



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

May 2026

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1. Introduction

SeeKenya was founded in 2010 and became a registered charity in 2013 and is led by a board of trustees. Its aim is to provide specialist treatment and eye care services to marginalised communities within Kenya. The charity is committed to serving God by sending out teams of volunteers and leaders at least twice a year to set up clinics, carry out eye tests, administer basic treatment and provide glasses to every person who attends as necessary.

2. Our Commitment

We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.”

SeeKenya therefore adopts the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance and expects every person who agrees to work for the charity to do the same. This policy and guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by thirtyone.eight (charity who help with safeguarding issues). We also believe that by protecting those who are vulnerable we honour God and his commands and follow in the example of Jesus. Proverbs 31:8 “Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.”

3. Aims of Policy

SeeKenya aims to make sure that everyone who is involved in any short-term team is aware of safeguarding issues, regardless of the degree of contact they may have with children and adults with additional care and support needs. Well informed teams are likely to be more effective in creating and maintaining a safe environment for children and adults at risk as we plan and carry out our work and other activities. We aim to:

- ✓ Protect all children and adults at risk with whom any short-term teams will work or come into contact.
- ✓ Protect all **SeeKenya** staff, volunteers and representatives.
- ✓ Make clear expectations of behaviour and good practice from any persons working with such children and adults.
- ✓ Explain what action should be taken if abuse is suspected or an allegation is made.

4. Areas of Policy

This policy sets our agreed guidelines in the following areas:

- Definitions of abuse, including issues relating to child protection internationally
- Safer Recruitment
- Code of conduct
- Allegations of abuse, including those made against a member of the host church in Kenya or a team leader
 - What you should do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred or is likely to occur

5. Definitions and terminologies

The definitions of child abuse recommended as criteria throughout England and Wales by the home office in their documents, 'the care act' – 2014 and 'working together to safeguard children' - 2018 are as follows:

'Children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their day-to-day lives. These threats can take a variety of different forms, including: sexual, physical and emotional abuse; neglect; exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups; trafficking; online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation. Whatever the form of abuse or neglect, practitioners should put the needs of children first when determining what action to take.'

Please see Appendix A at the end of this policy for more specific definitions of abuse along with signs and symptoms. Please see Appendix B at the end of this policy for more details on international Child Protection.

A child – Anyone under the age of 18

Adult with care and support needs or Adult at risk – A person over the age of 18 who has needs for care and support and who is at risk of or experiencing abuse or neglect as a result of these needs not being met and who is not able to protect themselves from the abuse or neglect.

Discrimination – abuse premised on the vulnerable persons age, race, nationality, sex, gender orientation, disability of other personal characteristics.

6. Safer Recruitment

All short-term teams could potentially have unsupervised contact with children or adults at risk. Therefore, all applicants who are offered a place to represent **SeeKenya** will be required to;

- Complete an application form if they haven't attended a trip before
- Submit to an enhanced DBS check before their position can be confirmed and renew this every 3 years
- Workers from outside the UK who work for **SeeKenya** will need to provide a 'Fit person' check from their home country as well as references from there
- Complete Safeguarding Training before going on a trip.
- Trustees will complete certified Safeguarding Training every 3 years and an in-house refresher course annually

- Sign to say that they have read and understood this Safeguarding Policy

Our local partners in Kenya will provide local checks for local workers.

7. Code of conduct

SeeKenya expects all staff and volunteers to abide by the Code of Conduct for their own protection and for the protection of children and adults at risk with whom they may be working. This means that they should:

- ✓ Not take any action that could compromise SeeKenya's values.
- ✓ Be aware of situations which may present risk and avoid them
- ✓ Not condone or participate in behaviours that sexually, physically or emotionally harass, exploit or abuse another person
- ✓ Plan and organise the work and other activities so as to minimise risks
- ✓ Be visible to others when working with children and vulnerable adults
- ✓ Create and maintain an environment in which concerns can be raised and issues discussed openly where appropriate
- ✓ Foster a culture of mutual accountability so that any potentially abusive behaviour can be challenged
- ✓ Respect the boundaries of any child or vulnerable adult and help them to develop their own sense of their rights as well as helping them to know what they can do if they feel worried
- ✓ Always respect a child's or vulnerable adult's dignity
- ✓ Refrain from sharing personal data with non-team members unless in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the team leaders.

Please see Appendix C at the end of this policy for more specific guidelines on our code of conduct.

8. Media and communication

The following safeguarding measures must be taken when handling photographs, producing media and communication regarding children:

- Ensure that two adults are present when interviewing children or vulnerable adults
- Portray children and adults in their true social context and reality. Images, information and messages about children and adults must be presented in a dignified, respectful manner
- Consent should be sought from parents or guardians before any photographs are taken of children and this information stored and kept safely
- All materials regarding children must be held securely and only used for the purposes outlined on the consent form.
- Data-protection laws must be followed, ensuring that information is used fairly, lawfully and relevantly and is handled in an appropriate, secure way and used by SeeKenya only.

9. Allegations of abuse, including those made against members of the host church in Kenya, team leaders and team members

If you suspect that a member of the **SeeKenya** team has abused a child or adult at risk, you must inform the **SeeKenya** team leader immediately. If the allegation involves a member of the leadership team, you should contact the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator **Helen Lake** as soon as possible at: safeguarding@seekenya.org Mobile: +44 7515 901712

10. What you should do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred or is likely to occur

If you notice that a child or adult at risk has a physical injury or symptom of neglect, you must immediately notify the team leader - Rachel Marson or Paul Wright, whether it be an allegation or suspicion, who will pass the matter to the host church leaders – Edward and Fridah Buria. It is then the responsibility of the host church in Kenya's leaders to act, as they see fit, taking into consideration any locally made policies or legal requirements. The Safeguarding Co-Ordinator will be informed by the team leader. They will ensure that the correct procedures and investigations are taken by the host church.

Under no circumstances should the person raising the concern or the team leader attempt to carry out any investigation into the allegation or suspicions of sexual abuse. Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

REMEMBER – IT IS NOT YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT ABUSE HAS OCCURRED OR IS TAKING PLACE BUT IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PASS ON ANY CONCERNS.

Cultural differences

Situations which arise or become apparent overseas are not always as straightforward to deal with as they are in the UK. There are a number of reasons for this including:

- Differences in the legal framework – what would constitute an offence in the UK might not in the country concerned. Children may be protected under the same law as adults e.g. sexual abuse becomes indecent assault or rape
- Attitudes and expectations (such as 'sexual abuse doesn't really happen here')
- Cultural expectations may be very different
- There may be no equivalent to our statutory agencies to ensure an independent and thorough enquiry
- Lack of experienced and appropriately qualified personnel to investigate and provide skilled support/therapy

HOWEVER, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT CONCERNS SHOULD GO UNREPORTED.

Paedophiles are turning to Africa, Asia or elsewhere as laws are tightened in Europe and North America as well as there being perpetrators of local origin. The following procedures should be followed even if the concern seems relatively minor. You need to bear in mind that it could be the tip of the iceberg.

There is always an understandable temptation to play-down the concern. To do so might well result in children or adults at risk continuing to be abused and any suggestion of cover-up could also have serious consequences

for **SeeKenya**. The needs and interests of both children and innocent adults who could be implicated demand a proper enquiry when concerns are raised. At all times, **SeeKenya** will endeavour to work in accordance with the local statutory agencies.

Responding to a child or adult at risk who has disclosed abuse to you

Always listen carefully if a child or vulnerable adult discloses any form of abuse to you as you will need to record what they have said to you. The following guidelines will help in your conversation

- Always show acceptance of what the child or adult says (however unlikely the story may sound)
- Try to keep calm
- Look at the child or adult at risk as they speak to you
- Be honest and never promise that you will not tell someone what they have disclosed to you
- Reassure the child or adult at risk that even if they have done something wrong, they are not to blame for the abuse
- Never try to gain specific details from a child or adult at risk
- Be aware that the child or adult at risk may have been threatened or bribed not to tell
- If the child or adult at risk decides not to tell you after all, then accept that but let them know that you are always ready to listen
- You will need to make notes as soon as possible after the disclosure including exactly what the child or adult at risk said to you, date and sign what you heard.
- Once a child or adult at risk has talked about abuse and the host church in Kenya's leader has been informed, it is their responsibility to consider whether or not it is safe for them to return home to a potentially abusive situation
- Inform the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator or representative as soon after the disclosure as possible

For more specific details on handling a disclosure from a child or adult at risk, please see Appendix D at the end of this policy.

Documenting a concern

Concerns must be documented on a pro-forma which are kept with the **SeeKenya** team leaders. Electronic copies are also available from Helen Lake. The allegation will be sent by the team leader to the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator at safeguarding@seekenya.org

The documentation can be sent straight to Helen Lake if the allegation involves a member of the leadership team.

The allegation must include details that are necessary to act on the allegation. E.g. Date, person making the report, facts of the allegation, name of the child, date of birth etc.

SeeKenya may seek advice from thirtyone:eight and you will be informed as to what action will be taken.

Please see Appendix E at end of this policy for an example of the form used.

11. USEFUL ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

SEE KENYA SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR

Helen Lake
The King's Church Mid Sussex
33-35 Victoria Road
Burgess Hill
West Sussex
RH15 9LR
Tel: 01444 244215
Mobile: 07515 901712
Email: safeguarding@seekenya.org

thirtyone:eight

P O Box 133, Swanley, Kent BR8 7UQ
Enquiries/Helpline: 0303 003 1111
Web: www.thirtyoneeight.org
E-Mail: info@thirtyoneeight.org
thirtyone:eight provides support and training across all Christian denominations and can advise and support in policy formulation and help in individual cases of abuse.

NSPCC

42 Curtain Road
London EC2A 3NH
Tel: 020 7825 2505
Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 500 (open 24 hours)
Helpline gives advice to anyone about child abuse issues. They also have excellent publicity information and leaflets.

KIDSCAPE

2 Grosvenor Gardens
London SW1W 0DH
Tel: 020 7730 3300
Helpline: 08451 205 204
National charity teaching children how to keep safe. They publish a lot of useful information on protecting children from both abuse and bullying.

CHILDLINE

Freepost 1111
London N1 0BR
Tel: 0207 239 1000
Helpline for children: 0800 1111 (open 24 hours)

CHILDLINE KENYA

P O Box 10003 – 00100
Nairobi, Kenya
WhatsApp: +254 722 116116
Helpline: 116 (from Kenya open 24 hours)
Email: 116@childlinekenya.co.ke

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Definitions of Abuse

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or adult at risk. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of or deliberately causes ill health to a child or adult at risk whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or adult at risk such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to them that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or adults at risk. It may involve causing children or adults at risk to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of them. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child or adult at risk, though it may occur alone.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or adult at risk to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child or adult at risk is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children or adults at risk in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

NEGLECT

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's or adult at risk's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of their health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child or adult at risk from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or adult at risk's basic emotional needs.

ORGANISED ABUSE

Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abusers and a number of related or non-related abused children, young people or adults at risk. The abusers concerned may be acting in part of a group or in isolation or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children or adults at risk for abuse.

SPIRITUAL ABUSE

Spiritual or religious abuse is abuse administered under the guise of religion, including harassment or humiliation, which may result in psychological trauma. Spiritual abuse may also include misuse of religion for selfish, secular, or ideological ends such as the abuse of a clerical position.

APPENDIX B: Child Protection Internationally

Defining child abuse as a world phenomenon is difficult because of the vast cultural and economic differences in which children live. Most research on child abuse has been carried out in economically developed countries and has unproven relevance to those children whose lives are very different.

Many children throughout the world can easily be described as being 'abused' in a very general sense because they are denied basic human rights such as an education or an adequate diet and live in circumstances that are extremely difficult, for example in war-torn areas.

It would be impossible to treat all these children as victims of specific child abuse as the causes are complex. Instead, we could describe children who are suffering because of malnourishment or war, for example, as being 'in need of protection.'

In an overseas setting it is essential to establish the 'local' definitions of abuse. The following questions, based on guidance from 'Save the Children' should be helpful:

- What are the main examples of child abuse in the country or local area?
- What meaning does it have in the country/local context? How is abuse understood or defined?
- Are there concerns about the treatment of children which could be construed as abusive?
- What kinds of behaviour are seen locally in relation to the way children are raised?
- What is viewed as acceptable or unacceptable?
- What cultural and religious considerations and assumptions are being made?
- How do children, parents/carers and the state deal with it? Do they have reporting mechanisms?

These questions will be discussed with the team leaders from the UK and the results will be shared with any visiting teams.

The key principle is that **if you know or suspect that a child is being harmed then it is your duty to report your concerns.**

APPENDIX C: Specific guidelines for working with children

The following guidelines and advice should be shared with all short-term team members before visiting Kenya.

- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the worker's
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker
- Team members should avoid any physical activity which is, or could be construed as, sexually stimulating to the child
- Children are entitled to privacy to ensure personal dignity
- If a child needs help with toileting, ensure that a worker of the same gender assists
- Children are entitled to determine the degree of physical contact with others except in exceptional circumstances i.e., when they need medical attention
- Team members should take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to constructively challenge a colleague if necessary.
- Concerns about possible abuse should always be reported.

IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE TO:

- Spend time with or take children anywhere where they would be alone with you
- Bribe the children in any way with money, gifts or food etc.

IT IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO:

- 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

ACTIONS OR BEHAVIOUR THAT COULD BE CONSTRUED AS POOR PRACTICE OR POTENTIALLY ABUSIVE SHOULD BE AVOIDED. THIS INCLUDES:

- Using language, making suggestions or offering advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- Behaving physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Sleeping in the same room or bed as a child
- Doing things of a personal nature for a child that they can do for themselves
- Condoning, or participating in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- Acting in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade
- Discriminating against, showing different treatment to, or favouring particular children to the exclusion of others

APPENDIX D: Things you may say to a Child or Adult at Risk during a disclosure

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what they say)
- Thank you for telling me
- It's not your fault
- I will help you

DON'T SAY

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked" or "Don't tell anyone else."

CONCLUDING

- Again, reassure them that they were right to tell you and show acceptance
- Let them know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed
- Never promise confidentiality

APPENDIX E: Example form used to record an allegation of abuse



Report of suspected abuse of a child or adult at risk

Date of report:

Name of person making statement:

Details of allegation or disclosure including dates, names and specific details.

Signed:

**This Policy was reviewed by SeeKenya in May 2026 and agreed by the charity’s board of trustees.
It will be reviewed again in May 2027.**

Signed:

Approved by P Wright	Signed Paul Wright
Policy owner H Lake	Signed Helen Lake
Review date	May 26