

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY



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Rebuilding young lives for a better future

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1 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

1.1 INTRODUCING THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Chance for Childhood is an international children's charity working to ensure that all children can enjoy their rights to their fullest potential, with access to protection and education.

We believe that a childhood shouldn't be spent on the streets, or in a war zone, or working in a field. It shouldn't be spent imprisoned at home by disability and the stigma that surrounds it.

It should be spent in school, and a nurturing, safe home environment.

Yet many children are robbed of their childhood by discrimination towards people with disabilities and a lack of tailored support, conflict or extreme poverty and in the process are exposed to danger and injustices.

Chance for Childhood promotes proactive response to keeping children safe. As such we seek all the opportunities to encourage the active participation of children as a central role in keeping themselves and others safe, and we develop our policies and practices around this concept.

In the twenty-five years of its existence, Chance for Childhood has focused on the welfare and safety of children and we continue to recognise our fundamental duty of care towards all of our beneficiaries. As part of this responsibility, we fully recognise the need to protect them from accidental harm, as well as deliberate abuse from and within the organisations intended for their benefit.

Additionally, Chance for Childhood specifically recognises that street children, children with disabilities, trafficked children and other at-risk children are especially vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and ill-treatment at the hands of carers, other project workers and any person who has access to their personal information. As such this policy serves as a means of rigorously maintaining that proper guidelines and procedures are in place to prevent situations that make Chance for Childhood vulnerable to enabling abuse and harbouring abusers. Chance for Childhood views child safeguarding as both an organisational and an individual responsibility.

Our policy has been developed with the help and co-operation of many of our collaborative partners to whom we are very grateful. We would like to acknowledge the following organisations' policies from which we have drawn helpful material: Child Hope, War Child, Sense International and the ABC Trust. We would also like to acknowledge the expert input from the Child Safeguarding Network Manager from Keeping Children Safe, a UK-based leading international Child Safeguarding Network.

NOTE: This Policy applies at all times, both within and outside work hours.

1.2 DEFINITIONS, ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Child

Throughout this policy document, we refer to the word ‘child’ which is typically used as reference to those under the age of 18 years. Chance for Childhood’s partners predominantly work with individuals below the age of 18 years, but in some of our joint programmes, our partners work with young people aged between 18 – 25. This Child Safeguarding Policy therefore includes all of these young people as well, irrespective of their age, as we regard their status as vulnerable young adults worthy of recognition and protection.

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CoC	Code of Conduct
CP	Child Protection
CPFP	Child Protection Focal Point
CSO	Child Safeguarding Officer
CSP	Child Safeguarding Policy
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
CSC	Consortium for Street Children
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
SMT	Senior Management Team

Child Safeguarding

Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

This definition draws from our values and principles and shapes our culture. It pays specific attention to preventing and responding to harm from any potential, actual or attempted abuse of power, trust, or vulnerability, especially for sexual purposes.

Safeguarding applies consistently and without exception across our programmes, partners and staff. It requires proactively identifying, preventing and guarding against all risks of harm, exploitation and abuse and having mature, accountable and transparent systems for response, reporting and learning when risks materialise. Those systems must be survivor-centred and also protect those accused until proven guilty.

Safeguarding puts beneficiaries and affected persons at the centre of all we do.

Categories of Harm (United Nations)

PHYSICAL: Actual or attempted injury of a child where there is knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was deliberately inflicted (including self-harm) or knowingly not prevented.

SEXUAL: The involvement of children in sexual activity activity that they do not fully understand, are not developmentally prepared for (physically or emotionally) and to which they cannot give informed consent.

EMOTIONAL: The failure to provide for the child’s basic emotional needs (including lack of affection and loving care) to the extent that there is a severe effect on their behaviour and development.

NEGLECT: Failure to provide for the child’s essential needs (food, clothing, cleanliness, shelter) to the extent that it affects the physical health and emotional development of the child. Includes failure to secure appropriate medical treatment.

EXPLOITATION: The physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect of a child for financial or other benefit.

Online Abuse

Online abuse is any kind of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen on any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones.

General Principles

- Children are active participants in their own futures and not passive victims. Chance for Childhood therefore actively supports the creation of spaces and institutions that give these children a “voice” to change their own development;
- The welfare of the children is paramount;
- All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation;
- All children should be encouraged to fulfil their potential and inequalities of potential should be challenged;
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children;
- INGOs have a duty of care to children with whom they work and with whom their representatives and staff work;
- Chance for Childhood is committed to working with its partners on developing and implementing their own organisational policies and procedures;
- This policy applies to all Chance for Childhood’s trustees, staff and volunteers and all trustees, staff and volunteers of its partner organisations; except in cases where the partner organisation has its own robust child safeguarding policy;
- A copy of this policy is available to every one of our partner organisations and has been translated into the relevant local language where required;
- Every UK staff member, trustee and volunteer has signed a commitment to the Child safeguarding Policy;
- All staff members, trustees and volunteers have two references obtained and have been the subject of recent police clearance checks;
- All staff members, trustees and volunteers have enhanced police clearance checks when they have direct contact with the children in our programmes;
- Child safeguarding is referenced in all our recruitment advertisements;
- Chance for Childhood participates in a number of networks and initiatives to promote good child safeguarding practices in a more standardised form to facilitate mutual learning and practice. Chance for Childhood is a member of Keeping Children Safe, a global Child Safeguarding Network.

2 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Key Performance Indicators

- **All staff members are informed as to the purpose, identity and whereabouts of the appointed Child Protection Officers (CSOs).**

- **An up-to-date record of all appointed Child Protection Focal Points (CPFP) for each project is available from the CEO or CSO at any given time.**
- **Quarterly monitoring and evaluation reports referencing child safeguarding are sent to the Overseas CSO.**
- **Supervision and feedback to CSOs is ongoing and includes 360° feedback at least once per year from colleagues on their performance.**
- **Feedback is followed up and the policy amended biannually (or more regularly if necessary).**

2.1 Chance for Childhood has appointed two Child Safeguarding Officers (CSOs), one for the UK and one for the Regional office in Rwanda. The role of the CSOs is to be the organisational representatives for all matters related to child safeguarding. The responsibilities of the CSOs include: ensuring the Child Safeguarding Policy (CSP) remains up to date; ensuring that all organisational activity is undertaken in compliance with the CSP and all related procedures; scheduling of required training; representing the organisation at child safeguarding groups and forums; being the key point of contact for all appointed CPFPs (Rwanda CSO).

2.2 In the absence of the CSOs, the CEO takes full responsibility for child safeguarding issues. The CSOs and CEO receive adequate training and are fully responsible for the implementation, monitoring and review of Chance for Childhood's Child Safeguarding Policy.

2.3 Each programme partner organisation has a dedicated Child Protection Focal Point (CPFP). This person must not be the Director of any of the programmes in question.

Child Protection Focal Point (CPFP)

All our partners must ensure that they have appointed someone to act as their Child Protection Focal Point. It is necessary that this person speaks the local language and has attended training in child safeguarding. This person must not be the Director of the organisation.

Broad areas of responsibility for the Child Protection Focal Point include:

- **Supporting the Board of Trustees and Programme Directors in implementing the Child Safeguarding Policy;**
- **Acting as the first point of contact for staff on all child safeguarding issues;**
- **Maintaining an up-to-date list of local specialist child welfare, health and law enforcement contacts;**
- **Liaising closely with Chance for Childhood's Rwanda CSO on all child safeguarding matters.**

2.4 All monitoring and evaluation project reports must include a section on child safeguarding.

2.5 Child safeguarding is a standing agenda item at SMT meetings, annual strategy and review meetings and is included within programme evaluations.

2.6 Disclosure of personal information is limited to those staff members who need to know.

3 RECRUITMENT

Chance for Childhood is committed to ensuring that child safeguarding is rigorously mainstreamed into our recruitment processes as part of an active risk management procedure.

Key Performance Indicators:

- **Every staff member, trustee and volunteer has signed a commitment to the Child Safeguarding Policy.**
- **All staff members have had police clearance checks obtained and verified.**
- **All staff members must have another police clearance check 5 years after the first check.**
- **All staff members have had two references obtained and verified.**
- **Child Safeguarding Policy is referenced with all new job advertisements.**

3.1 All job advertisements will state that Chance for Childhood has a child safeguarding policy, which the successful applicant will be expected to comply with.

3.2 Interview candidates selected are asked to read the policy in advance of their interview and asked questions specific to child safeguarding during the interview.

3.3 We request two references from all prospective employees. References from family members are not accepted.

3.4 All new employees are required to undergo a police clearance check. Two members of staff are assigned specifically to ensure that this is undertaken having undergone the necessary training in data protection. Chance for Childhood's commitment is such that the Chief Executive is the final authority on all matters relating to personnel recruitment.

3.5 All new interns and volunteers are expected to read and sign a statement of commitment to the policy prior to commencement of their placement.

3.6 All new trustees read and sign a statement of commitment to the Child Safeguarding Policy.

3.7 All employees and volunteers who will work directly with children undergo an enhanced police clearance check.

3.8 All external consultants of Chance for Childhood are required to read and sign a statement of commitment to the Child Safeguarding Policy before the commencement of their assignment. Further, those consultants who are required to work directly with children undergo an enhanced police clearance check or, in cases where this is not available, they must provide Chance for Childhood with details of two voluntary organisations that will provide professional and character references.

Where the consultant does not live in the UK they are required to obtain a police check from the relevant authorities in the country they live in.

4 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Key Performance Indicators

- **Two staff training workshops delivered by the appointed Child Safeguarding Officers (CSOs) every year; one training can be substituted by the participation of another staff member in a Child Safeguarding Seminar/Conference and sharing the meeting minutes and learning with the rest of the staff.**
- **Staff report a clear understanding of child safeguarding issues.**
- **Agendas and minutes from quarterly Trustee meetings with clear reference to child safeguarding issues.**
- **Inclusion of child safeguarding training in budgets both in the UK and overseas.**

4.1 All new members of staff, volunteers and Trustees must attend an induction into Chance for Childhood's Child Safeguarding Policy and necessary procedures by the UK CSO or, in our overseas programmes, the Rwanda CSO. This must take place at the earliest possible opportunity and certainly within one month of their appointment.

4.2 All consultants, journalists and project visitors who will have direct contact with children either in the UK or overseas must be briefed fully on child safeguarding issues and must sign a copy of the Chance for Childhood Child Safeguarding Policy prior to their visit and/or direct contact with the children.

4.3 The CSO delivers refresher training to all Chance for Childhood staff and regular volunteers on an annual basis. Such training is also be carried out by our Rwanda CSO or delegated to CPFs in our overseas programmes.

4.4 The CSOs receive refresher training and actively participate in training courses and groups to ensure that they are up-to-date with new developments in best practice.

4.5 Field-based Child Protection Focal Points are responsible for orienting children involved in Chance for Childhood's projects in all aspects of Chance for Childhood's CSP and procedures.

Training should involve using child-friendly materials, such as pictures and flowcharts. Support and training will be provided by the Rwanda CSO.

4.6 A review of the CSP is made biannually by the CSOs.

Local partners

4.8 Local partners who do not have robust child safeguarding policies will be required to sign up to the Chance for Childhood CSP until they have such policies in place. Any deviation from Chance for Childhood's CSP while under its jurisdiction will be investigated as a matter of grave concern and may result in a cessation of their grant from and partnership with Chance for Childhood.

4.9 Where necessary, Chance for Childhood will offer local training in child safeguarding, which will be delivered by a qualified party.



Community members in Patongo, Northern Uganda attending a session on Child Protection, facilitated by our partner's pro-bono lawyer. ©Chance for Childhood 2016

5 BEHAVIOUR PROTOCOLS

Key Performance Indicators

- **Every one of our partner organisations has developed its own Code of Conduct (CoC).**
- **The CoC is displayed in all of our partners' offices.**
- **Questionnaire reporting that children feel safe around Chance for Childhood staff and our partner organisations' staff.**

5.1 Chance for Childhood's Code of Conduct (CoC) should be distributed and adhered to by all staff and trustees. (see Appendix I)

5.2 Chance for Childhood staff must try to incorporate and understand local norms around physical contact with children and adults as long as these comply with UN child safeguarding standards.

5.3 In cases where local norms are unclear, a country specific document with a code of conduct must be developed.

5.4 All children, staff and partners will be inducted in the CoC.

5.5 The CoC will be displayed on the Chance for Childhood website and within the offices of all our programmes (unless they have their own specific CoC).

6 COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT CHILDREN

As part of our duty of care for the children, Chance for Childhood will always put the children's needs first. Chance for Childhood recognises its responsibility to the children who are portrayed in any of the images or communications used and will always strive to represent them accurately and not as passive victims.

Chance for Childhood fully understands that children must be represented as human beings with their own identity and dignity preserved.

Key Performance Indicators

- **Informed consent forms obtained for case studies and images used by the communications team.**
- **Signed Statement of Commitment for Third Parties' forms are obtained from every journalist, photographer or other stakeholder visiting a Chance for Childhood supported project.**

6.1 Permission will always be sought from the child/children themselves, their parent or guardian before taking photographs, except under exceptional circumstances, based on the child/children's best interests, where this may not be possible or desirable.

6.2 The names of children will always be changed to protect their identity.

- 6.3 No images of children should be used which are degrading, sexually provocative or where children are partially clothed or naked.
- 6.4 No photos should be manipulated or taken out of context.
- 6.5 Any identifiable details will not be photographed or shown
- 6.6 Third parties requesting the use of Chance for Childhood's images or other materials should sign the agreement on guidelines as defined here in this policy.
- 6.7 Photographs and videos will be kept for five years and then deleted
- 6.8 All social media (blogs, Facebook etc.) generated by Chance for Childhood will be subject to the same child safeguarding guidelines as outlined in this policy.
- 6.9 Information about a child/children's life and any images of children will be kept confidential in secure files. Access to images is limited to those that need them during the course of their work.

7 REPORTING

Key Performance Indicators

- **All children involved in any of Chance for Childhood's partner organisations are aware of the procedure for reporting a concern.**
- **All staff, trustees and volunteers are aware of reporting procedures, as measured by a specially designed questionnaire.**
- **Regional specific lists of referral agencies are displayed in each of our partners' offices.**

- 7.1 In any cases of suspicion of child abuse, the person to whom it has been reported must immediately inform Chance for Childhood's UK CSO or Rwanda CSO and not discuss it with any other person.
- 7.2 It is the responsibility of the CFPF in each of Chance for Childhood's partner organisations to ensure that children involved in Chance for Childhood support projects are made aware – in an age-sensitive and language-appropriate way – that they understand what to do if they feel uncomfortable and want to report something.
- 7.3 The reporting of suspected or actual abuse is a professional and legal obligation. Failure to report information can lead to disciplinary action or dismissal.
- 7.4 Any suspected or actual child abuse in the UK should be reported immediately to Chance for Childhood's UK CSO.

- 7.5 In cases of suspected or actual abuse overseas, the person to whom it has been reported or who has concerns must immediately inform the CPFPP within the organisation. The CPFPP will then inform Chance for Childhood's Rwanda CSO.
- 7.6 The informant must fill out an incident reporting form as soon as possible and submit to either the CSO or the CPFPP depending on the area in which the case was reported (Appendix 3: Sample form for reporting of suspected abuse).
- 7.7 The CSOs are responsible for filing report forms in a secure place in Chance for Childhood's filing system in the UK.
- 7.8 All CPFPPs are to compile a list of local agencies that deal with issues relating to child safeguarding and to whom children can be referred (e.g. social services, emergency medical help, psychologist, paediatrician etc.), and update the list on an annual basis.
- 7.9 A standardised flowchart on reporting abuse is to be laminated and displayed at the Chance for Childhood office and all of the offices of our partnering organisations (Appendix 2: Child safeguarding reporting flowchart), unless the organisation has already developed their own flowchart and reporting mechanisms in this respect.

8 RAMIFICATIONS OF MISCONDUCT

Key Performance Indicators

- **Investigation reports all follow standardised templates.**
- **Investigations are prompt and follow standardised procedures.**
- **HR documentation of disciplinary action.**

- 8.1 Following an allegation of abuse/violation of the Child Safeguarding Policy in the UK, an initial clarification will be co-ordinated by the UK CSO. The CSO will immediately assess the severity of the accusation in order to decide on the relevant authority to inform. The CSO will respond upon the advice of the relevant authority and will record all information, investigate all facts and assess the condition of the child within 48 hours.
- 8.2 Following an allegation of abuse/violation of the Child Safeguarding Policy overseas, an initial clarification will be coordinated by the Rwanda CSO who will record all information, investigate the facts and assess the condition of the child within 48 hours, in association with the CPFPP of the partner organisation concerned.
- 8.3 If an allegation of a violation of the policies, guidelines or practice of child safeguarding is made concerning a named individual from a verifiable source, and the accused is a staff member in the UK, trustee, intern, volunteer, consultant or Chance for Childhood contractor, they will be immediately suspended on full pay (staff member) or suspended from all activity/association with Chance for Childhood (trustee, intern, volunteer, consultant or contractor) pending the

outcome of an independent investigation. The decision to suspend must be taken by the CEO or a Chance for Childhood Trustee and is not open to challenge.

8.4 The investigation process will be confidential and information limited only to those who need to know (SMT, CSO). All parties involved will be required to keep all information relating to the case confidential and documentation will be filed securely.

8.5 Depending on the outcome of the independent investigation, if it comes to light that anyone associated with Chance for Childhood commits acts in relation to children – whether within or outside the context of Chance for Childhood’s work – which are criminal, grossly infringe children’s rights, or contravene the principles and standards contained in this document, Chance for Childhood will take immediate disciplinary action and any other action which may be appropriate to the circumstances.

8.6 The media will be dealt with by the CEO or the Board of Trustees depending on the individual circumstances of the incident in question.

9 MONITORING

Key Performance Indicators

- **Field based CPFs share quarterly child safeguarding reports with the Overseas CSO**
- **Annual targets are set to achieve greater child protection for child beneficiaries of Chance for Childhood’s programmes**

9.1 Child safeguarding incidents will be collated and analysed and fed into the monitoring of the CSP.

9.2 Each CFPF recommends three to five annual Child Safeguarding Targets to achieve at the end of each year. Targets can involve building staff capacity, reviewing CSP, creating child-friendly materials, and implementing robust case/data management systems.



Street-connected children learning in non-formal education classes in Kisumu, Kenya. Children have the right to learn in a safe environment. ©Chance for Childhood 2016

APPENDIX 1: CHANCE FOR CHILDHOOD BEHAVIOURAL CODE OF CONDUCT

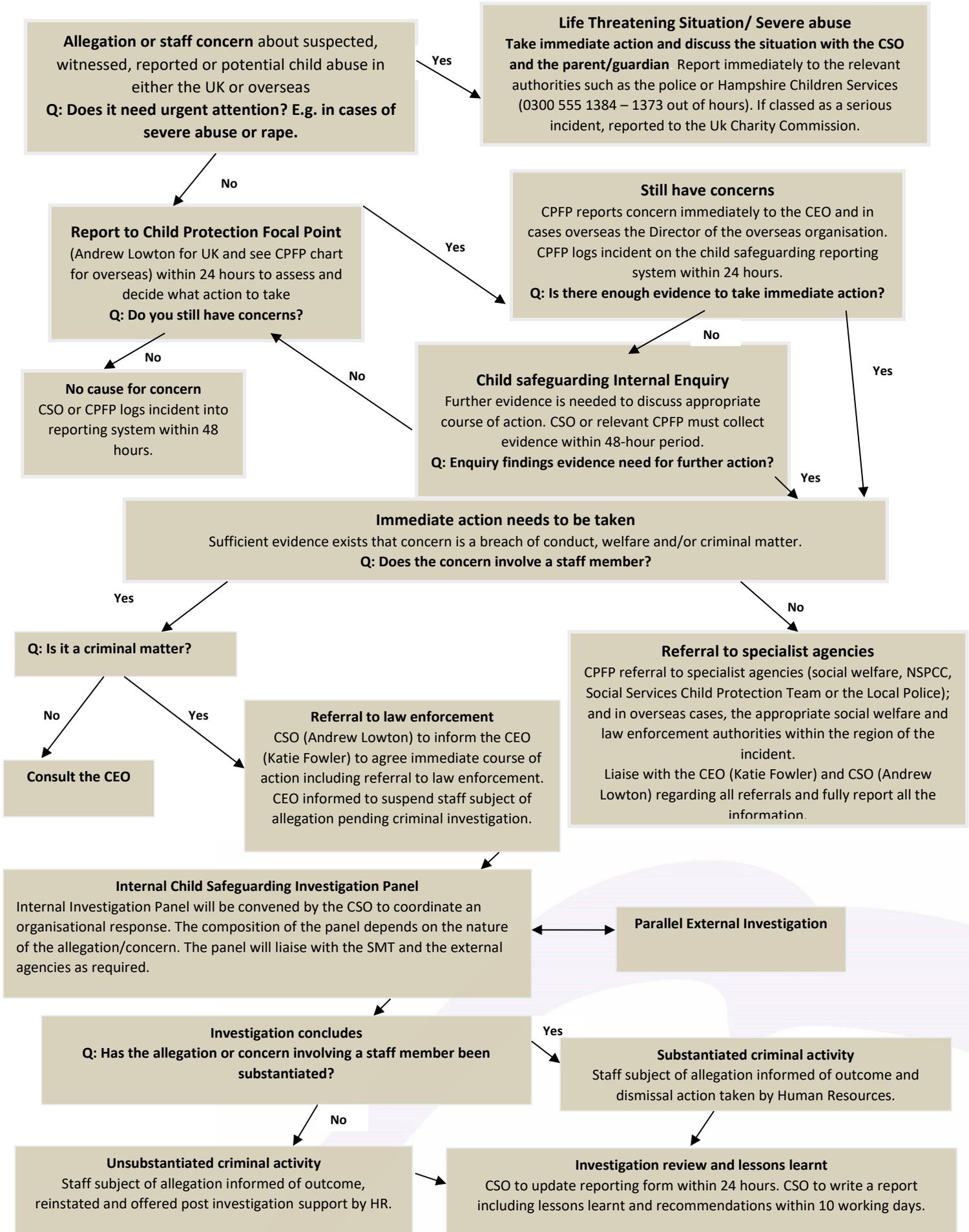
NEVER:

- Condone or participate in behaviour that is illegal or unsafe.
- Develop physical/sexual relationships with a child.
- Behave physically in a manner that is inappropriate or sexually provocative.
- Engage in or allow sexually provocative games with children to take place.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child could do for themselves, including dressing, bathing, and grooming.
- Pay for sexual services, of any kind, with anyone of any age.
- Never exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or indulge in any other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour.
- Use physical punishment or chastisement, however acceptable or moderate it may seem.
- Use any language intended to belittle or humiliate children and not to abuse children in any way (including not to engage in any sexual activity with anyone below the legal age of sexual consent).
- Be alone with a single child.
- Show favouritism or spend excessive amounts of time with one child.

TRY TO:

- Avoid placing yourself in a compromising or vulnerable position.
- Be accompanied by a second adult whenever possible.
- Meet with a child in a central, public location whenever possible.
- Immediately note the circumstances of any situation which occurs which may be subject to misinterpretation by a third party.
- Avoid doing anything that could be misinterpreted by a third party.

APPENDIX 2: CHILD SAFEGUARDING REPORTING FLOWCHART



APPENDIX 3: SAMPLE FORM FOR REPORTING OF SUSPECTED ABUSE

1. About you

Your name

Your job title

Workplace

Your relationship to the child

Contact details

2. About the child

Child's name

Child's gender

Child's address

Child's guardians

3. About your concern

Was the abuse observed or suspected?

Is this concern based on first-hand information divulged to you by someone else? In which case, by whom?

Did the child disclose abuse to you?

Date of the alleged incident

Time of the alleged incident

Location of the alleged incident

Name of alleged perpetrator

Job title

Nature of the allegation

Your personal observations (visible injuries, child's emotional state, etc.) [N.B Make a clear distinction between what is fact and what is opinion or hearsay]

Exactly what the child or other source said to you [if relevant] and how you responded to him or her: [Do not lead the child. Record actual details]

Any other information not previously covered:

Were there any other children/people involved in the alleged incident?

Action Taken:

Signed:

Date:

APPENDIX 4: STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHANCE FOR CHILDHOOD'S CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Applicable to all staff, contractors, trustees, visitors and volunteers

"I, _____ [name], have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in this Child Safeguarding Policy. I agree with the principles contained therein and accept the importance of implementing child safeguarding policies and practice while working with Chance for Childhood.

(Print name)

(Job title / role)

(Signature)

(Date)

"I, _____ [name], have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in this Child Safeguarding Policy. I agree with the principles contained therein and accept the importance of implementing child safeguarding policies and practice while working with or visiting Chance for Childhood.

(Print name)

(Job title / role)

(Signature)

(Date)

"I, _____ [name], have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in this Child Safeguarding Policy. I agree with the principles contained therein and accept the importance of implementing child safeguarding policies and practice while working with Chance for Childhood.

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