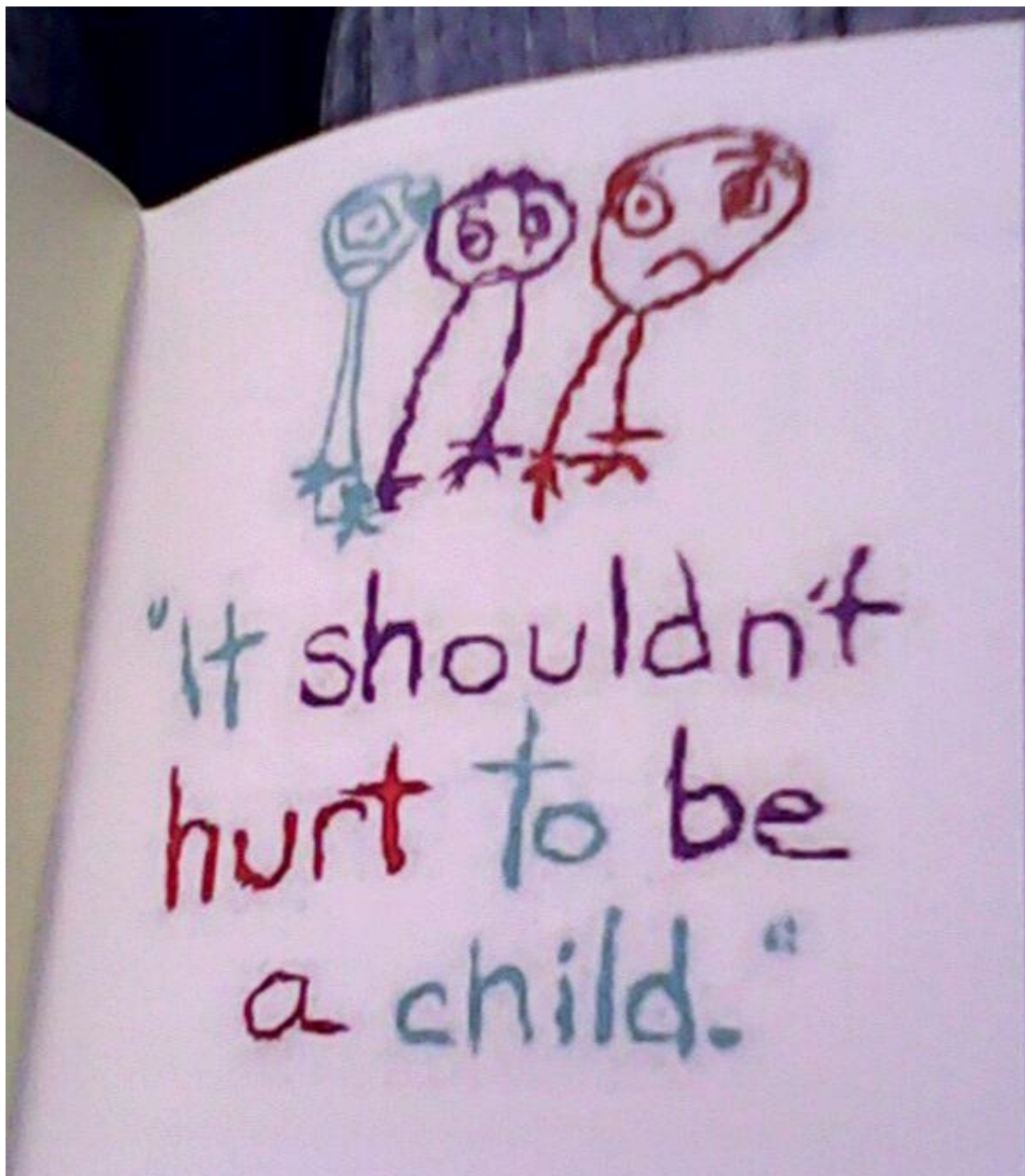




MAVAMBO ORPHAN CARE

CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION POLICY



1. PREAMBLE

Mavambo Orphan Care (MOC) believes that it is unacceptable and intolerable for a child to experience abuse of any kind. MOC therefore, shall ensure that every child is protected from all forms of abuse and exploitation.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy serves to provide guidance and procedures in the safeguarding and protection of children by MOC and all its stakeholders.

MOC is committed to the following:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children, regardless of his/her age, culture, ability, gender, language, race, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to perform activities in a fun and safe environment
- taking all reasonable steps to safeguard and protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- all MOC employees who work with children will be recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility, and will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and child safeguarding and protection procedures
- working in partnership with parents/caregivers and children is essential for the safeguarding and protection of children

3. SCOPE

This policy is a corporate and binding document, and therefore applies to:

- All trustees
- All MOC staff, graduate trainees and interns
- All MOC volunteers, primary caregivers and secondary caregivers
- All partnership arrangements
- All contractors, e.g. consultants, associates, researchers, writers, suppliers

Partnership agreements shall abide by MOC's policy and if they do not have their own, they shall be assisted to develop the Child Safeguarding Policy.

All project personnel shall undergo police clearance, check and sign a declaration form declaring ongoing or previous criminal offences. The form shall be kept in a safe place in the individual's file in the Institutional Director's office.

4. DEFINITION OF TERMS

In this policy, **Child Safeguarding** means “the responsibility the MOC have to make sure its staff, operations, and programs do no harm to children, that is they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse and that any concerns MOC has about children’s safety within the communities in which it works, are reported to the appropriate authorities”. **Child Protection** refers to measures and structures aimed at preventing and responding to abuse affecting children.

In this policy, a **child** is any human being who is below the age of 18 years.

CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm, it commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

There are four main types of abuse: Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse, Neglect and Emotional Abuse. MOC recognise the following as definitions of abuse:

1) SEXUAL ABUSE.

The actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex), incest or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet or mobile phones). Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by adult males, females and children against other children.

2) PHYSICAL ABUSE.

The actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/caregiver fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

3) NEGLECT.

The persistent or severe neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to

carry out important aspects of care, resulting in a significant impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may involve failure to provide adequate food and clothing, exclusion from home or abandonment; failure to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision- including the use of inadequate care-givers; and failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional, social and educational needs.

4) EMOTIONAL ABUSE.

The actual, or likely adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child due to, or caused by the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, and may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another e.g. where there is domestic violence and abuse;
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger;
- Exploiting and corrupting children.

NB. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

5. SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

MOC understands that even for the most experienced personnel in child care and protection, identifying abuse is not an easy task. Most people are not experts in recognising abuse in children, but signs that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- the young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them
- another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person
- unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper

- inappropriate sexual awareness
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- distrust of adult's, particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- difficulty in making friends
- being prevented from socialising with others
- displaying variations in eating patterns including over eating or loss of appetite
- losing weight for no apparent reason
- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt

Signs of bullying include:

- behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go training or competitions
- an unexplained drop off in performance
- physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g. on food, alcohol or cigarettes
- a shortage of money or frequents loss of possessions

The above list is not exhaustive, also the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place. It is **NOT** the responsibility of those working in MOC to decide that child abuse is occurring. It **IS** their responsibility to act on any concerns. This policy recognise that types of risk may vary according to the child and that the means of addressing risks may also vary.

The **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** (UNCRC) underpins all of MOC's work. Our work is driven by a commitment to making a reality the UNCRC as well as the provisions of the **African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child** and the **Children's Act (5:06)**

6. RISK ASSESSMENT AND SAFE RECRUITMENT

A risk assessment of all MOC's operations, programmes and project activities, will be conducted. Risk mitigation strategies will be developed, which minimise the risk to children and incorporated into the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes, operations and activities which involve or impact upon children.

MOC will ensure that it applies the highest standards in its recruitment and vetting process across the organisation. Candidates will be checked for their suitability for working with children and their understanding of child safeguarding. A child safeguarding clause will be incorporated in all job adverts the organisation will post so as to attract suitable candidates.

7. DEALING WITH DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE AND PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CONCERNS

If a child or young person tells a member of staff about possible abuse:

- 1) Listen carefully and stay calm.
- 2) Do not interview the child, but question normally and without pressure, in order to be sure that he/she understands the child's story.
- 3) Do not coerce the child, e.g. put words into the child's mouth.
- 4) Reassure the child that by telling you, they have done the right thing.
- 5) Inform the child that the information shall be passed on to the relevant authority and disclose to whom the matter will be reported.
- 6) Note the relevant information carefully.
- 7) Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what the child said, did and the questions asked etc.
- 8) Staff shall not investigate concerns or allegations themselves, but shall report them immediately to the Designated Person.

7.1 REPORTING FLOWCHART

NB: The Child Safeguarding Officer (CSO) will be responsible for handing allegations and ensure child safeguarding work is effectively undertaken.

The reporting form will be kept in file, in a lockable cabinet, by the CSO and upon a child safeguarding concerns; it will be filled in within the designated timeframes.

In the event of a child safeguarding concern, the district level Department of Social Welfare (DSS), Police Victim Friendly Unit (VFU) and the local medical institution will be contacted for support and case management.

8. SAFE COMMUNICATION

- 1) Staff members shall not take images of children for personal use, or any other use that could be undermining to the child. Consent shall be sought from management or parents/caregivers before images of children are taken or used. This information shall be reported to the Child Safeguarding Officer/Institutional Director and complete report within 24 hours.
- 2) Staff members shall not use the organization's name, logo, or any other material to create or distribute to children any inappropriate material.
- 3) Staff members shall avoid where possible, taking individual children's photos and opt for group photos.
- 4) Where an external photographer has been contracted for documentation or any other purpose, staff members shall assess their eligibility to participate in such activities.

REPORT TO THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING OFFICER/INSTITUTIONAL DIRECTOR AND COMPLETE REPORT WITHIN 24 HOURS

ALL FACTORS AND INFORMATION CONSIDERED BY THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

9. CODE OF CONDUCT

- 1) No child shall be discriminated on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity and other factors. All children shall have the opportunity to participate or benefit fully in MOC activities.

CONCERNS ALLAYED

CONCERNS ONGOING

- 2) Children shall be accompanied by an adult (staff member or appointed guide) at all times when participating in MOC activities. Parental consent shall be obtained for all trips.

NO ACTION

UNCERTAIN? Consult with Department of Social Services. Record action and decision taken

Refer to DSS/ Police Victim Friendly Unit. Put in writing within 48 hours. Record Action and decision taken

The concern does not constitute a safeguarding concern. Record decision made and reason for it

- 4) Children shall not be subjected to any type of work that might be termed, defined, viewed or interpreted as a form of child labour. Such cases include, carrying heavy loads or any work that is beyond their capacities.

CSO to follow up after 3 working days if received no feedback on action taken by DSS/VFU/ Medical institution

- 5) No staff member shall engage in any relationship outside of working relationship with a minor (persons under the age of 18) in whatever circumstances (be it consent or mistaken belief) since such a relationship shall be based on inherently unequal power dynamics.
- 6) Staff and other stakeholders shall not develop relationships with children that could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of Child Safeguarding work.
- 7) Staff and other stakeholders shall not hit or physically assault children. Bullying in whatever form is not tolerated amongst the children.

- 8) No one shall exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual or any other favours that are humiliating, degrading and exploitative.
- 9) No staff member shall accept bribes or significant gifts from beneficiaries/children and their families and other people concerned such as suppliers, which have been offered as a result of them benefiting from the project.
- 10) Staff members and others shall avoid actions or behaviour that may be construed as poor practice or potentially abusive.
- 11) Any Staff Member shall not use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate or offensive to children.
- 12) Any member of the Staff shall not do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves.
- 13) Staff Members shall not act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.
- 14) MOC shall not purchase or get services from any individual/organisation that exploits children or engages in child labour.

10. REPORTING AND RESPONDING FRAMEWORK

- 1) Where a staff member develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, s/he shall report such concerns to the **Child Safeguarding Officer Mrs Beaula Mazonde (0774 542 767) or bruparanganda@mavambotrust.org.zw** Reports can also be channelled to **Dr Mashava** who is one of Mavambo's Board members. She can be contacted on **(0712 203 838)** or mashavad@mweb.co.zw The duties of the Child Protection Officer shall include ensuring that any immediate protection and health needs of the victim are addressed and further reporting within the organisation to the Institutional Director.
- 2) Staff members can whistle blow on any child protection issue if they are not comfortable following the standard reporting procedure either to the Institutional Director or Board of Trustees.
- 3) MOC shall take seriously any concerns raised and take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are subject of any concerns. Initial response shall include opening a case file, where all the essential details shall be recorded. Internal and external investigations shall then be conducted with immediate effect. A report of the case shall be compiled by the Child Safeguarding Officer and submitted to the Institutional Director.

- 4) MOC shall ensure that it acts appropriately and effectively in instigating or cooperating with any subsequent process of investigating.
- 5) MOC is guided by the Principle of Best Interest of the Child and shall listen to, and take seriously the views and wishes of children.
- 6) Any person accused of committing an offence shall have the right to be heard before an impartial Tribunal.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 1) MOC shall ensure that any records made in relation to a referral in Clause 7 are kept confidentially and in a secure place.
- 2) Information in relation to child protection concerns shall be shared on a “need to know” basis. Nevertheless, the sharing of information is important to child protection and, therefore, the issue of confidentiality is secondary to a child’s need for protection.

12. MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

Management has responsibilities for introducing, safeguarding and operating the policy. Their responsibilities include:

- 1) Promoting good practice and challenging poor practice.
- 2) Encouraging an open culture for all.
- 3) Ensuring beneficiaries, volunteers, interns and staff receive awareness training on the policy. Refresher trainings shall be held annually, as well as when need arises. New staff, interns and volunteers shall receive training within the first month of recruitment.
- 4) Ensuring training records are compiled for monitoring.
- 5) Dealing with all reported concerns.
- 6) Ensuring that child rights and child protection are mainstreamed in all programmes.

MOC shall work with other partners in the community and beyond to ensure children are protected. A Service Directory shall always be in place and updated regularly to ensure better support to, and protection of children.

NB: These guidelines constitute acts of gross misconduct and shall result in disciplinary action that may lead to dismissal, termination of services, and termination of MOC membership, legal action, and/or criminal investigation and prosecution.

13. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

All stakeholders shall make the following commitment:

I SHALL:

- 1) work actively to protect children by carrying out my special responsibility for children to whom MOC has a duty of care, and creating a safe environment for children to prevent their physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect.
- 2) treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status;
- 3) not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
- 4) not engage a child in any form of unlawful sexual activity or acts, including paying for sexual services or acts;
- 5) ensure wherever possible, that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children;
- 6) not spend time alone with children who are unrelated to me outside work hours unless I live and work in the same community and come together with those children in the context of my family, social and community life. In this situation, I shall continue to be a positive role model and mentor for those children and not discuss private/confidential information concerning them;
- 7) use any computers, mobile phones, video and digital cameras or social media appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or to access child exploitation material through any medium.
- 8) not use physical punishment on children;
- 9) not hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury;
- 10) comply with all relevant local legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour;
- 11) Be respectful of children's rights, background, culture and beliefs as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 12) Conduct myself in a manner consistent with my position as a positive role model to children and as a representative of MOC.
- 13) Respect the confidentiality of a child's personal information so that their dignity and safety is not compromised.

- 14) **Not** act in a way that breaches MOC’s Child Safeguarding Policy or in any way places children at risk of harm.
- 15) **not** withhold information about any current criminal convictions, charges or civil proceedings to child abuse, either when I join MOC or arising during the time of employment.

14. I further agree that, while working with MOC or engaged in MOC activities, and when photographing or filming a child or using children’s images for work-related purposes, I shall:

- 1) before photographing or filming a child, assess and comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images;
- 2) before photographing or filming a child, obtain informed consent from the child and a parent or guardian of the child (where applicable), and wherever possible, I shall use the MOC policy, together with a verbal briefing from the Child Safeguarding Officer about where and how the photograph or film will be used;
- 3) ensure photographs, films, videos present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not posed in ways that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
- 4) ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts; and
- 5) ensure any information provided do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.

15. POLICY INTERPRETATION

The policy interpretation shall be done by the Child Safeguarding Officer.

16. POLICY REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed at least once annually. Children shall participate in the review and their views taken on board. **Date of last review 25/07/19**

I have read and understood the provisions of this policy and code of conduct, and agree to abide by it at all times to protect the children I may come into contact with through my work for or in association with MOC.

Name:

Signature:

Date: