

Child Protection Policy

Purpose

This child protection policy is our statement of intent which demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding children from harm and makes clear to all in the organisation and those who come into contact with us what is required in relation to the protection of children and that child abuse in any form is unacceptable to the UK charity Owl Blue Children's Charity.

Statement

The UK charity Owl Blue Children's Charity takes seriously our responsibility to promote child safe practices and protect children from harm, abuse, neglect, poverty and exploitation in any form. In addition, we will take positive action to prevent child abusers from becoming involved with Owl Blue Children's Charity in any way and take stringent measures against any trustee, employee or volunteer who abuses a child.

Definitions Under This Child Protection Policy

A **"child"** is defined as any person under the age of 18 years.

"Child abuse" is defined as all forms of physical abuse, emotional ill treatment, harassment and bullying, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial or other exploitation of a child and includes any actions that result in actual or potential harm to a child.

Child abuse may be a deliberate act or it might be the failure to act to prevent harm.

Child abuse consists of anything which individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do, intentionally or unintentionally, which harms a child or damages their prospect of safe and healthy development into adulthood.

"Child protection", within the scope of this policy is defined as the responsibilities, measures and activities that Owl Blue Children's Charity undertake to safeguard children from both intentional and unintentional harm.

"Direct contact" being in the physical presence of a child or children in the context of Owl Blue Children's Charity's work.

“Indirect Contact” Having access to information on children in the context of Owl Blue Children’s Charity work, such as children’s names, locations, (addresses of individuals or projects), photographs and case studies.

“Partner” for the purpose of this policy an overseas organization which receives assistance from Owl Blue Children’s Charity or an overseas organisation involved in project work with children.

Scope of the child Protection Policy

This child protection policy applies to everyone working for or associated with Owl Blue Children’s Charity. It encompasses the whole of the UK charity Owl Blue Children’s Charity and includes without limitation employees, trustees, volunteers, staff/representatives of partner organisations and visitors who are brought into direct contact with children.

Owl Blue Children’s Charity Child Protection Policy

Trustees Staff and Volunteers

As a condition of working with our organisation all trustees, employees and volunteers are required to undergo the following:

- 1. Satisfactory clearance through an enhanced records bureau check or equivalent police check where the person is not in the UK**
- 2. Both acceptance of and commitment to our child protection policy and code of conduct for working with children.**
- 3. Signing a personal declaration stating any criminal convictions, including spent convictions. Anyone with convictions spent under the rehabilitation act of offenders 1974 can still be employed/volunteer using Owl Blue Children’s Charity committees’ discretion.**
- 4. Providing the name and contact information of two character references they have known for no less than two years, excluding family members.**

Management

The designated child protection officer is Stuart McDougall (Director)

Code of Conduct

All trustees, staff and volunteers of Owl Blue Children’s Charity who have direct contact with children either in the UK or overseas will be informed of and will be required to sign that they will abide by Owl Blue Children’s Charity’s code of conduct.

Communications About Children

Photos of children either on the website or in any publication by Owl Blue Children's Charity must only take place with the child's parents or guardians permission.

All publications and the web site of Owl Blue Children's Charity which contains images and text relating to children will not contain the following:

Manipulated or sensationalised text and/or images

Discriminatory and degrading language

Images where children are inappropriately clothed

The names of actual children (without permission)

Anything which might be used to identify the location of a child and put them at risk.

All information relating to children must be held securely and limited only to those trustees, members of staff and volunteers who need to know and must be treated as confidential.

Reporting Incidents

All witnessed, suspected or alleged violations of the child protection policy will be immediately reported to the designated child protection officer who will record and act on those in a confidential manner. The charity will take appropriate action to protect the child in question from further harm and others in the organisation during and after an incident or allegation.

Ramifications of Misconduct

Pending the outcome of an investigation we will immediately suspend the trustee, employee or volunteer who is alleged to have violated our child protection policy. We reserve the right to take disciplinary action against any of the above who have been proved guilty of an investigation; this may include reporting the incident to the police.

Owl Blue Children's Charity Code of Conduct for Working with Children

All trustees, staff and volunteers of the UK charity Owl Blue Children's Charity must sign and abide by this code of conduct.

Trustees, staff or volunteers must never:

Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children

Develop physical/sexual relationships with children

Develop relationships with children which could in anyway be deemed as exploitative or abusive.

Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse

Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.

Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative

Take a child/children with whom they are working away from the place without authorisation from the person in charge

Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves, to be alone with a child when they are bathing, showering etc. without permission

To take a child in their motor vehicle except where this is the most practical solution and have gained permission

Take photographs of a child without their parent's/guardians permission

Take a camera or mobile phone into any place where a children are not fully dressed

Condone or participate in behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive

Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children

Perpetrate any forms of abuse, discriminate against, show differential treatment or favour particular children to the exclusion of others

PLEASE NOTE: This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list, trustees, staff and volunteers must avoid actions or behaviour which constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour.

