EveryChild aims to safeguard children from abuse and exploitation in all that we do, in line with article 19 of the UNCRC.

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Ruth Steele, Child Policy Manager for EveryChild, has written this document in consultation with Jenny Myers, Senior Consultant with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC). These Child Protection Policy and Procedure materials were drawn up specifically for EveryChild with the assistance and advice of the NSPCC and conform to current child protection legislation and guidance. The NSPCC cannot accept responsibility for the implementation and application of the procedures.

EVERY CHILD

EVERY CHILD PROTECTION POLICY, PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

All children have a right to protection from abuse, violence and exploitation. EveryChild works to create a safe environment for children who benefit from EveryChild programmes.

This mandatory policy is approved and endorsed by the Board of Trustees and makes clear EveryChild’s position on child protection. It applies to all staff, trustees, and volunteers in EveryChild offices, including the London and other representative offices.

It is essential that all staff, trustees, volunteers, partners, international organisations, beneficiaries, donors and the general public are aware of its central messages and any duties/responsibilities it places on them.

It will be publicised and promoted in EveryChild material to relevant audiences.

All EveryChild representative offices will be expected to translate this policy into local languages and adapt the policy and procedures to ensure it is made relevant to their work. Partners will be encouraged to develop a child protection policy and procedures. Future partnership agreements will include such a policy as part of the agreement.

Children and young people need protection and safeguarding for many reasons. They may need protection from the effects of poverty, disadvantage, exclusion and violence. But in addition to these economic, social, and
political problems affecting large numbers of children, individual children may also be at risk from specific forms of abuse by adults or other children.

In this policy EveryChild is concerned with specific incidents of maltreatment against a child who is in contact with an EveryChild representative.

There are additional child protection concerns in emergencies and disasters, when families are under extreme stress. It is EveryChild’s policy not to respond to emergencies unless specific criteria apply. However if EveryChild intervenes, it agrees that emergency projects must follow international codes to protect children at risk.

It is not EveryChild’s task to decide whether a child has been abused. EveryChild’s task is to refer concerns to the correct authorities, if they exist. If they do not, organisations dealing with children’s rights need to be contacted.

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or whenever appropriate.

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2 In ‘Increasing the Impact, EveryChild’s Strategic Plan: 2003-2007’, child protection is one of three cross-cutting themes.
3 These are independent non-governmental organisation partners, registered locally, with their own board, national identity, strategy, and name.
4 The term ‘children’ will be used to refer to those individuals who are under 18 years of age as recognised in the UNCRC.
5 ‘Representative’ means any person presenting themselves to a child because of their relationship with EveryChild. This includes staff, volunteers, board members, consultants and supporters.
EveryChild's Vision is a world where every child has the right to grow up and develop to their full potential in a secure, safe, family environment, free from poverty and exploitation.

EveryChild's Mission is to empower families, communities and their governments to provide the best environment for children to thrive and develop. In line with the UNCRC, we work to ensure that all children, particularly those that are most marginalised and vulnerable, are empowered to realise their rights through all our work. In particular in line with Article 19 of the UNCRC, EveryChild's policy states that all children have a right to protection:

“…from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has the care of the child.”

Part Three: What is abuse and neglect?

Defining child abuse is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, institution or community setting, by those known and trusted to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.
In England and Wales there are four categories of abuse in general use:

**Physical injury**: may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child including fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, ill health to a child.

**Neglect**: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

**Emotional abuse**: persistent or emotional ill treatment of a child that adversely affects their development. May involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, and inadequate, there only to meet the needs of another; or where inappropriate expectations are imposed upon them. In addition it includes children who are regularly frightened, exploited or corrupted.

**Sexual abuse**: involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. This may also include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

6 These definitions from England and Wales apply only as a guide when considered for global applications.
Many beneficiaries of EveryChild are marginalised and some vulnerable children are particularly open to abuse such as disabled children, those from minority ethnic groups, street children, refugee and asylum seeking children and those who live with families where there are alcohol or drug problems, mental health or domestic violence.

In countries where EveryChild works there may be different definitions and understandings about what constitutes child abuse. In-country guidelines and procedures should be relevant and socially sensitive, while not undermining the principle that children’s rights must be protected.

EveryChild’s actions must represent the best interests of the child, as defined by the UNCRC. They cannot be merely a reflection of local behaviour, if that behaviour permits abuse.

Who Abuses
Most children are loved and cherished by parents, carers and communities. Similarly most people working with children recognise they are in a special position with respect to the influence and power they wield. But EveryChild recognises it needs to be vigilant since those who want to abuse and harm children exist in all societies, cultures and organisations.

International children’s organisations, such as EveryChild, provide possibilities for befriending and establishing relationships with vulnerable children and must therefore be vigilant to the possibility that a small minority of individuals may abuse their position to gain access to children.
EveryChild has projects where individual children are sponsored. The substantial majority of child sponsors are genuine and have no ulterior motives in supporting projects that help children they sponsor.

It is EveryChild’s duty to protect children from any sponsor who may want to misuse the sponsorship system. The protection applies to sponsors’ visits to projects and to defining what is appropriate for sponsors in the areas of behaviour, correspondence, gifts and visual information.

Children are also vulnerable to abuse by other children.

Part Four: Procedures

The responsibility for managing this policy lies with the Children’s Policy Manager and the Personnel Administrator, supported by the Chief Executive. All serious concerns will be referred to these staff in London.

Every representative office will appoint designated person(s) who will have responsibility for the implementation of the child protection guidelines and procedures in their programme and office(s).

The contact goes via designated person(s) in the field, to the managers in London. Or it may go directly to the managers in London, according to the flow chart. Any final decision lies with the EveryChild Senior Management Team and the Chief Executive.
All information relating to any concerns about abuse by EveryChild staff, trustees and volunteers must be sent and/or copied to the London managers so that all incidents, minor or major are recorded. This information will be kept securely and confidentiality will be respected. Confidentiality will only be breached if and when it is in the best interests of a child.

A simple Referral Form, available in local languages in country programmes, will enable referral to the managers in London. The form will be discussed with beneficiaries (including children and their parents/carers). This will be a participative exercise in line with EveryChild's child rights based approach. The form must be posted, emailed or faxed to the London Managers within 12 hours of any concern being raised.

Any serious concerns about a child’s welfare in a country programme where no specific allegation is made will be referred to the Country Programmes Director who will communicate with the Regional Programmes Manager. This applies to country programmes where project
workers may come across families where children are being maltreated.

In the UK all concerns should be referred to local social services/police department.

The NSPCC Child Protection Helpline (0808 800 5000) can also be called in situations where some external advice or guidance is needed.

In other countries, referrals will depend on existing legislation. Each representative office needs to investigate the situation in their country. The best interests of the child should always be the overriding concern.

Details of contacts for the police and local social services departments will be available in the London office and kept by the managers. Similar locally relevant information will be available in the field.

EveryChild aims to create a safe organisation for children, but also to keep child protection concerns proportionate and to guard against the growth and promotion of over-zealous attitudes.

The best interests of the child are of paramount concern and any urgent medical need should be addressed as a priority.

Explaining the policy and procedures will form part of the induction process for new staff, trustees or volunteers in London and in the field.
Recruitment
EveryChild will strive to ensure that it applies the highest standards in its recruitment and vetting policies as laid out in the EveryChild Staff Handbook.

In representative offices similar checks will exist in the child protection guidelines and procedures where local staff are employed according to labour and employment codes of each country. Candidates will be checked for their suitability for working with children and their understanding of child protection.

Safeguarding checks, such as disclosure of previous convictions or police checks (if disclosure is unavailable), forms an important part of this recruitment policy. If police checks are impossible then other checks must be put into practice and noted. This to include checking evidence of identity, authenticity of qualifications, self-declaration about previous convictions and taking up at least two references.

Disclosure or police checks will also be completed when visitors (not previously checked) want to see children’s projects in the field or are contracted to work there10.

Duty of Care
EveryChild takes its duty of care very seriously and all programmes, including child sponsorship projects, must comply with rules and regulations11.

Transporting children and taking them away to summer...
camps or other activities will be covered by each country's child protection guidelines. This will vary according to regulations in each country. Where there is no guidance, the country programme should have its own policy that best safeguards children.

Written material and visual images used by EveryChild or sponsors need to be checked as being appropriate and not denigrating for any child. Photographs, films of children and websites, must show respect for children, be in their best interest and conform to EveryChild's policy on 'Use of Visual Images'.

Part Six: Codes of practice and behaviour

EveryChild's codes, principles, standards and procedures aim to help build a safe organisation. Through defining what is and is not acceptable behaviour, good practice can be promoted and opportunities for abuse minimised (see EveryChild Staff Handbook).

Programmes that implement projects for children, families and communities, including child sponsorship projects, need to be implemented in a safe environment. EveryChild's Staff Handbook includes information on Code of Conduct including whistle blowing, disciplinary procedures, grievance procedure, harassment policy, HIV/AIDS and equal opportunities.

EveryChild representative offices are to include similar
codes in their child protection guidelines including codes on the behaviour of adults towards children and of children towards other children, including disabled children where relevant.

In addition, EveryChild adheres to the Core Principles of the United Nation’s Task Force on Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises 2002. These apply to implementing projects for children, families and communities and apply irrespective of whether there is an emergency situation or not.

- Sexual exploitation and abuse by project workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
- Sexual activity with children is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. A mistaken belief about a child’s age is not a defence.
- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour are prohibited.
- Sexual relationships between project workers and beneficiaries are strongly discouraged since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships would undermine the integrity of work to help vulnerable and excluded children.
- Where a project worker develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a colleague, whether in the same organisation or not, s/he must report such concerns in accordance with the system and procedures in place.
EveryChild beneficiaries, including children, need to be aware of this policy and of their right to be protected from abuse.

Information will be displayed in field offices presented in an appropriate format and in the local language so that children will understand.

All parties are to be informed that they can communicate their child protection concerns.

Staff will be trained so they understand why it is necessary to protect children. This will help them develop the necessary skills.

A basic level of child protection training should take place throughout the organisation.

Training will be planned for relevant staff and budgets need to be planned to include the cost. Social work technical advisers, local NGOs or local trainers could be additional training resources for country programmes.

Training should be requested in particular areas that present difficulties.
Part Nine: Implementation and monitoring

The policy will be monitored and evaluated to check that all safeguards are in place and that the policy is being properly implemented.

The policy is to be evaluated after three years implementation, or whenever appropriate.

Processes are to be put in place by the Country Programme Directors so that all major stakeholders, including children, families and communities will be consulted as part of an evaluation.

All complaints received are be recorded and kept safely. Confidentiality will be respected in all circumstances except where necessary to protect the best interests of a child.

Part Ten: Support

Child abuse is a difficult and emotional subject for the child victim and for the staff dealing with the issue. EveryChild will support staff who disclose abuse, refer concerns or are involved when an incident has happened (see: 'Whistle Blowing' in Staff Handbook).

London-based Programmes staff will refer people on to other organisations for counselling or treatment. The same system of referrals would take place in the field when necessary by the designated person(s) and Country Programme Directors.
Referral Form (continued)

About YOUR CONCERN

Are you reporting your own concerns or passing on those of somebody else? Give details.

Brief description of what has prompted the concerns (include dates and times of any specific incidents):

Observations made by you: Physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?

Have you spoken to the child? If so what was said?

Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so give details.

Have you consulted an external agency or reported this to anyone else? Give details (name of person, name of organisation, date and time).

Does the child require medical attention?

Signature    Date
Referral Form

About YOU

Your name and email address:

________________________________________________________________________

Your relationship to EveryChild:

________________________________________________________________________

Your relationship to the child concerned - if relevant:

________________________________________________________________________

About THE CHILD/CHILDREN

Name of child: ____________________________________________________________

Age and date of birth of child: _____________________________________________

Who does the child live with? ____________________________________________

Address/place of residence (and telephone no. if available):

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

FORM CONTINUES ON REVERSE
Child protection policy, procedures and guidance