



THE FALCONER TRUST

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Compiled and Written by Neil Starling February 2017

Adopted by the Trustees February 2017

For Review November 2018

Safeguarding Lead: Geoff Webb

The Falconer Trust

27 Swaffham Road, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 6LA

Tel: 01953 884468 email: mail@thefalconertrust.co.uk

www.thefalconertrust.org

Registered Charity No. 280864

The Falconer Trust's Child Protection Policy

The Falconer Trust is committed to a practice which protects children from harm. The best interests of the child are paramount and are the primary consideration in our decision-making. The Falconer Trust accepts and recognises our responsibility to develop awareness of issues relating to child protection, in accordance with the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Article 19:**

Parties shall protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.

Child abuse has been defined in the following terms:

Child abuse consists of anything that individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospect of safe and healthy development into adulthood.

Report of the UK National Commission of Inquiry into the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (1996)

The Falconer Trust rejects all forms of abuse and exploitation suffered by children, and seeks to ensure that, throughout our work, we commit to policies, practices and procedures that are consistent with the best interests and the protection of the child at all times.

The Falconer Trust believes that Trustees, employees, volunteers, and anyone undertaking any activities in the name of The Falconer Trust, must demonstrate behaviour that is not simply consistent with protocols and legislation, but also with an appropriate set of personal and professional standards. The guidelines and requirements set out in this document apply to the following situations:

- a) All occasions on which Trustees, employees, volunteers, and anyone undertaking any activities in the name of The Falconer Trust come into contact with children at the Falconer Children's Home, Kabulamema, Zambia, or any other overseas institution or organization for which The Falconer Trust provides support;
- b) All occasions on which Trustees, employees, volunteers, and anyone undertaking any activities in the name of The Falconer Trust come into contact with children in the context of Falconer Trust activities in the UK.

The Falconer Trust has developed policies and procedures to protect both children and Falconer Trust representatives. Establishing and maintaining a child-safe environment is a guiding principle in all our activities and management practices.

It is recognised that, during visits to the Falconer Children's Home, or any other institution to which we provide support, it is necessary to comply fully with Child Protection and Safeguarding policies which are in effect in those institutions.

Requirements Prior To Contact With Children

Statement of Commitment

Before commencing an activity or visit which results in coming into contact with children, within the context of the Falconer Trust, you must complete the Statement of Commitment to The Falconer Trust's Child Protection Policy, to indicate that you have read the Policy, and agree to abide by its Code Of Conduct. The Statement of Commitment can be found in Appendix 4.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

Before commencing an activity or visit which results in coming into contact with children, within the context of the Falconer Trust, you must have done one of the following:

- a) undergone a DBS check, or
- b) obtained a Basic Disclosure (you can apply for this online by visiting <https://www.mygov.scot/basic-disclosure/>), or
- c) obtained a similar police check from your country of origin if you are not a British national.

Code of Conduct

Following this Code of Conduct will enable you to comply with The Falconer Trust's Child Protection Policy. By setting standards for appropriate behaviour it also protects people who come into contact with children from unfounded accusations of improper conduct.

The Code of Conduct should be interpreted in a spirit of transparency and common sense, with the best interests of the child as the primary consideration.

One to one contact

Work in open spaces where you can be seen by other adults. Avoid bedrooms, bathrooms and rooms with the door shut.

Falconer Trust representatives should not take children away from their environment alone or without the permission of staff who have permanent responsibility for the child.

You should be accompanied by a second adult whenever possible.

Every effort should be made to ensure that all contact with children takes place in a public, visible location.

Physical contact

Children may initiate physical contact and it is important to be warm with them. However do be mindful of our guidelines of what is appropriate and inappropriate.

It is acceptable to return hugs but try to give shoulder-to-shoulder or 'A frame' hugs. Encourage other forms of physical contact, for example high-fives instead.

Be extra careful with pre-teens (10- 12 years) and teenagers as physical contact can be confusing. This includes pre-teens and teenagers who experience intellectual or physical disability.

Developing a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of 18, or any vulnerable adult, is forbidden.

Physical and sexual abuse is strictly forbidden. You must never hit or physically assault a child. Physical punishment of any form is forbidden.

Do not act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade the child.

Do not do things of a personal nature for a child or young person that they can do for themselves.

Attachments

While it can feel good to have a child very attached to you, remember that it can be distressing for that child when you leave. Avoid favouring a particular child. Share your attention fairly between all children, even children who might not be easy to interact with.

Support a child's attachments with their principal caregivers. Many of the children will already have an attachment figure. Please respect and support these attachments.

Do not make promises to the children that you may not be able to fulfil (e.g. that you will definitely come back and visit next year).

Create realistic and positive expectations

Children need to have a realistic and a positive understanding of what visitors are there to do. Visitors should be seen as a kind and helpful adult. They should also be seen as a positive role model. Although it might seem like the children do not speak very good English, you would be surprised by what they can pick up.

Providing sweets and gifts to the children is a nice gesture but care should be taken not to create unrealistic expectations. Children may think that visitors have sweets and gifts with them every day and will ask for these.

Sensitive topics

Be careful around the questions you ask children, as well as the content and materials used in activities. Be aware that some topics may be sensitive and inappropriate due to the children's personal situations. Examples include family life and dreams for the future. Do not ask sensitive questions, such as what happened to your parents to the children or in front of the children.

Do not use language or behaviour which demonstrates discrimination of race, culture, age, gender, disability, sexuality or political persuasion.

Confidentiality and Information Management

Suspected abuse: In the case of a child coming to you to report abuse you should:

- Let the child speak and listen carefully
- Take the child seriously
- Reassure the child it is ok to talk to you about this
- Record what is said
- Tell the Designated Person on the same day. The Designated Person is as defined in the next section 'What To Do If You Suspect That Abuse Or Neglect Has Taken Place'

You should not:

- Promise to keep it a secret
- Stop the child from speaking
- Force the child to recall what happened
- Ask leading or unnecessary questions
- Make assumptions
- Ask to see injuries requiring the removal of clothing
- Ridicule, reject or humiliate the child

If you witness or suspect abuse it is essential you inform the Designated Person immediately, on the same day.

What to Do If You Suspect That Abuse or Neglect Has Taken Place

The guidelines found in Appendix 1 suggest possible indicators that abuse or neglect may have taken place. It is not an exhaustive list – you may have other reasons for suspecting that a child has been abused. Neither is it a checklist, i.e. identifying a child who fulfils one or more of those criteria does not automatically indicate that abuse has taken place.

- 1) It is extremely important to observe the guidelines in the previous section 'Confidentiality and Information Management'.
- 2) Concerns should be reported immediately to the Designated Persons. Designated Persons are defined as follows:
 - a. Where suspected abuse has taken place at the Falconer Children's Home, the Director of the Home should be notified immediately, as well as the Chairman of the Falconer Trust. Where suspected abuse has taken place at another overseas institution, the Director of that institution should be notified immediately. Where there are suspicions of abuse within the context of activities within the UK, the Chairman of the Falconer Trust should be notified.
 - b. If concerns of abuse involve the Director of the Falconer Home or other overseas institution, the Chairman of the Falconer Trust should be notified immediately. If concerns of abuse involve the Chairman of the Falconer Trust, one of the Trustees of the Falconer Trust should be notified.
- 3) All matters should be treated with the utmost confidentiality, and should not be discussed with anyone other than the Designated Person(s) as defined above.
- 4) The person to whom a matter has been reported should keep detailed records, including all relevant information, such as dates, times, others involved, witnesses etc. All records should be signed and dated. All records should be kept in a secure location, accessible only to the Designated Person(s).
- 5) The Trustees have an obligation to report any suspicions, allegations or incidents of abuse to The Charity Commission. Details of how to do this are found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

Appendix 1: Recognising Signs of Abuse

It may be difficult to recognise signs of abuse in a child. You may become aware of potential warning signs but these should be observed and assessed carefully. Do not automatically assume that abuse is occurring. It may be that the situation is perfectly innocent. Do not, however, dismiss significant changes in behaviour, or any fears, worries or physical signs a child may be exhibiting. You are not required to be an investigator – rather, you should report any concerns you have to an appropriate adult.

The following may help in recognising when abuse may be occurring.

1. Possible Signs of Physical Abuse

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Being aggressive towards others
- Being overly passive and compliant
- Running away

2. Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development is delayed
- Highly anxious
- Showing delayed speech or sudden speech disorder
- Fear of new situations
- Low self-esteem
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing

3. Possible signs of Neglect

- Frequent hunger
- Very poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Inappropriate clothing

- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationships
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug or alcohol abuse

Please be aware that signs of neglect can be the norm when working with children in Zambia or other developing countries.

4. Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Age inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Physical indicators (general, and in genital and anal areas)
- Behavioural indicators (general and sexual) which must be interpreted with regard to the individual child's level of functioning and development stage

Appendix 2: Possible Signs of Concern Regarding Adult Behaviour

- A person in whose presence a child becomes unusually distressed or agitated
- An adult who asks a child to lie about anything – especially if it is about meeting that child
- Any adult who asks you to lie about a situation involving a child – particularly if that child looks distressed
- Any person who persistently fails to follow the appropriate Code of Conduct and/or behavioural protocols, particularly if their reasons are evasive
- Private, unsupervised meetings between an adult and a child

Appendix 3: Links to Useful Guides for Charities

Safeguarding Children and Young People

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people/safeguarding-children-and-young-people>

Charities: How To Protect Vulnerable Groups Including Children

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charities-how-to-protect-vulnerable-groups-including-children>

Charities: How To Manage Risks When Working Internationally

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charities-how-to-manage-risks-when-working-internationally>

Protecting staff and beneficiaries and managing risk

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140505102719/http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/detailed-guidance/protecting-your-charity/charities-working-internationally/protecting-staff-and-beneficiaries-and-managing-risk/>

Appendix 4: Statement of Commitment

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

To The Falconer Trust's Child Protection Policy

I, _____ [name], have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in this Child Protection Policy. I agree with the principles contained herein and accept the importance of implementing child protection policies and practices while representing The Falconer Trust.

(Signature)

(Print name)

_____/_____/_____
(Date)