

Deaf Child Worldwide Minimum Standards in Child Protection and Safeguarding

These standards are recognised as best practice and can be used by Deaf Child Worldwide, and our partner organisations, to provide a benchmark against which safeguarding can be measured and audited.

The standards provide a comprehensive framework that our partners should use to make their policies effective within their own context and circumstances.

As well as these standards we provide child protection training and policy development support for our partners.

Standard 1: Policy

When entering into an agreement with partner organisations, Deaf Child Worldwide requires that they should have, or be prepared to develop, a child protection and safeguarding policy. The policy should outline what measures are in place to prevent harm to all children and young people, and explain how to respond appropriately when safeguarding concerns arise.

Why?

By developing a child protection and safeguarding policy organisations make it clear to everyone that they believe children must be safeguarded at all times and not put at risk of harm or abuse.

The policy must:

- › reflect the principles of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- › include appropriate definitions of ‘child’, ‘young person’ and ‘abuse’ and reference to different types of harm and abuse
- › cover all staff, volunteers, interns, consultants, sign language interpreters and visitors to the organisation’s programmes
- › be approved and endorsed by the relevant management committee within the organisation and reviewed every three years
- › clearly describe the responsibilities of managers, directors and trustees in overseeing safe practice
- › include procedures to follow if senior staff or trustees have any allegations made against them
- › be publicised in an appropriate manner, translated into different languages and formats that are accessible to deaf children and young people, and distributed widely.

The following documents can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met.

- › A copy of the policy, signed and dated by the management.
- › Policy translated into local languages.
- › Examples of ways the policy has been shared and promoted, including to deaf children and their families.

Standard 2: Procedures

Partner organisations must have, or create, child safe environments by integrating child safeguarding processes and procedures into their existing systems. These procedures must detail the steps needed to fulfil the child protection and safeguarding policy.

Why?

Effective safeguarding processes and procedures ensure that child protection is integrated throughout an organisation. They support staff to feel confident in dealing with any safeguarding concerns or incidents that may arise. They reduce risk across programmes and organisations.

Partner organisations must:

- › develop locally appropriate response and reporting processes for child protection incidents and concerns which arise both within their organisation and externally
- › include, within their policy, guidance for staff on confidentiality, data protection and how to store personal information
- › include, within their policy, guidance on the use of photographs, film and case studies of children and young people
- › develop a procedure for gaining informed consent from deaf children and young people for the use of images and personal information about them.

The following documents can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met.

- › Reporting flowcharts to show how staff manage and appropriately escalate information about safeguarding concerns and incidents.
- › Template consent forms for deaf children and young people and their parents.

Standard 3: People

Partner organisations must place clear responsibilities and expectations on all their staff and stakeholders – and must support them to understand and act in line with the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures.

Why?

Child safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility; we all have a role to play. Organisations need to ensure that all those associated with them understand safeguarding, this includes deaf children and young people and their families.

Partner organisations must:

- › designate staff at different levels within the organisation, who have safeguarding responsibility which is clearly defined within their role
- › ensure that all recruitment processes have safeguarding measures in place – this includes the recruitment of volunteers, interns and sign language interpreters
- › ensure that all staff are fully trained in child protection and safeguarding, and that this training is refreshed every year, and fully renewed every three years
- › ensure that management of staff considers child protection and safeguarding, using supervision, team meetings and appraisals to discuss any issues or concerns
- › include a Code of Conduct within their child protection and safeguarding policy, outlining appropriate behaviour for staff, volunteers, interns and sign language interpreters
- › ensure that all staff sign a statement of commitment to the safeguarding policy
- › promote the importance of child protection and safeguarding widely within the communities and families that they work with.

The following documents can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met.

- › A copy of training plans, and course attendance records.
- › Lists of contacts for specialist advice and information.
- › Samples of recruitment adverts and employment contracts, application or reference forms.
- › Codes of conduct.
- › Guidelines on reporting mechanisms for staff, partners, children and communities.