CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Table of Contents

Policy statement.....1

Principles and Values.....1

General roles and responsibilities of the staff.....2

Intervention in cases of suspected child abuse.....3

Annex 1: Dealing with disclosures.....3

Annex 2: Dealing with psychological distress.....4

Annex 3. Child protection principles for the development of teaching material.....4

Annex 4: Recruitment principles.....5

Annex 5: What is child abuse?.....5

Policy statement

- We recognize our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the physical and psychological welfare of all children.
- We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children feel safe and able to talk freely about their concerns, believing that they will be listened to and valued.
- We are committed to providing a risk-free environment and to this end, we thoroughly regulate, supervise and educate our staff, volunteers, and associates.
- We recognize the potential psychological impact of our messages and we understand how demanding involvement in the subject can be among the psychologically vulnerable youth. Our activities and events are designed by child education experts and psychologists to ensure that no anxiety or other mental harm is caused by the demanding learning process.
- We understand the need for a transparent Child Protection Policy. To this end the current Child Protection Policy shall be freely accessible on the project website or on email upon request.
- All Partners of the Project undertake to publish their own Child Protection Policy in accordance with the current Policy

Principles and Values

- Children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so.
- All children regardless of age, gender, race, ability, sexuality, religion, culture or language have a right to be protected from any harm.
- All staff has a key role in the prevention of harm and an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm in accordance with the guidance.

- We have established clear lines of accountability, training, and advice to support the process and individual staff within that process.
- We maintain that all matters relating to child protection are to be treated as confidential and only shared as per the 'working together' guidance.
- Information will only be shared with agencies whom we have a statutory duty to share with and individuals within the school who 'need to know'.
- Due to the psychologically demanding nature of the program, we take special care to avoid causing anxiety or other mental harm.
- We continuously monitor and review our safeguarding measures

General roles and responsibilities of the staff

All staff have a key role to play in identifying concerns early and in providing help for children. To achieve this, they will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Establish and maintain an environment where discussion and debate are encouraged but never so much as to violate anyone's self-dignity
- Ensure children know that there are adults whom they can approach if they are worried about any problems.
- Record their concerns if they are worried that a child is being abused and report these to the relevant person as soon as possible that day.
- Record their concerns if they are worried that a child is being psychologically overburdened and report these to the relevant person as soon as practical that day.
- Treat information with confidentiality but never promise to "keep a secret".
- In the context of early help, staff will notify colleagues and/or parents of any concerns about their child(ren), and provide them with, or signpost them to, opportunities to change the situation.
- Staff members are obliged to strictly follow all child protection rules and are accountable for not doing so

In their contact with children, it is unacceptable for employees and collaborators to do any of the following:

- embarrass, humiliate, belittle, or demean children or display any behaviour bearing signs of emotional, physical, or sexual abuse;
- come into inappropriate physical contact with the child, violating the child's dignity; permissible physical contact is naturally associated with play, hygienic assistance, ensuring safety, or the need to soothe the child;
- serve children alcohol, medications or other psychoactive substances;
- condone or participate in illegal activities involving a child;
- establish sexual relations with children;
- exhibit sexually provoking behaviour;
- host the child in their own private home;
- maintain a private relationship with the child, outside the framework of work and support;
- accompany the child during travel in the absence of a caregiver;
- sleep in the same room with children during camps, and trips;

Intervention in cases of suspected child abuse

All employees and collaborators of the Project team act for the purpose of protecting children against abuse. In our work, we comply with the legal regulations of every Member State. Every suspected case of child abuse is treated seriously and investigated, whether reported by a child, caregiver, or professional and no matter if suspected abuse was perpetrated by another child, caregiver, professional, or employee/collaborator of the current consortium.

In the case of a suspected crime or threat to the child's interest, employees must immediately undertake legal intervention. The decision to intervene is made by a team made up of the reporting employee, the coordinator of the relevant program, and the designated person to act as the focal point to receive and manage any safeguarding concerns appointed by the coordinator.

If the child's health or life is in imminent danger, an employee learning of the situation intervenes without delay, by immediately informing the proper Police unit by phone and by fax about direct threat or damage to the health and life of a child.

All activities undertaken in the course of the intervention are documented.

Annex 1: Dealing with disclosures

All staff should:

A member of staff who is approached by a child should listen positively and try to reassure them. They cannot promise complete confidentiality and should explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe. The degree of confidentiality should always be governed by the need to protect the child. It is important to communicate with them in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference.

Receive

- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is said and take it seriously
- Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable

Reassure

- Reassure the pupil, but only so far as is honest and reliable
- Don't make promises you may not be able to keep e.g. 'I'll stay with you' or 'everything will be all right now' or 'I'll keep this confidential
- Do reassure e.g. you could say: 'I believe you', 'I am glad you came to me', 'I am sorry this has happened', 'We are going to do something together to get help'

Respond

- Respond to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details
- Do not ask 'leading' questions i.e. 'did he touch your private parts?' or 'did she hurt you?' Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any later prosecution in court
- Do not criticize the alleged perpetrator; the pupil may care about him/her, and reconciliation may be possible
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat it all for another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to. Reassure the pupil that it will be a

senior member of staff.

Report

- Share concerns with the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible
- If you are not able to contact your designated safeguarding lead, and the child is at risk of immediate harm, contact the children's services department directly
- If you are dissatisfied with the level of response you receive following your concerns, you should press for re-consideration.

Annex 2: Dealing with psychological distress

We are dedicated to enabling a learning environment of positive mental health and well-being. Through developing and implementing psychosocial support policies informed by learners' needs, voices, and capacities; embedding mental health literacy and social and emotional learning in the curriculum; the implementation of the teaching methodology; the management of debates and discussions; in the organizational guidelines of physical and virtual events - we seek to create a positive environment where we try to get the child's attention not by rigor, or breaking the visual threshold, but by approaching the subject through entertainment

Should the staff, but in particular teachers, volunteers, and peers feel or experience distress or anxiety among the attendees:

Receive

- Listen to what is being said,
- Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable
- Treat the other as equal

Reassure

- Reassure the pupil,
- Take the problem seriously
- Show openness and willingness to discuss

Respond

- Respond to the pupil as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter,
- Discuss with the pupil the details of the problem and generate a discourse
- Remain objective do not let your feelings overcome but don't be afraid to take sides in the story-telling
- Do not push the pupil to openly express or repeat the problem concerned. If you think the pupil needs it, reassure that a professional staff member will also listen.

Report

- Share concerns with the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible
- If you are not able to contact your designated safeguarding lead, consider contacting the parents of the child

Annex 3. Child protection principles for the development of teaching material

- Do not try to acquire attention through extremely violent visuals
- Refrain from direct exposure to violence and psychological anguish

- Discrimination should be presented only in a historical and social context, explaining and pointing out the lack of any justifiable or rational base
- Prevention of the use of negative stereotypical attitudes and wording about children from minorities
- Teaching objects must be failsafe and must be designed to minimize the risk of harm to the children they come into contact with by taking sufficient account of child physical safety
- Provide adult supervision during sessions

Annex 4: Recruitment principles

We make every effort to choose employees and collaborators possessing appropriate skills and competencies, as well as sharing our belief in the values proposed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, specifically the right to protection against abuse.

Each employee/collaborator is to submit their resume and references. An interview is conducted by two Project employees, focusing on candidates' knowledge and competencies, as well as explaining any existing gaps in employment/education. As early as the interview, the candidate is informed about the organization's Child Protection Policy.

Before they commence their employment, candidates must submit legally required documents, along with a certificate of clean criminal record regarding crimes against sexual freedom and morality, crimes against minors and ongoing criminal proceedings involving them.

All newly appointed employees and collaborators are expected to familiarize themselves with the stipulations of the Child Protection Policy, bylaws of employment, rules for upholding children's rights, and principles of safeguarding and processing personal data. This is confirmed by the employee's signature on a relevant statement appended to the employment contract.

Throughout the recruitment process recruiters / employees must:

- Avoid using discriminatory terms
- Avoid physical contact with volunteers
- Refrain from making references, or comparisons of sexual differences
- Refrain from making promises you cannot keep
- Refrain from using violent visuals or terms
- Implement a multi-stage volunteer selection process supervised by adults
- Multi-stage selection model and screening in the hiring process

Annex 5: What is child abuse?

The following definitions are taken from NSPCC guidelines.

Domestic abuse: Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships.

Sexual abuse: A child is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This doesn't have to be physical contact, and it can happen online.

Physical abuse: Physical abuse is deliberately hurting a child causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

Psychological abuse: subjecting or exposing another person to a behavior that may result in psychological trauma, including anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder

Neglect: Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs. It's dangerous and children can suffer serious and long-term harm.
Emotional abuse: Children who are emotionally abused suffer emotional maltreatment or neglect. It's sometimes called psychological abuse and can cause children serious harm.
Bullying and cyberbullying: Bullying can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online (cyberbullying). It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

30.07.2025

Date

Signature