

# Paper Airplanes Child Safeguarding Policy

EIN 81-4278267

<https://www.paper-airplanes.org/>

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect from harm children and young people who receive Paper Airplanes' (PA) services, regardless of their ability, ethnicity, faith, gender, sexuality and culture.
- to provide all PA personnel, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection and the procedures put in place to fulfill our commitment to child safeguarding.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Paper Airplanes (PA), including senior managers and the board of directors, paid staff, volunteers, and students (this policy refers to them as 'PA personnel').

## 3. Policy statement

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Our mission statement: *"to bridge gaps in language, higher education, and professional skills training for conflict-affected individuals. By harnessing virtual learning technology and the benefits of peer-to-peer connections, we seek to provide a means of pursuing educational and employment opportunities."*

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PA works across many different states with conflict-affected individuals, providing one-to-one online lessons. PA currently has six programmes: Youth Exchange, English, Turkish, Women in Tech, Citizen Journalism and Student Advising. This policy applies currently to the Youth Exchange Programme as this is the only programme PA offers to children.

We understand that:

- in order to fulfill our mission safeguarding practices must be incorporated throughout PA.
- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind and we are committed to promoting the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practice in a way that protects them.

We recognize:

- the 'Do no harm' principle and are committed to not inadvertently exposing any individual in contact with PA activities to additional harm or abuse.
- that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility.
- that all PA personnel should uphold the highest standards of conduct and ethics.
- the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take about children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- children can be additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues. The types of risk may vary according to the child and the means of addressing risks may also vary.

- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.
- it is better to help children as early as possible, before issues escalate and become more damaging.

This is an international policy which establishes the minimum standards and guidelines for safeguarding children that come into contact with PA personnel. This policy has been written and will be applied according to the following guiding documents and legal frameworks:

**Guiding Documents and Legal Frameworks:**

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989
- Minimum standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, Child Protection Working Group (CPWG), 2012
- Minimum standards in Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery, International Network for education in emergencies, 2012
- UN General Assembly, The right to education in emergency situations: resolution/adopted by the General Assembly, 27 July 2010,
- Secretary general's bulletin on the special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, October 2003
- Child Protection standards and how to implement them, Keeping Children Safe, 2014
- IASC Six Core Principles relating to sexual exploitation and abuse, Inter-Agency Standing Committee, September 2019
- Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability, 2014
- Contextual Safeguarding, CS Network
- Arab Charter on Human Rights, Arab League of Nations, 2004
- WHO Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention, 1999
- BOND 20 core elements: a toolkit to strengthen safeguarding report-handling, 2019
- Working Together to Safeguard children, Statutory Guidance Department of Education, March 2015
- Keeping Children Safe, Statutory Guidance for schools and colleges, Department of Education, September 2019
- The Care Act, 2014
- Protecting children from radicalisation: the prevent duty, Statutory Guidance Department of Education, July 2015,
- The Data Protection Act, 2018
- The Human Rights Act 1998

**Supporting documents:**

- Adult Safeguarding policy
- Risk assessments
- Staff Code of conduct
- Student Code of Conduct

- Service Mapping Document
- Complaints Policy

#### 4. Designated Safeguarding Officers

Position	Named Person	Contact Details
Safeguarding Officer	Gabrielle Wimer	<a href="mailto:gabby@paper-airplanes.org">gabby@paper-airplanes.org</a> C: +962 07 9017 8624 S: gabby.wimer
Child Safeguarding Officer	Rania Ahmed	<a href="mailto:rania@paper-airplanes.org">rania@paper-airplanes.org</a>

See Appendix 3 for the roles and responsibilities of the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer.

#### 5. Definitions

**Child:** PA adopts the internationally recognized definition, “every human being below the age of eighteen (18) years, unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier”. *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989*

**Child safeguarding:** “is the responsibility that organisations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organization has about children’s safety within the communities in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities.” *Child Safeguarding Standards and How to Implement them*

**Child Abuse:** constitutes “all forms of physical and/or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship or responsibility, trust or power”. *World Health Organisation*

There are many different types of abuse, see the definitions below:

*Child Safeguarding Standards and How to Implement them*

- A. **Physical abuse:** actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, adult or child. it may involve hitting, shaking, poisoning, drowning and burning. Physical harm may also be

caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

- B. **Sexual abuse:** forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities that he or she does not fully understand and has little choice in consenting to. This may include, but is not limited to, rape, oral sex, penetration, or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching. It may also include involving children in looking at, or producing sexual images, watching sexual activities and encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- C. **Child sexual exploitation:** a form of sexual abuse that involves children being engaged in any sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, food, accommodation, affection, status, or anything else that they or their family needs. It usually involves a child being manipulated or coerced, which may involve befriending children, gaining their trust, and subjecting them to drugs and alcohol. The abusive relationship between victim and perpetrator involves an imbalance of power where the victim's options are limited. It is a form of abuse that can be misunderstood by children and adults as consensual. Child sexual exploitation manifests in different ways. It can involve an older perpetrator exercising financial, emotional or physical control over a young person. It can involve peers manipulating or forcing victims into sexual activity, sometimes within gangs and in gang-affected neighborhoods. It may also involve opportunistic or organized networks of perpetrators who profit financially from trafficking young victims between different locations to engage in sexual activity with multiple individuals.
- D. **Neglect and negligent treatment:** allowing for context, resources and circumstances, neglect and negligent treatment refers to a persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's healthy physical, spiritual, moral and mental development. It includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm and provide for nutrition, shelter and safe living/working conditions. It may also involve maternal neglect during pregnancy as a result of drug or alcohol misuse and the neglect and ill treatment of a disabled child.
- E. **Emotional abuse:** persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child's emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber bullying), and threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.
- F. **Commercial exploitation:** exploiting a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes, but is not limited to, child labour.

See Appendix 2 for additional signs of abuse.

## 6. Best practice on how to respond if a child discloses to you

When a child safeguarding issue is brought to your attention ACT:

**Act on your concerns:** If in doubt, speak out.

**Child-centered:** The protection of the children is the most important consideration.

**Time counts:** Ensure timely, effective, confidential and appropriate responses to child safeguarding issues.

*From Plan International, Child Protection Policy Reporting and Responding to Child Protection Issues in Plan*

- Respond in a calm manner, try not to appear shocked.
- Allow them to talk without interruption and do not ask leading questions, use the TED approach (Tell me what happened, explain or describe).
- Treat the comments seriously and provide reassurance that they were right to tell you and you believe them.
- Be aware of potential misunderstandings or use of different terminology because of language or cultural differences.
- Do not say you will keep it a secret or confidential or promise any outcome that may not be feasible in light of subsequent developments but reassure them that it will only be disclosed to those that need to know. Let them know what you are going to do next, who you are going to tell and why.
- Make a full record of what you remember has been said, heard and seen and immediately (using the Incident Report Form provided in Appendix 4). If possible, listen whilst the child is speaking and write down your report immediately after. It is important to record exactly what the individual said and the time of disclosure.
- Avoid delay and contact a Designated Child Safeguarding Officer to discuss the matter. Do not discuss the matter with anyone else.
- If you have a concern about a child but abuse or neglect has not been explicitly disclosed:
  - Make a full record of what you remember has been said, heard and seen.
  - Do not seek to investigate the concern yourself but report your concerns to the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer immediately (at most within 24 hours).

## 7. Procedure if abuse is suspected/disclosed

### a) First steps:

- Immediately inform the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer, in a confidential manner.
- Working with the Child Safeguarding Officer, Complete the Incident Report form in Appendix 4 with basic information, dates and times.
- The Designated Child Safeguarding Officer will notify the Executive Director and liaise with the Managing Director to investigate and respond to the safeguarding issue.
- The needs of the child at risk for protection and support will be assessed and a fact-finding process will take place. If the individual involved is a child (younger than 18) and it is determined

that abuse has happened, Paper Airplanes will be obligated to report it. In all other situations, Paper Airplanes will work with the individuals involved to determine next, best steps.

- The sociocultural norms in the location where the individual resides will be taken into account and each case will be contextualised.
- Use the flowchart found in Appendix 1 to aid the decision-making process.

b) Safeguarding issue relating to PA personnel:

- Where the safeguarding issue is an internal concern, relating to PA activities, and does not violate national or international law then PA's internal safeguarding procedures will apply and the individual in question may face disciplinary action.
- Where the safeguarding issue is an internal concern, relating to PA activities, and does violate national or international law then the PA personnel in question may:
  - face disciplinary action by PA.
  - be suspended from PA or working with children or 'adults at risk'.
  - be reported to local authorities for further investigation.
  - face criminal investigation in the state they reside in.
  - be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) about the incident by PA if they are British.
  - be reported to partners 'on the ground', if deemed necessary.
- The decision to report to the authorities should be:
  - based on the wishes of survivors
  - informed by any formal or informal binding legislation, including mandatory reporting requirements.
  - informed by a risk assessment covering all parties to an incident.
  - done on a case-by-case basis.
  - discussed with and be agreed upon by members of the senior management team.

*(BOND 20 core elements: a toolkit to strengthen safeguarding report-handling)*

c) Safeguarding issue outside of PA:

- Where the individual concerned is in **immediate danger**, contact the emergency services or other relevant services in the state.
- Where the safeguarding issue is an external concern and constitutes a violation of the national laws of the state the individual resides in or the international standards and legal framework this policy rests upon, the matter will be reported to the local authorities for further investigation.
- If it is deemed that the authorities do not have the capacity to provide protection or reporting to the authorities may put the individual in question at further risk, PA will inform partners 'on the ground' and services in other sectors in that state. The relationship and reporting procedure will be established and understood by all parties. The Designated Child Safeguarding Officer can use the [Service Mapping](#) resources to indicate the partners and organizations 'on the ground' for PA to contact. Information on the services in other sectors that might be relevant for the individual in question should be shared in a child-friendly format.
- The decisions should be taken **case-by-case** and the reporting process, whether to the official authorities or to services in other sectors 'on the ground', needs to be done with the aim of not

putting the individual in danger or made vulnerable by the very action of reporting harm or abuse.

- All investigations are confidential. All actions taken are written up by the Designated Child Safeguarding officer and reports are confidentiality stored.

## **8. Allegations against staff or volunteers/ Whistleblowing procedures**

- PA has a zero-tolerance policy for any conduct that is exploitative or abusive. Violation of this policy can be grounds for disciplinary action. For alleged abuse that may also constitute criminal conduct, the accused may be subject to criminal prosecution.
- Any concerns for the welfare or safety of a child from a member of staff or volunteer need to be reported immediately. Any behavior that seems inappropriate should be reported to their direct supervisor immediately.
- If a member of staff reports on another member of staff for concerns of abuse of a child, the whistleblower will be supported as necessary. It is important to reassure the individual that, if the report was done in good faith, no negative action will be taken against them.
- Any allegation made by a child must be taken seriously, responded to swiftly and referred to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. PA offers an anonymous [whistleblowing mechanism](#) available for children.
- All discussions will be recorded in writing by the direct supervisor and a plan of action subsequently put in place.
- If there is alleged abuse, the relevant Programme Manager, Managing Director, Executive Director and Designated Safeguarding Officers will need to reconsider the individual's contact with children and 'adults at risk' at PA.
- The individual who has been accused will receive the necessary support. If the individual is asked to take leave from their duties at PA during the investigation, this suspension does not imply guilt but protects all parties while the investigation is undertaken.
- Every effort should be maintained to keep confidentiality for all individuals involved, particularly whilst the case is still being investigated.
- After the results of the investigation, PA may wish to take disciplinary action against the staff member. If the investigation results in the termination of the individual's involvement at PA or contact with children and adults at risk PA will need to:
  - Report the individual to DBS, if the individual is British.
  - Report to the relevant authorities.

## **9. Prevention- Recruitment**

- All PA personnel will be familiar with and sign PA's Staff Code of Conduct. All PA personnel are fully aware of the repercussions of failure to comply with the Staff Code of Conduct.
- All PA students will also be familiar with and sign PA's Student Code of Conduct. All PA students are fully aware of the repercussions of failure to comply with the Student Code of Conduct.

- For any PA student under the age of 18, PA will obtain a signed parent/guardian consent form (Appendix 5).
- Safeguarding requirements are clearly indicated in the job description. All PA personnel have clear role descriptions and the reporting structure is understood.
- PA personnel from U.K. will undergo an Enhanced DBS check and a Barred list check, if they are teaching children unsupervised more than three times in thirty days. Their recruitment to PA is subject to passing the DBS check.
- PA personnel from other countries, need to to complete and sign a self-disclosure form.
- If appropriate during the interview the candidate will be asked safeguarding related questions to draw out their attitudes and values in regard to the protection of children.

## **10. Prevention- Training**

- All PA personnel working with children will undergo induction safeguarding training and child protection training by a recognized provider. Regular refresher training will be available for all staff.
- Records of training provided to staff on child safeguarding should be kept by the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer and the training provided to PA personnel will be evaluated annually and updated accordingly.

## **11. Communication of the Child Safeguarding Policy**

- Children will be provided with a child-friendly version of the policy, explaining their rights, what constitutes child abuse, who to seek advice from and report to. This should be written in child-appropriate language and be translated into the relevant local languages.
- Our policy will be publicly accessible on our website and shared with PA partners.
- The Designated Child Safeguarding Officer will work with the Youth Exchange Programme Manager to decide the best forms of communicating any child safeguarding updates to PA personnel.

## **12. Use of Media**

- PA personnel should never take inappropriate photos or films of children. All media taken should be relevant to PA work. Before taking the photo or film consent from the child and parent or guardian must be taken.
- Media where the location of the child can be determined should never be taken and geotagging of images should be disabled.
- If children submit media (video, photos, quotes) they and their guardians will need to sign and submit a [media release waiver](#) to Paper Airplanes

## **13. Advice and Support**

- PA will liaise with and seek advice from partners and experts in this field. PA will develop and maintain relationships with agencies that offer advice and training in child safeguarding.
- Information of the services available in all the countries PA works in will be gathered by service mapping exercises and be accessible for each state in the Service Mapping resources. The following services will be gathered: safety, health, mental health, and legal. Particular consideration for the states where they lack capacity to provide these services will be given. PA will assess the environment of protection and perception of refugees in each state.
- The Designated Child Safeguarding Officer will receive advice and support from children, staff and experts where needed.

#### **14. Implementation and Review**

- It is mandatory that the Paper Airplanes' Code of Conduct is read and signed by all PA personnel.
- PA will carry out risk assessments for each of the programmes annually and review the Service Mapping Document annually also. These risk assessments will feed the policies and procedures.
- This policy will be reviewed at least once every three years using the '*Child Safeguarding Standards and How to Implement them*' self-auditing tool. Where possible PA will use an external auditor to review the policies.
- Wherever possible, PA will ask for feedback and advice from current and past students on safeguarding.

This policy was agreed on:

9 July 2020

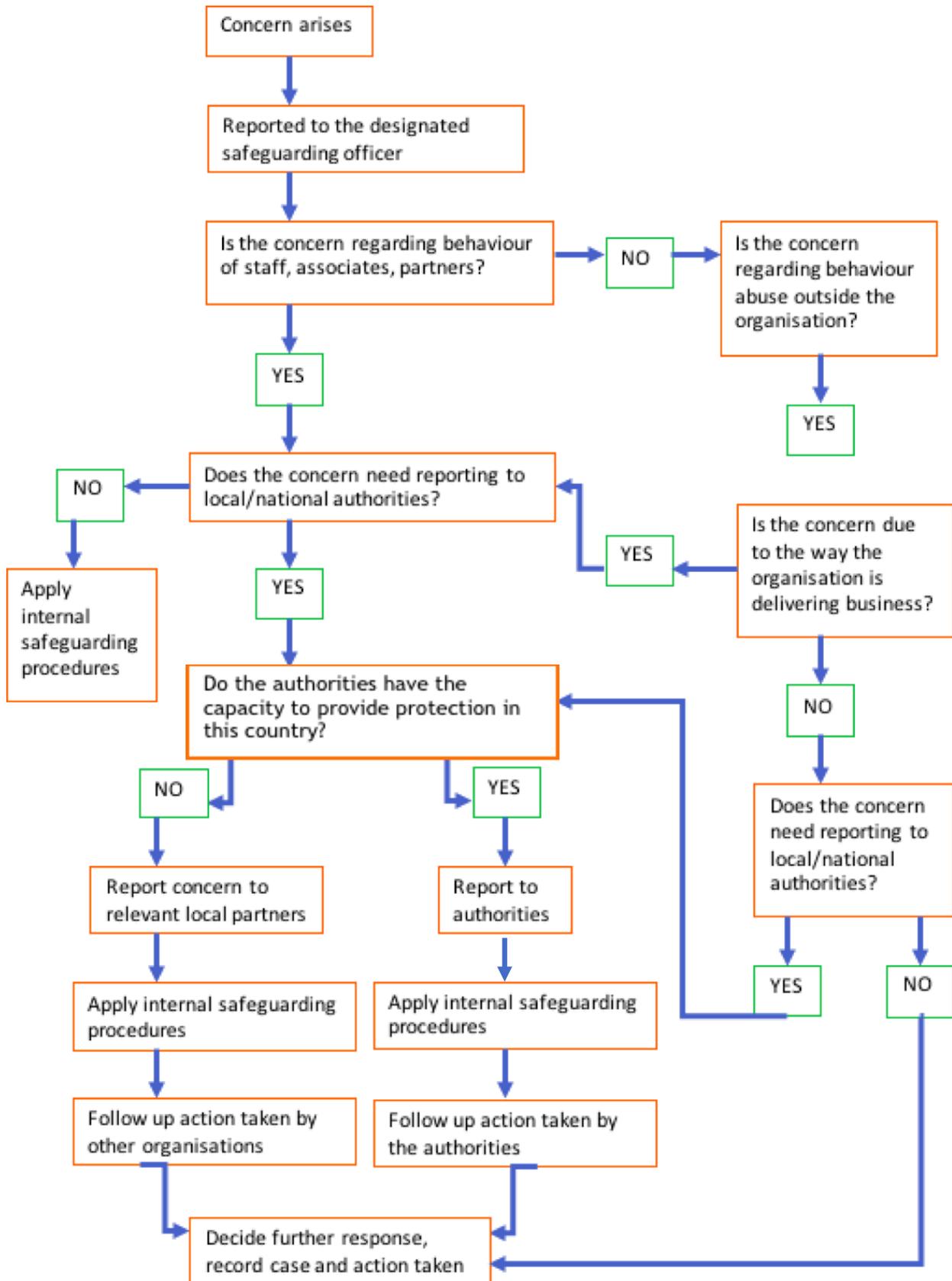
This policy will be reviewed on:

9 July 2021

Signed by:



**Appendix 1: Flowchart for safeguarding procedure**



## **Appendix 2: Signs of abuse (from NSPCC)**

### Physical Abuse:

- If a child regularly has injuries, there seems to be a pattern to the injuries or the explanation doesn't match the injuries, then this should be reported.
  - Bruises
  - broken or fractured bones
  - burns or scalds
  - bite marks.

### Sexual abuse:

- Avoiding being alone with or frightened of people or a person they know.
- Language or sexual behaviour you wouldn't expect them to know.
- Having nightmares or bed-wetting.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Self-harm.
- Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem.
- Bruises.
- Bleeding, discharge, pains or soreness in their genital or anal area.
- Sexually transmitted infections.
- Pregnancy.

### Sexual exploitation:

- Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- Being frightened of some people, places or situations.
- Being secretive.
- Sharp changes in mood or character.
- Having money or things they can't or won't explain.
- Physical signs of abuse, like bruises or bleeding in their genital or anal area.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Sexually transmitted infections.
- Pregnancy.
- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Staying out late or overnight.
- Having a new group of friends.
- Missing from home or care, or stopping going to school or college.
- Hanging out with older people, other vulnerable people or in antisocial groups.
- Involved in a gang.
- Involved in criminal activities like selling drugs or shoplifting.

### Neglect:

- being smelly or dirty

- being hungry or not given money for food
- having unwashed clothes
- having the wrong clothing, such as no warm clothes in winter
- anaemia
- body issues, such as poor muscle tone or prominent joints
- medical or dental issues
- missed medical appointments, such as for vaccinations
- not given the correct medicines
- poor language or social skills
- regular illness or infections
- repeated accidental injuries, often caused by lack of supervision
- skin issues, such as sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm
- thin or swollen tummy
- tiredness
- untreated injuries
- weight or growth issues.
- living in an unsuitable home environment, such as having no heating
- being left alone for a long time
- taking on the role of carer for other family members.

Emotional abuse:

- use language you wouldn't expect them to know for their age
- act in a way or know about things you wouldn't expect them to know for their age
- struggle to control their emotions
- have extreme outbursts
- seem isolated from their parents
- lack social skills
- have few or no friends.

### **Appendix 3: Designated Safeguarding Officer- Role and Responsibilities:**

The Child Safeguarding Officer will complete the necessary training on safeguarding and child protection and will refresh their training regularly.

#### Responsibility:

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff on all safeguarding issues.
- Liaise with the Health and Social Services or other organizations deemed necessary if a concern about a child or a case arises, making the necessary referrals.
- Coordinate and manage all safeguarding issues.

#### Role:

- Act as a point of contact with any external partners on safeguarding issues.
- Liaise with the Executive Director and Managing Director to investigate and respond to a concern.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understand the relevant data protection legislation and regulations and the PA's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Understand the importance of information sharing, within the organization and with any safeguarding partners.
- Able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Encourage a culture of curiosity, scrutiny and listening.
- Ensure the organization's policies, procedures and training are reviewed regularly and publicly available.

#### **Appendix 4: Safeguarding Incident Form**

Name of person filing report:	Contact email:
Name of child:	Date:
Parents/carer of child contact details (if available):	
<b>Details of the disclosure/concern:</b>	
Please indicate: Are you recording... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- A disclosure made directly to you by the child?</li><li>- A disclosure or concerns from a third party?</li><li>- Your own concerns?</li></ul>	
If you are reporting a disclosure or concern from a third party, please provide their contact details here:	
Date and time of the disclosure:	
Date and time of the incident:	

Details of the incident or concerns. Include time/date of incident.

Have parents/carers been notified of the incident?

Yes/No

Who have you spoken to about your concern? (please specify)

Direct supervisor/ PA Child Safeguarding Officer/ Any others

Action to be taken (to be completed by Safeguarding Officer)

Signed:

Date:

**Appendix 5: Parental Consent Form**

**Youth Exchange Program Agreement of Participation**

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The Youth Exchange Program at Paper Airplanes uses videochat to connect youth who are fluent in English with a peer mentee in the Middle East. The goal of the program is to help students improve their English whilst allowing both tutors and students to participate in a virtual, cultural-exchange.

Tutors join through youth clubs which are supported by a club advisor. Each tutor goes through Paper Airplanes' training in order to learn more about the organization, teaching English, and intercultural communication. Once they complete the training, tutors are matched with a student. The tutor and student work together to decide when they will have their weekly videochat lesson

Students are referred by partner organizations who work directly with these students. Students also complete a training about Paper Airplanes and intercultural communication before being matched with a tutor.

Questions about the Youth Exchange Program can be directed to the Program Manager Rania Ahmed at [rania@paper-airplanes.org](mailto:rania@paper-airplanes.org)

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By completing this form, both the tutor and their parent/guardian consent to the tutor participating in this program.

**Participant Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone day: \_\_\_\_\_ evening: \_\_\_\_\_ cell: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone day: \_\_\_\_\_ evening: \_\_\_\_\_ cell: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_