



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Policy Statement

Vision Changers Kenya, in cognizance of its moral and legal duties to safeguard and protect the fundamental rights of the children under their care, formulates this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Vision Changers Kenya is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care. It recognizes the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. For the purposes of this policy and associated procedures a child is recognized as someone under the age of 18 years.

Staff and volunteers will work together to embrace difference and diversity and respect the rights of children and young people.

The organization has a zero-tolerance policy against all forms of abuse meted out against children. As such, the organization stands guided by the Best Interest Principle of the child.

Definitions

Safeguarding: is the responsibility that entities have to ensure that its employees do no harm to children in their care and protection whether by their acts of commission or omission. Further, it involves the safeguards in place to ensure that children are not exposed to the risk of harm, neglect and abuse.

Child Protection: is a central part of safeguarding that involves protecting individual children who have been identified as either suffering or at risk of suffering harm or abuse. Child protection involves the measures put in place as well as the response to these incidences of child abuse and neglect.

Abuse: refers to the violation of a child's rights by any other person or persons. Abuse can take the form of physical, psychological, or sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or other exploitation that results in actual or potential harm to the health, survival, development or dignity of a child. It can be a single isolated act or omission, or repeated acts.

The Legal Framework

The Constitution of Kenya, 2010

Article 53 of the Constitution of Kenya details the rights of a child which include the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, all forms of violence, inhuman treatment and punishment, and hazardous or exploitative behavior. The provision further embodies the Best Interest Principle as a matter of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.

The Children's Act, No 29 Of 2022

The Children's Act No 29 of 2022 is the guiding statute with regards to children's matters.

This policy guidelines are premised on the following principles:

- The welfare of children is the primary concern.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse.
- Child protection is everyone's responsibility.
- Children have the right to express views on all matters which affect them, should they wish to do so.
- Organisations shall work in partnership together with children and parents/care givers to promote the welfare, health and development of children.

Vision Changers Kenya will:

- Promote the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities for them to take part in **[sport] and any other physical activity** safely.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and protect them from abuse.
- Recruit, train, support and supervise its staff, members and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves.
- Require staff, members and volunteers to adopt and abide by this Child Protection Policy and these procedures.
- Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children in line with this Policy and these procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Observe guidelines issued by local Child Protection Committees for the protection of children.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Policy and these procedure.

Procedure for Dealing with Child Abuse

Identification

Once a member of staff, or a child by themselves suspects incidences of child abuse or neglect, or they have reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer abuse, they must report to the designated persons.

Reporting

Reporting shall be in written form for purposes of proper record keeping. If the child is reporting in person, then the designated person receiving the report shall cause it to be in writing, taking care

to note down the specific acts of commission or omission, as well as the specific dates or the period within which the abuse occurred.

Follow up

Once the designated officer receives a report of suspected abuse, a series of detailed sequential steps occur.

A crisis management team shall be appointed by the designated safeguarding officer to follow up on the investigation leading to closure.

Sanction

Any breach of this child protection and safeguarding policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter. This may result in immediate termination of employment, and reporting to the police, and relevant regulatory authority or other body.

Responsibility

Vision Changers Kenya recognizes that it is the individual and collective responsibility of every member of staff to safeguard and promote the well-being and safety of the children.

Background Checks

Vision Changers Kenya runs background checks on all its potential employees, as part of safeguarding the children entrusted to them.

Review

This Policy and these Procedures will be regularly reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in National legislation and guidance on the protection of children or following any changes within **Vision Changers Kenya**
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the protection of children within **Vision Changers Kenya**
- In all other circumstances, at least every three years