding Focal Points, and will also ensure that all members of the organization understand their responsibilities in relation to child protection.
- All staff working directly with children or with direct access to information on children will be supervised, monitored and supported in their dealings with children by their managers and peers.
- Employees are required to bring to the attention of Street Child any practices or actions of exploitation and abuse by Street Child personnel and affiliates. Failure to report incidents may result in disciplinary procedures.
- Quarterly risk review at country and HQ level will incorporate a review of child protection procedures, and all those supervising staff that are in direct contact with children should be

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

attentive to any child protection issues emerging from discussions.

- The disclosure of personal information about children, including legal cases, shall be limited to safeguarding leads, decision makers and the Safeguarding Complaint Committee, and other personnel on a strict need to know basis.
- Opportunities shall be given at meetings and all other formal organisational gatherings to discuss any child protection issues that staff/volunteers and trustees may wish to bring up.

Behaviour Protocols

- In order to protect all children from varying forms of abuse and exploitation, there will be a Code of Conduct intended to guide Street Child trustees, staff, volunteers, and visitors in their dealings with children with whom they may have direct contact during the course of their work for the organization.
- The Code of Conduct shall specifically and only relate to the **actions and behaviour** of Street Child personnel, all trustees, volunteers, visitors and consultants who may have direct contact with children during the course of their work for Street Child
- The Code of Conduct shall be designed to promote good practice amongst Street Child personnel and affiliates and to prevent child abuse.
- The Code of Conduct shall be made easily accessible to all Street Child staff, volunteers, trustees, visitors, and contracted consultants who may have direct and indirect contact with children during the course of their work for the organization.
- The Code of Conduct shall be made available in all situations where the organisation is responsible for bringing children into contact with adults. Any staff, volunteer, trustee or associate of Street Child will be asked to sign and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct prior to any contact with children.

Communications about Children

Every child has a right to be accurately represented through words and images. It is therefore Street Child's responsibility to make sure that each child is portrayed without manipulation of his/her true identity and dignity. All children will be presented as human beings with their identity and dignity preserved.

- To the greatest extent possible, Street Child will acquire informed consent/ the permission of the child, child's guardian, and/or organisation responsible for the child in order to use his/her image for publicity, fundraising, awareness raising, or other purposes that should be made clear to the consent- giver.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

- Street Child will ensure that where possible, accounts of certain experiences are narrated by the person concerned (except where he/she decides that someone does it for him/her).
- Street Child will ensure that all texts and images included in any print, broadcast or electronic materials such as brochures, publications, reports, social media content, digital learning material, videos or websites present an accurate and balanced depiction of children and their circumstances. Sufficient information will be provided where possible as to their social, cultural and economic environment.
- In images, children will be appropriately clothed and not depicted in any poses that could be interpreted as sexually provocative.
- People or other organizations that receive photos (or other visual materials) from Street Child will be provided with advice and guidance on how they are to be used. In addition, photos and all other visual materials will be accompanied by a statement from Street Child stating that they are to be used solely and specifically for the purpose of genuine publicity on behalf of, and as agreed with Street Child.
- Any staff, volunteers, contractors and implementing partners are strictly prohibited from using AI-powered tools to create images, videos and behavioural or demographic profiles of child beneficiaries, including for purpose described as fund raising, educational assessment, learning analytics or programme monitoring, without explicit institutional approval and parental/guardian consent.
- Further, the statement will clarify that failure to adhere to the agreed use of the material will result in the immediate termination of the recipient's permission to use the subject material(s) and require immediate return of all materials (including any copies made). The person or organisation requesting the material will sign this statement.
- Street Child shall avoid in particular: language and images that could possibly degrade, victimise or shame children, making generalisations which do not accurately reflect the nature of the situation, discrimination of any kind, and taking pictures out of context (pictures will be accompanied by an explanatory caption where possible).
- Personal and physical information about the child that could be used to identify the location of the child within a country or a particular location that may cause them to be put at risk will not be used in any form of communication about the child.
- To the greatest extent possible, in addition to parent's/guardian's consent, Street Child will always ask permission from the child or children themselves before taking photographs, except under exceptional circumstances where this might not be possible or desirable (for e.g. if the child is too young to do so). Such circumstances will be judged based on the

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

child/children's best interest.

- Where children are indeed victims, the presentation of the child's dignity will be preserved at all times. In these circumstances, 'before' and 'after' pictures may be useful to depict a balance between victimisation and empowerment.
- When case studies are used in any official publications, the child's first name shall be changed and surnames omitted to protect his/her identity (except if he/she desires otherwise) and a footnote added to highlight.

5. Accountability to the Affected Population

Street Child acknowledges that whilst instances of exploitation and abuse by its personnel and affiliates against children are extremely grave, which can be prevented by its safeguarding policies and procedures, the most common child protection risks are within communities living in high environments such as IDP⁴ or refugee camps, slum communities, and on the streets. Particularly vulnerable populations include girls and children with disabilities.

As such, Street Child commits to work towards the elimination of abuse and exploitation of children in all the communities where it works, as part of its wider commitment to Child Protection Policy and accountability to affected populations, as set out in Street Child's Accountability to Affected Population Policy.

"Street Child will actively seek the views of affected populations to improve policy and practice in programming, ensuring that feedback and complaints mechanisms are streamlined, appropriate and robust enough to deal with (communicate, receive, process, respond to and learn from) complaints about breaches in policy and stakeholder dissatisfaction"

The appointed Safeguarding Focal Point will be responsible for the implementation of these policies at a country level.

6. Child Protection Mainstreaming

Street Child will ensure that safeguarding concerns are considered and addressed in every project - even those that are not explicitly child protection-focused.

Specifically, Street Child will use all available opportunities to incorporate awareness and prevention of harm to children and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse into its programmes, including but not limited to staff training and advocacy activities with affected populations and key stakeholders such as teachers, police, community elders, local and national government representatives and young people and children themselves.

⁴ Internally Displaced Persons

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

7. Child Friendly Feedback Mechanisms

Street Child will ensure there are feedback mechanisms in place that allow reports of exploitation and abuse to be made, including child-friendly mechanisms and those that facilitate anonymous reporting.

Street Child will also ensure that child friendly complaints and feedback mechanisms are consistently available, visible and understood at key project sites. A local safeguarding focal point may be appointed, ideally female, conversant in the local language (s).

Specifically, Street Child will:

- Display child-friendly messages on abuse and how to report.
- Display a phone number to call (local safeguarding focal point)
- Create an anonymous feedback mechanism – e.g., complaints box

8. Glossary of Terms

Affiliates

This includes the staff, board members, volunteers, interns, consultants, pro bono experts and private contractors of organisations who have entered into partnership, sub-grant or sub-recipient agreements with Street Child.

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence is technology that enables computers and machines to simulate human learning, comprehension, problem solving, decision making, creativity and autonomy.

Child

For the purposes of this policy, a “child” is defined as anyone under the age of 18, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Child abuse

According to the World Health Organisation, “Child abuse” or “maltreatment” constitutes ‘all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.’⁵

NSPCC⁶ similarly specify “cruelty to children” or “child abuse” as ‘behaviour that causes significant harm to a child. It also includes when someone knowingly fails to prevent serious harm to a child. All forms of cruelty are damaging – it can be harder to recover from the emotional impact than from the physical

⁵ The WHO definition of Child Abuse as defined by the Report of the Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention WHO – 1999.

⁶ The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

effects.⁷

Street Child's safeguarding policy defines abuse within the following categories:

- *Discriminatory abuse* - including discrimination against children on grounds of race, gender and gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment;
- *Financial or material abuse* - including theft, fraud, exploitation, coercion in relation to a child's property, possessions or benefits;
- *Exploitation*: The act of deliberately maltreating, manipulating or abusing power and control over a child. It is usually for personal gain of the abuser but not always. Exploitation includes forced or compulsory labour, child labour, human trafficking, and domestic and sexual violence and abuse;
- *Neglect*: Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, for example by failing to provide adequate food, clothing and/or shelter; failing to prevent harm; failing to ensure adequate supervision; or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- *Physical abuse* – including hurting or injuring a child through assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, burning, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions, poisoning, drowning, smothering or female genital mutilation (FGM)
- *Psychological abuse* - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks from a child.

Child protection

This is a broad term to describe philosophies, policies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In the current context, it applies particularly to the duty of organisations - and individuals associated with those organisations - towards children in their care.

Direct contact with children

Being in the physical presence of a child or children in the context of the organisation's work, whether contact is occasional or regular, short or long term. This could involve project / site visits. [N.B. this list of examples is not exhaustive].

⁷ Definition taken from *Are you worried about the safety of a child?*, NSPCC, 2002, available to download from <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/documents/safetyofchild.pdf>.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Harassment

Harassment covers a wide range of behaviours of an offensive nature. It is understood as behaviour that demeans, humiliates, and intimidates a person. These are behaviours that appear to be disturbing, upsetting, or threatening. When harassing behaviours become repetitive, it is defined as bullying. The continuity or repetitiveness distress caused may distinguish it from insult.

Harm

Psychological, physical, emotional, sexual infringement of an individual's rights. Harm by neglect includes the withholding of available resource or assistance.

Indirect contact with children

To have access to information on individual children (in the context of the organisation's work) such as children's names, locations (addresses of individuals or projects), photographs and case studies. [N.B. this list of examples is not exhaustive].

Personnel

For the purpose of this policy and in the specific context of Street Child, personnel include staff, board members, volunteers, interns, consultants, pro bono experts working for Street Child UK and its affiliated entities – Africa Educational Trust, Street Child EU, Street Child US, CIC Afghanistan, Street Child Sierra Leone, Street Child of Liberia.

Serious Incident

It is defined as an incident which has caused significant harm to an individual affiliated with the organization and/or constitutes a major threat to the operations and reputation of the organization. This would include safeguarding concerns of sexual abuse, exploitation, serious physical or emotional abuse and death.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse - as defined by the UN Secretary General Bulletin ST/SGB/2003/13:

"Sexual exploitation" means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Similarly, the term "sexual abuse" means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.⁸

Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence. A child who is being abused may experience more than one type of abuse.

8

<https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=ST%2FSGSB%2F2003%2F13&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a type of harassment based on the sex or gender of a victim. It can involve offensive, sexist or sexual behaviour, verbal or physical actions. Harassment may be explicit or implicit.

Survivor

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, however it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

Spontaneous or Unexpected Contact with Children

To be in the physical presence of a child or children in the context of the organisation's work, without prior arrangement with the Project Manager or Board of Trustees.

Vulnerable Children

This can refer to all children in family homes or community settings, street children, reintegrated and reunified children, and all trainees in the vocational/skills training centres, including those in residential centres or institutional centres, detention centres, children with health issues, displaced and refugee children.

8. Related Policies

The policy is aimed at guiding Street Child staff and the other entities referred to in section 3 under Behaviour Protocol of this policy, and must be considered together with:

Street Child Safeguarding Policy

Street Child Code of Conduct

Street Child HR Manual

Street Child Recruitment Internal Guide

Street Child Anti Bribery and Corruption Policy

Street Child Social Media Policy

Street Child Whistleblowing Policy

Street Child IT and Data Protection Policy

Street Child EDI Policy