



## Hope for Children Safeguarding Policy

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<b>Designated Safeguarding Officer - UK</b>	Anna-mai Andrews. Email: <a href="mailto:Anna-mai.Andrews@chanceforchildhood.org">Anna-mai.Andrews@chanceforchildhood.org</a> Tel: + 44 (0) 1483 230 250
<b>Chair of the board of trustees</b>	Mick Bardella <a href="mailto:mirco59@outlook.com">mirco59@outlook.com</a>
<b>Global Safeguarding Lead</b>	Richard Opoku. <a href="mailto:Richard.Opoku@chanceforchildhood.org">Richard.Opoku@chanceforchildhood.org</a>
<b>Designated Safeguarding Officer Uganda</b>	Tel: +256 774784319 E-mail: <a href="mailto:immaculatekiiza@hope4c.org">immaculatekiiza@hope4c.org</a>
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Hope for Children.  
Mailing address: 48 High St, Hemel Hempstead HP1 3AF  
Telephone: + 44 (0) 442 234561  
Email: [hope@hope4c.org](mailto:hope@hope4c.org)  
[www.hope-for-children.org](http://www.hope-for-children.org)  
Charity Registration 1161729



## 1. Introduction

Hope for Children is a Charity registered in England and Wales. Its registration number is **1161729**. It works towards a world where every child has a happy childhood that provides a positive future. Hope for Children's mission is to create opportunity for overlooked, vulnerable and exploited children. We work in Kenya, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and the United Kingdom to provide education, sustainable livelihoods, and health and well-being projects run by our local partners. Hope for Children's team in Uganda manages several projects from our office in Kampala.

Hope for Children's aim is to fill the gaps in provision left by larger organisations and governments, and this aim is best achieved using grassroots partners with the knowledge about the communities that they serve. Protecting the rights of every child is fundamental to all our projects.

In this paper, we refer to other policies that make up our suite of safeguarding policies. Should you wish to see them, please contact the CEO, Anna-mai Andrews using this email address:

[Anna-mai.Andrews@chanceforchildhood.org](mailto:Anna-mai.Andrews@chanceforchildhood.org)

## 2. Hope for Children and Safeguarding

Hope for Children's contact with children is primarily through the services and projects of our own Country Office in Uganda and by supporting the delivery of services through our project partners in other countries. Direct contact with children by our UK operations can occur through project visits and fundraising activities, mainly in the UK.

Hope for Children's Safeguarding policy is part of our commitment to preventing and protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse and promoting safeguarding cultures and environments where children can grow up safely with their rights upheld.

Hope for Children works to the Charity Commission definition of safeguarding. In its guidance, the Charity Commission describes safeguarding as meaning ***"taking reasonable steps to protect from harm people who come into contact with your charity. This includes people who benefit from your charity's work, staff, volunteers, other people who come into contact with your charity through its work"***<sup>1</sup>

In the NGO sector in general, we understand it to mean taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment from occurring; to protect people, children, and adults at risk from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

Hope for Children will take reasonable steps to protect beneficiaries, staff and all those connected with its activities and who come into contact with it, from harm.

We expect that our partners' working practices represent a commitment to a safe, inclusive, and nurturing safeguarding environment for all.

We require all staff to report concerns or allegations against any member of our staff, partners and all people associated with our work. We also aim to be approachable for reports to be made directly by

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<sup>1</sup> [Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-protecting-people-for-charities-and-trustees) [Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-protecting-people-for-charities-and-trustees)

beneficiaries or any professional from another organisation.

### 3. Policy Statement

Hope for Children believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Hope for Children recognises that some children and adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs, or other issues.

Hope for Children will not tolerate any form of abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

This policy outlines how Hope for Children seeks to fulfil its duty to prevent children we come into contact with from harm (from our people or by actions or inactions) and how we respond to concerns about abuse of children or children at risk of harm.

This policy relates to safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults who come into contact with us, directly and indirectly through our work. The safeguarding of our staff is managed through our human resource policies.

### 4. Scope

This policy applies to: -

- Anyone acting on behalf of, or representing, Hope for Children (paid or unpaid) including all staff, volunteers, interns, trustees, consultants, patrons or ambassadors, supporters, or visitors to projects.
- All Hope for Children offices and countries of operation now and in the future.

### 5. Legal Framework

- This policy has been drawn up based on legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children and adults at risk in the international context and the UK, including the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Care Act 2014 in England, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, and United Kingdom Charity Commission guidance.
- Hope for Children's leadership will promote a fair, open, and positive culture and ensure all involved feel able to report concerns, confident in the knowledge that they will be heard and responded to in a timely manner.

### 6. Definitions

**Child:** Anyone under 18 years old. This is regardless of the legal age of adulthood in countries where Hope for Children operates.

**Adult at risk** - Any person aged 18 or over who is or may need care and support, (e.g., health, personal or social care), is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and as a result of this is unable to protect themselves from either the risk or experience of neglect or abuse.

**Vulnerable Adult** - Vulnerable adults are defined as people who are unable to take care of protecting themselves against harm or exploitation for any reason. When safeguarding adults, this involves reducing and preventing the risk of harm, neglect, or abuse alongside supporting them to maintain their own lives. While most would consider vulnerable adults to be those who lack capacity, adults with full capacity can also be considered as vulnerable as well. This is when they are unable to take care or protect themselves from harm<sup>2</sup>.

## 7. Safeguarding Framework

Hope for Children's safeguarding framework is supported by four key pillars – **Prevention, Protection, Reporting and Responding**. These are sustained by embedding a strong safeguarding culture throughout the organisation.

### 7.1. Prevention

**Hope for Children** will reduce the risk of harm through organisational risk assessment, safer recruitment, a code of conduct robust partner due diligence, and awareness raising with all stakeholders.

#### 7.1.1. Risk Assessment

Hope for Children manages the risks associated with its activities in accordance with its Safeguarding Risk Management Matrix which is reviewed annually. The risk matrix deals specifically with the safeguarding risks associated with Hope for Children's activities and sets these out in its Risk Matrix along with the controls implemented by Hope for Children to mitigate these risks. Staff should refer to the Risk Matrix in which safeguarding risks are integrated, and mitigation measures are identified.

The Risk Assessment will be the responsibility of the board of trustees and will be reviewed and submitted to the full board meeting for endorsement.

#### 7.1.2. Safer Recruitment

Safer recruitment is an integral part of Hope for Children's commitment to build an organisational culture wherein the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved is paramount. Hope for Children is fully committed to applying safer recruitment principles in the selection and vetting of potential new staff and trustees and people associated with our work.

If Hope for Children does ever engage in activities that require the presence of its staff or other representatives on the ground, they will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS or other background check in accordance with relevant legislation. We will ensure that these are carried out as part of our commitment to safer recruitment and safeguarding. Please see our Safer Recruitment Policy.

#### 7.1.3. Code of Conduct

Hope for Children's Code of Conduct describes the ethics and behaviour required of all stakeholders

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.carecheck.co.uk/importance-of-safeguarding/>

to ensure a robust safeguarding environment. It is designed to create a culture of best practice in keeping beneficiaries safe. All staff members, and all those who act on our behalf, as well as visitors will read and sign the Code of Conduct and are expected to adhere to its values and minimum standards. Those making overseas visits are expected to uphold local law wherever they operate, in addition to our Code of Conduct. Breaches of the Code of Conduct are grounds for disciplinary action as well as possible referral of matters to relevant external bodies including statutory authorities, for example where a possible criminal breach is involved.

We expect our partners to have their own internal robust Code of Conduct that clarifies the values, principles, and the acceptable behaviours within their organisation and which should influence and drive their organisation's culture.

Staff, volunteers or other representatives or visitors MUST report any breaches of the Code of Conduct that they see or become aware of, or their concerns about adult behaviour around children, by any person connected to Hope for Children or an organisational partner (see section below on Reporting).

Staff reporting concerns will be protected by Hope for Children's Whistleblowing Policy.

The Code of Conduct will be displayed in all Hope for Children offices and relevant managers are responsible for sharing it with our partnership organisations (both project and fundraising partners) so that all are aware of the standards of behaviour to expect from those representing Hope for Children alongside how to report any concerns to Hope for Children. It will also be available to the public via Hope for Children's website.

A child-friendly version of the key points of Hope for Children's Code of Conduct will be available and provided to partner organisations. Partner organisations are responsible for ensuring their beneficiaries' access to and understanding of the Code of Conduct.

A fundraiser/support group friendly version of the key points of the Code of Conduct will be shared with those whose fundraising could involve children in the UK or other countries. As these events represent Hope for Children, guidance on behaviour around children, based on the Code of Conduct, will be provided.

#### **7.1.4. Whistleblowing**

Hope Children's Whistleblowing Policy is part of its Safeguarding Framework. A complaint handling framework managed by a named whistleblowing officer, ensures reports are examined and resolved quickly at the appropriate level. It identifies a clear process to follow if the concern is being raised against an individual in the organisation. The policy makes explicit that there can be no reprisals for the whistle-blower where concerns are reported in good faith and without malice. This applies to operations worldwide regardless of legislation to protect whistle-blowers.

#### **7.1.5. Partnerships**

Hope for Children funds projects in Uganda, Kenya, India, Sri Lanka, and the United Kingdom. Hope for Children has a robust due diligence process in place for partner selection. As part of our due

diligence process, we require implementing partners to have their own Safeguarding Frameworks. Partners, as independent organisations, are ultimately responsible for dealing with their own safeguarding concerns. As stated in our grant agreements, we expect serious incidents (including all safeguarding incidents) to be reported to Hope for Children. Please see our Partnership policy.

#### 7.1.6. Country Offices

- a) To ensure the Safeguarding Policy is appropriate for both the country context and operational needs, each Country Office will adapt Hope for Children's policies and supporting documents, ensuring they are culturally appropriate and consistent with national legislation, and publish / print and display them in the country's main languages and / or the languages of the primary users.
- b) Hope for Children's office in Uganda will have Reporting Procedures that take account of country context and that country's safeguarding systems.
- c) Assuming its capacity to do so, Hope for Children will resource its Uganda office with the training and any specialist services/advice (legal, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults or counselling) required to achieve high standards of safeguarding and responses to disclosures and cases.

#### 7.1.7. Visits to Projects and Partner Organisations

Anyone visiting a project or project partner for or on behalf of Hope for Children (staff, volunteers, trustees, photographers, patrons, contractors, consultants) or where Hope for Children is responsible for introducing a third party (e.g. individual supporter, donor, journalist) to our projects before a visit, must follow the requirements for a safe visit in section 9 and 10 of our Partnership Policy.

#### 7.1.8. Media and Communication

As part of our duty of care to children and vulnerable adults, Hope for Children will always put the child's or vulnerable adult's needs first. Our Media and Communications policy ensures our responsibility to the children or vulnerable who are portrayed in any of the images or communications used and will always strive to represent them positively and not as passive victims. We understand that all our beneficiaries must be represented as individuals with agency and identity. We pledge that:

- We will prioritise the rights and well-being of the children sharing their stories with Hope for Children.
- We acknowledge that informed consent is complex, can change over time and may not always be possible.
- We will share stories of children using positive strength-based language.
- We will actively ensure that no child is put at risk by the way we share their story online.
- Above all, Hope for Children will continuously reflect on the power and responsibility we hold in collecting and using stories and images of children.
- As part of the **OverExposed**, campaign led by Chance for Childhood, Hope for Children has decided to remove identifiable features of children from imagery and video footage, this will include removing children's faces from all fundraising campaigns.

There is no scenario where taking an image is more important than the safety and wellbeing of the

person involved. The quality of consent obtained is essential. For instance, if a person is concerned about the impact of being photographed, we will not take their photo. We will not take photos of adults who are unable to provide informed consent, regardless of others' consent for us to do so.

We acknowledge that when there is a real or perceived imbalance of power between photographer and the person being photographed, gaining true consent may not be possible. We understand that in the age of the internet, images can be shared widely beyond their original intent of use. Consequently, we work hard to ensure that individuals who have their images taken in relation to our work have clear pathways for contacting us and that options to withdraw consent remain open, without a time limit.

Absolutely no payments or any other form of compensation are to be provided to any person being photographed in exchange for an image or to encourage consent.

All social media and case studies generated by Hope for Children will be subject to the same safeguarding guidelines as outlined in our Media and Communications Policy. Access to images is limited to those that need them during the course of their work.

## 8. Protection

### 8.1.1. Protection - Enabling reports.

Hope for Children will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to team members, our associates, and the communities we work with. We will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners, and official bodies. Reporting is supported by our Whistle Blowing policy and procedures for internal (related to our team members, trustees, volunteers) and external (related to information we learn from our work in the community) safeguarding concerns.

Hope for Children places a mandatory obligation on all board members, directors, team members (**full time or part time**), consultants and contracted individuals to immediately report concerns, suspicions, allegations, and incidents that indicate actual or potential abuse and harassment of children, vulnerable adults and beneficiaries when perpetrated by team members and anyone associated with our work.

Hope for Children's team members, and everyone associated with our work are required to report violence and harassment against colleagues.

Hope for Children commits to take appropriate action in response to any such reports and does not tolerate misconduct.

### 8.1.2. Becoming aware or concerned about abuse of a child.

Those working with or for or representing Hope for Children may become aware or concerned about a child at risk in our work (either our own or partner organisations) or a person of concern in a number of ways; direct disclosure by a child, being told of something by another person (child or adult), through their own observations of a child or adult behaviour (e.g. breaching the code of conduct). "**Awareness of Abuse and Responding**" gives guidance on recognising signs of abuse and responding to a child/adult who discloses harm. This will be part of safeguarding training.

### 8.1.3 Duty to Report

- a. Reporting allegations or concerns is not easy, especially if these involve colleagues within Hope for Children or partner organisations but it is important everyone working with or for Hope for Children understands the need and their **obligation** to report as soon as they become aware.
- b. It is **mandatory to report what has been alleged, suspected, or observed** about possible child/vulnerable adult abuse or breach of the Code of Conduct - regardless of whether harm to a child/adult appears to have resulted or not.
- c. It is not the responsibility of the person with the concern to investigate further but simply to report. **It is important that this is observed so that child/vulnerable adult or alleged perpetrator is not put at risk, that evidence is not compromised** (in event of a criminal investigation).
- d. Staff and representatives should be aware that a failure to report something they knew and later comes to light could result in disciplinary action e.g., knowing a staff member has made unsupervised home visits or invited children to stay at their home/hotel and not reporting this.
- e. All reports will be treated confidentially involving only those who need to know and handled according to the procedures in this policy with the best interests of the child/vulnerable adult paramount and taking due care to the needs of any subjects of concern (people about whom allegations are made) and any witnesses and person making the report.
- f. To ensure that responses to reports are appropriate to the country context and best interests of the child/vulnerable adult a local mapping of child protection laws, agencies and systems will be carried out for countries where Hope for Children works.

### 8.1.3. Making a report

- a. Reports should be made to the relevant country Safeguarding Officer (SO) within 24 hours using the **Reporting Form**, which should be sent to the country Safeguarding Office and, simultaneously to the CEO, Anna-mai Andrews at [Anna-mai.Andrews@chanceforchildhood.org](mailto:Anna-mai.Andrews@chanceforchildhood.org), and to the Global Safeguarding Lead, Richard Opoku, at [Richard.Opoku@chanceforchildhood.org](mailto:Richard.Opoku@chanceforchildhood.org)
- b. If you are unsure, please speak to your Safeguarding Officer prior to making the report.
- c. If the matter concerns the safeguarding officer, then the report should go to the Anna-mai Andrews, the Chief Executive Officer. If it concerns the CEO, please report your concerns to the chair of the board of trustees, Mick Bardella, at [mirco59@outlook.com](mailto:mirco59@outlook.com)

## 9. Responding

Hope for Children is committed to responding effectively, sensitively, and swiftly to all allegations and suspicions of any type of harm, violence, and harassment.

The safety and wellbeing of the individual(s) affected is the paramount consideration and immediate steps will be taken by the safeguarding officer in collaboration with the programmes and safeguarding committee as necessary to protect the individual(s) affected and to address any possible urgent medical needs. The local mapping exercise will help to identify resources.



Where it appears that a criminal offence may have taken place, the matter will be referred to the appropriate national authorities in line with local reporting/referral systems. A context specific risk assessment will be undertaken to aid decision making.

Safeguarding concerns identified in the community through Hope for Children's work will be signposted to appropriate institutions and professionals identified through the mapping exercise for support and advice for further action.

Hope for Children will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to team members found in breach of the safeguarding policy.

## **10. Recording and storage**

All records relating to child abuse disclosures or concerns must be treated as confidential. The transfer of this information (verbally or in writing) should be done securely and shared on a "need to know basis". Records (electronic and paper) should be kept in locked files accessible to the Safeguarding Officer and those who "need to know" and then securely archived. All reports should be signed and dated so that the origin and date of the information is clear.

## **11. Accountability**

Accountability is a fundamental principle underpinning Hope for Children's commitment to safeguarding. Just as Hope for Children recognises and accepts its responsibility to be accountable upwards to our trustee board and our donors, supporters, and the general public via the Charity Commission, we also recognise that we are accountable to the communities we support through the work that we fund through our partners, and that this can only be realised if beneficiaries are engaged in a dialogue with those who work to support them.

Hope for Children's Safeguarding Officer (CEO) will report all safeguarding matters to the designated safeguarding trustee at board level through the programmes and safeguarding committee.

Hope for Children's designated safeguarding trustee is responsible for ensuring that the board of trustees is fully informed of the situation and will recommend the appropriate course of action to it.

Hope for Children will report to its donors and the Charity Commission any safeguarding incident that the programmes and safeguarding committee determines is a reportable serious incident.

At the operational level, Hope for Children's CEO is responsible for ensuring a working environment and organisational culture conducive to the implementation of all aspects of its safeguarding framework. The implementation strategy of Hope for Children's safeguarding framework and subsequent reviews will be presented by the CEO to Hope for Children's board of trustees for approval.

Hope for Children's safeguarding officer is accountable for identifying the training, support and resources required to implement our safeguarding framework effectively and for reporting on this to the programmes and safeguarding committee for its consideration and recommendation to the trustee board. This will include ensuring that staff are appropriately trained in conducting thorough due diligence of potential partners, ensuring memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between Hope for Children and partners reflect safeguarding responsibilities and consequences for non-compliance, and ensuring that Hope for Children's monitoring and evaluation frameworks incorporate safeguarding.

The CEO is responsible for earmarking or securing adequate resources in relation to the effective implementation of the safeguarding framework and any further strategy in relationship to safeguarding set by the board. The CEO will ensure that the Safeguarding Officer delegates responsibility for implementing the safeguarding framework to appropriate members of staff within Hope for Children, including country level safeguarding officers.

All managers are accountable for ensuring that all staff under their supervision have received safeguarding training and that safeguarding is a standing agenda item in all supervision meetings. All staff are accountable for following the procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns, making appropriate records, and observing the code of conduct expectations.

The Director of Programmes, or equivalent, is responsible for ensuring that partners are assessed in accordance with Hope for Children's due diligence framework and are adequately trained and resourced to fulfil their safeguarding obligations, and that a capacity building package is in place if needed and if resources are available.

## 12. Serious Incident Reporting.

Hope for Children defines a serious incident in line with the Charity Commission's definition as 'an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant<sup>3</sup>.

- Harm to your charity's beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, or others who come into contact with your charity through its work (who are collectively referred to throughout this guidance as people who come into contact with your charity through its work)
- Loss of your charity's money or assets.
- Damage to your charity's property.
- Harm to your charity's work or reputation

Charity Commission guidance may be seen [here](#).

Hope for Children Board of Trustees delegates the responsibility for Serious Incident Reporting to its CEO.

Hope for Children will make a report to the Charity Commission and donors if any of the following things occur:

- Individuals coming into contact through Hope for Children's work (adults or children) have been, or alleged to have been, abused or mistreated, by someone connected with Hope for Children, for example a director, staff member, while under the management responsibility of Hope for Children
- There has been an incident where someone has been abused or mistreated (alleged or actual) and this relates to the activities of Hope for Children.
- Financial crimes – fraud, theft, cyber-crime, and money laundering
- Large donations from an unknown or unverifiable source, or suspicious financial activity using the charity's funds
- Other significant financial loss

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<sup>3</sup> [How to report a serious incident in your charity - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity)

- Links to terrorism or extremism, including ‘proscribed’ (or banned) organisations, individuals subject to an asset freeze, or kidnapping of staff
- Other significant incidents, such as – insolvency, forced withdrawal of banking services without an alternative, significant data breaches/losses or incidents involving partners that materially affect the charity
- There has been a breach of procedures or policies at Hope for Children which has put people at risk, including failure to carry out checks which would have identified that a person is disqualified in law, under safeguarding legislation, from having contact with children and vulnerable adults.

## **11. Implementation and Review**

Hope for Children’s safeguarding policy will be available to all staff, volunteers, interns, trustees, consultants, patrons or ambassadors, contracted individuals for specific projects, supporters, or visitors to projects via induction, briefings, written communication and through its website.

The CEO will develop an implementation strategy and ensure resources and supports has been secured to roll it out to all stakeholders as necessary.

Hope for Children’s employees with specific safeguarding responsibilities will be trained to receive and respond professionally to safeguarding concerns and allegations.

Hope for Children will continually evaluate its safeguarding practice and update its policy following an annual review by the Programmes and Safeguarding Committee.

**Hope for Children  
July 2023**