



SAFEGUARDING

Statement

Stay At School works to advance the education of children and young people in Solu Khumbu and wider Nepal by providing and developing infrastructure, facilities, and other educational services to improve the attendance, attainment and well-being of pupils; enabling them to achieve their fullest potential and create opportunity for themselves and others.

We are committed to safeguarding and child protection and believe that it requires everyone to take responsibility. We recognise that the care, protection and welfare of children is paramount and that all children have the right to be protected from all types of harm. We have a fundamental duty of care towards all children where our programmes and operations facilitate contact with children or have an impact on children.

We aim to achieve this through compliance with UK child protection laws and the relevant laws where we operate and by adhering to Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989.

This policy applies to Trustees, paid staff and volunteers of Stay At School. Stay At School will also require its partner organisation in Nepal, Stay At School Nepal ["SSN"] to adopt this policy and report any breaches to UK Trustees according to the established reporting structure.

Introduction

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Article 19 states:

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

Trustees, staff, volunteers and partners of Stay At School have a common commitment to the prevention of child abuse and the protection of children. The abuse and exploitation of children happens in all countries and societies across the world.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Stay At School. Its purpose is:

- To protect children and young people who receive Stay At School services; and,
- To provide all staff, including the Board of Trustees, paid staff, volunteers, students or anyone working on behalf of Stay At School together with SSN [hereafter referred to as "staff and partners"], with the overarching principles and common values that guide our approach to safeguarding and children protection.



Stay At School believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that protects them. This policy describes the steps that will be taken in meeting our commitment to protect children.

Definitions

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children wherever possible. In contrast, child protection is about responding to circumstances that arise.

Abuse is a selfish act of oppression and injustice, exploitation and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm. Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture.

It can take many forms, including the following:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Bullying
- Neglect
- Financial (or material) abuse

Definition of a child - A child is under the age of 18 (as defined in the United Nations convention on the Rights of a Child).

Legislative framework

Stay At School acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and statutory requirements and guidelines.

Our values, principles and beliefs

We recognise that:

- All child abuse involves the abuse of children's rights.
- All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation.



- The situation of all children must be improved through promotion of their rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This includes the right to freedom from abuse and exploitation.
- Child abuse is never acceptable
- We have a commitment to protecting children with/for whom we work
- When we work through partners, they have a responsibility to meet minimum standards of protection for children in their programmes.

Our commitments

We will seek to keep children and young people safe through:

Awareness	We will ensure that all staff and others are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children.
Prevention	We will ensure, through awareness and good practice, that staff and others minimise the risks to children.
Reporting	We will ensure that staff and others are clear what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children.
Responding	We will ensure that action is taken to support and protect children where concerns arise regarding possible abuse.

To meet our commitments, Stay At School staff and partners will ensure that they:

- take seriously any concerns raised;
- take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns;
- support children, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns;
- act appropriately and effectively in instigating or co-operating with any subsequent process of investigation;
- are guided through the child protection process by the principle of ‘best interests of the child;’
- listen to and takes seriously the views and wishes of children; and,
- work in partnership with parents/carers and/or other professionals to ensure the protection of children.

This policy will be widely promoted and adherence to it is mandatory for everyone involved with Stay At School. Failure to comply with the policy will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation. In addition:



- All staff and partners will abide by the safeguarding policy;
- All staff and partners will have access to a copy of the safeguarding policy;
- Recruitment procedures will include checks on suitability for working with young people;
- Induction will include briefing on safeguarding and child protection issues;
- Wherever possible, all workplaces will display contact details for reporting possible child abuse to the relevant local contact, and every member of staff can report concerns to Stay At School's UK Office via info@stayatschool.org
- Training, learning opportunities and support will be provided by Stay At School management team as appropriate to ensure commitments are met.

Staff and partners must never:

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children;
- Develop physical/sexual relationships with children;
- Develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed 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;
- Have a child/children with whom they are working to stay overnight at their home or other lodging unsupervised;
- Sleep in a bed with a child with whom they are working;
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves;
- Condone or participate in behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive;
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse; and,
- Discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.

This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The principle is that staff should avoid actions or behaviour which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour.

It is important for all staff and partners in contact with children to:

- Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these;
- Plan and organise the work and workplace so as to minimise risks;
- As far as possible, be visible in working with children;



- Ensure that a culture of openness exists to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed;
- Ensure that a sense of accountability exists amongst staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged;
- Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns; and,
- Empower children – discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem.

We will provide adequate and appropriate resources to implement this policy and will ensure it is communicated and understood.

Review

These policies and procedures will be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with changes in law and equality and diversity legislation.

Adopted: February 2018

To be reviewed: January 2019