



PAMOJA DEVELOPMENT
PROJECTS (PDP)



MIER PAMOJA CARE CENTRE, AYWEYO,
NR AHERO, KISUMU

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Date: March 2019

Designated Safeguarding Lead: MPCC – Regina Ondiek

PDP board member responsible for child Protection: Millicent Maguke

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1. INTRODUCTION

At present Pamoja Development Projects (PDP) runs two orphanages (Care Centres) and a primary school. The things written in this child protection policy document express the wishes of the trustees of Pamoja UK as well as Board members of PDP, Kenya.

Pamoja values young people and children as being a vital part of the organisation and desires to see them grow, mature and be challenged in a healthy and safe environment.

Pamoja UK will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead as agreed by the trustees meeting.

This policy aims to provide all members of staff (paid and unpaid), children and young people, and their families with a clear and secure framework for ensuring that all children in the Care Centre are protected from harm, both while at the Centre and when off the Care Centre premises on other activities.

The Mier Pamoja Care Centre (MPCC) believes in supporting all aspects of children and young people's development and learning, and keeping children safe. We understand that emotional and social aspects of learning create a foundation for all academic learning. If a child has not been supported to understand, express and resolve their feelings, they may not have the ability to share with other children, resolve the small conflicts that arise in day-to-day classroom life, or concentrate on learning. Their frustrations may cause a range of antisocial, disruptive, overly compliant or withdrawn behaviours.

The central aim of this Child Protection Policy is to set out for all relevant parties the:

- a. Principles and values underlying this Care Centre's approach to the safeguarding of its service users
- b. Ways in which the Care Centre does this
- c. Steps taken to avoid abuse/harm taking place
- d. Actions taken to deal with abuse/harm if it occurs

This policy has been developed to ensure the Care Centre fulfils the principles, requirements and any statutory duties established by

- Education Act 2002
- Kenya's Children Act 2001
- National Plan of Action for Children in Kenya 2015
- THE BASIC EDUCATION ACT, 2013
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2010
- Working together to safeguard children 2015
- Safer Working Guidance DfE 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016

2. DEFINITIONS

What is child abuse and child protection?

Child abuse: Involves acts of commission and omission, which result in harm to the child. The four types of abuse are physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

Child protection: Is the process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of violence, exploitation, abuse or neglect.

(National Plan of Action for Children in Kenya 2015)

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Role of the PDP Board Members

The board members have a key responsibility for monitoring child protection in the Care Centre.

Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring all staff and regular volunteers have access to this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the implications on their role are fully explained.
- Having a designated person responsible for child protection
- Ensuring that there is a board member who has particular responsibility for safeguarding and child protection
- Reviewing policies and procedures in line with national guidance
- Receiving regular reports from the Matron on Child protection
- Ensuring all members of staff are made aware of the main forms of abuse and their symptoms.
- Ensuring all members of staff are made aware of their responsibilities in relation to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse and the Care Centre's procedures for dealing with such incidents.
- All staff members are made aware of procedures and where to locate them.
- Ensuring that procedures are in place to deal with allegations against a member of staff.
- Ensuring that appropriate ongoing training is provided to ensure that staff maintain knowledge of child protection issues and are aware of any new developments.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

We understand that the care centre should provide a stable and secure element in the lives of all children and that all staff have a role to fulfil in relation to safeguarding children. We recognise that, because of the day to day contact with children, staff are well placed to observe children and spot potential indicators of abuse. The Matron is the designated senior person for Child Protection and Safeguarding within the care centre.

3.2 Designated Safeguarding Leads

The following people have been appointed as Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Pamoja UK: Chair of Trustees

PDP Nairobi: Matron of Kware Care Centre

PDP Magina: Matron of Mier Pamoja Care Centre

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Coordinating action within the care centre and liaising with children's social services and other agencies over cases of abuse and suspected abuse
- Acting as a source of advice within the care centre
- Ensuring that staff are familiar with the child protection policies and procedures
- Referral of individual cases of suspected abuse to the relevant social services agency
- Organising training on child protection within the care centre
- Informing parents/guardians of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures
- Where referrals are made to social care these should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. The designated person is responsible for following up any referrals where concerns remain or there is no communication about actions taken. Where there is uncertainty about making a full referral, advice can be sought from MASH without giving the child's details.
- Ensuring that the policy is being put into practice;
- Being the first point of contact for child protection issues;
- Keeping a record of any concerns expressed about child protection issues;
- Bringing any child protection concerns to the notice of the PDP Board members and contacting the Local Authority if appropriate;
- Ensuring that paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate supervision;
- Ensuring that everyone involved with the organisation is aware of the identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

3.3 Role of Staff and Volunteers

- Being alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse and their responsibility for the immediate referral of any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
- Supporting children who wish to make a disclosure
- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Implementing the Care centre's *Health and Safety policies* in order to maintain a safe and secure setting.
- Ensuring that children know that there are adults in the care centre whom they can approach if they are distressed or worried.
- Promoting anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice in line with the care centre policy by providing positive role models, and by acknowledging and respecting the individual needs of the child.
- Being aware of the PDP's *whistle blowing policy* and are encouraged to raise any concerns relating to practice in the care centre in line with the policy

New staff and volunteers are familiarised with this Child protection policy as part of their induction.

3.4 Role of Parents / Guardians

We will always undertake to share our concerns with and support parents/guardians but the care centre is required to take into account the safety of the child. Professional advice would be sought prior to contacting parents /guardians should the need arise.

4. GENERAL STRATEGIES

There are a number of strategies to address safeguarding issues. These include:

- Health and Safety procedures
 - Safe recruitment procedures including the need for DBS checks / Good conduct certificate
 - Care / Educational Plans
 - Strong Home/Care Centre Links
 - Complaints Procedures
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Good role modelling from staff
 - All children are encouraged to take on responsibilities and roles to ensure the safe keeping of themselves and each other.
- Each child and young person should be formally registered with PDP. The information includes an information/consent form which their parent/guardian must complete. These forms have vital information about health and emergency contacts and should be kept securely.

5. PROCEDURES

The Care Centre's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, recording forms and body maps are in the office and available on request.

6. STAFF TRAINING

All staff in the care centre will attend training at least every three years. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will undertake training every two years in order for them to fulfil their role.

As part of the new staff induction all staff will have a meeting with the DSL to:

- Discuss procedures that are in place
- Be given an overview of different types of abuse and symptoms that could possibly be encountered.

7. RAISING AWARENESS OF CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

The care centre is committed to raising awareness of child protection and to equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe. It aims to do this by:

- Ensuring staff have access to appropriate training and resources.
- Including opportunities at the centre that will help children to develop skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Ensuring that children know what to do if they have worries or concerns
- Providing children the opportunity to share their worries or concerns

8. SAFE CARING

All members of staff are made aware of the care centre's safeguarding procedures and are committed to working in accordance to the principles of safe caring.

- Every effort will be made to minimise the time when members of staff are left alone with a child. If it is necessary for a member of staff to be alone with a child then the door of the room should be kept open and another member of staff should be informed.
- If a child makes inappropriate physical or verbal contact with a member of staff or another child the incident must be reported to the senior designated person and must be recorded.
- Members of staff will never carry out a personal task for a child that they can do for themselves. If such contact is essential, a member of staff will assist the child as required in line with the Centre's *intimate care policy*.

- Unless a child has a specific need staff should not accompany children into the toilet or washrooms.
- All members of staff will be mindful of how they approach children both physically and verbally. All contact should be appropriate to the child's age and emotional understanding and unnecessary or potentially inappropriate contact will be avoided.
- Members of staff are aware that their actions, however well intentioned, may be misconstrued and therefore they must ensure that they consider, and are aware of, the implications of their actions at all times.

9. RECOGNISING CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse manifests itself in a variety of ways, some overt and some less obvious. All members of staff are committed to maintaining a vigilant approach to identify potential cases. Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. For our care centre it includes such things as child safety, bullying, tribal abuse and harassment, educational visits, intimate care and children missing education.

All members of staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware that a child may display a range of symptoms and that these may have other causes. All members of staff will maintain an objective and non-judgemental approach when considering symptoms but will remember that their first priority is the protection of the child.

Unless the initial concerns are related to sexual abuse or fabricated illness they will always be discussed with parents / guardians and their explanations / comments will be noted.

10. USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC / VIDEO EQUIPMENT

Visitors, volunteers and Pamoja workers will take photos and videos of our Pamoja children. These photos will only be used to send to sponsors or in advertising material and presentations (E.G. newsletters, AGM, presentation talks to promote the work of Pamoja, facebook and other social media sites). These images will only identify the child's first name – not their full name. If a parent or guardian wants to object to their child's photo being taken then they need to speak either to the Matron of the Care Centre or the head teacher of the school.

11. DEALING WITH SUSPECTED ABUSE / ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

The care centre is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities by treating any suspected or alleged abuse seriously, objectively and sensitively. Any suspicion or disclosure of

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abuse must be reported to the designated senior person immediately to ensure that initial inquiries and records comply with procedures.

- All members of staff must report any concerns to designated person.
- Initial concerns should be discussed with parents / guardians by the designated lead unless they are related to sexual abuse or fabricated illness.
- Written records of all reported incidents will be produced and maintained, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Written information is kept by the Matron who is the designated Safeguarding Lead and kept in their office.
- All members of staff will demonstrate great care in distinguishing between fact and opinion when recording suspected incidents.
- The senior designated person will ensure that all records are kept securely, separate from the main children's records.
- All members of staff will ensure that all suspicions and allegations are treated sensitively and confidentially.
- Any child involved in alleged incidents will be comforted and reassured.

In incidents where a child makes an allegation or a disclosure the member of staff concerned **will**:

- Ask open questions that will encourage the child to speak in their own words.

What you should do

- Remain calm.
- Listen to the child/young person
- Ensure the child is safe, comfortable and not left alone.
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame.
- Look at them directly and do not promise to keep any secrets before you know what they are, but always let the child/young person know if, and why, you are going to tell anyone
- Take whatever is said to you seriously and help the child/young person to trust his/her own feelings. Take notes of exactly what is said to you avoiding assumptions and conjecture. Make any observable judgement
- It is not the role of the worker to investigate any allegations (this would contaminate evidence if a situation went to court). Any disclosure by a child/young person must be reported to the named child protection officer.
- Speak immediately to the Local Children's Authority for further advice and guidance.

What you should *not* do

- Project workers/volunteers should not begin investigating the matter themselves.
- Not ask leading questions that puts words into the child's mouth.
- Do not discuss the matter with anyone except the correct people in authority.
- Do not form your own opinions and decide to do nothing.

Things to say or do:

- 'What you are telling me is very important'
- This is not your fault'
- 'I am sorry that this has happened/is happening'
- 'You were right to tell someone'
- What you are telling me should not be happening to you and I will find out the best way to help you'
- Make notes soon after the event. Try to write down exactly what the young person or child said. Avoid assumptions or conjecture.

Things *not* to say or do:

- Do not ask leading questions – Why? How? What?
- Do not say 'Are you sure?'
- Do not show your own emotions e.g. shock/disbelief
- Do not make false promises

12. RECORD KEEPING

In the event of any form of allegation or disclosure having been made, or in the event of a member of staff finding any cause for concern, a written record must be kept and recorded **within 24 hours**, with the record being passed to and stored by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Staff can play a vital role in helping children in need or at risk by effective monitoring and record keeping. Any incident or behavioural change in a child that gives cause for concern should be recorded. It is important that records are factual and reflect the words used by the child or young person. Opinion should not be given unless there is some form of evidence base which can also be quoted. Records must be signed and dated with timings if appropriate. It is important to remember that any issues are confidential and staff should know only on a 'need to know' basis.

Information to be recorded, on the Record of Concern and Body Map if necessary

- Child's name and date of birth
- Child in normal context, e.g. behaviour, attitude, (has there been an extreme change)
- The incident(s) which gives rise for concern with date(s) and times(s)
- A verbatim record of what the child or young person has said.
- If recording bruising/injuries indicate position, colour, size, shape and time on a body map.
- Action taken

The details above are vital to the information gathering process and do not constitute an investigation. Written information should be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Storage of records

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that records relating to concerns for the welfare or safety of children are kept separate from other children's files and are stored securely. Information will be shared on a strictly need to know basis and in line with child protection policy guidance.

13. SUPPORTING VICTIMS / WITNESSES OF ABUSE

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helpless, humiliated and guilty. At school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. We understand that school may be the only predictable element in the lives of children at risk and as such, the care centre will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The care centre's aims and values.
- Establishing effective relationships, and liaison with other agencies that support the child such as social services.
- Notifying social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than *one week* for any pupil who is being supported by social services.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil known to social services leaves, their information is transferred to their new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

14. DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

Any allegation made against any member of the Mier Pamoja Care Centre staff will be fully investigated.

- If an allegation is made against a member of staff the Matron will immediately follow guidelines set out in the Whistle Blowing policy.
- If the allegation is against the Matron, the board member (PDP) responsible for child protection issues will be notified and they will follow the procedures.

15. PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS

Concerns about child abuse may be brought to your attention in different ways.

For example:

- A child tells you (i.e. discloses) that he/she is being abused
- Someone tells you that they have grave concerns about a child
- A child's behaviour may indicate abuse
- A worker's behaviour changes or focuses inappropriately on a particular child

It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. Please follow the following procedure:

Discuss your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a senior member of staff if the Designated Safeguarding Lead is not available. The designated officer will then discuss this with the parents.

If you suspect a child is being sexually abused or is being physically harmed through giving or denying medication, or if discussing with the parents/guardians will make the situation dangerous for the child or for you, then this **will not** be discussed with the parents/guardians.

16. REFERRING ALLEGATIONS TO CHILD PROTECTION AGENCIES

- If the senior Designated Safeguarding Lead has reasonable grounds to believe that a child has been, or is in grave danger of being, subject to abuse, the following procedure will be implemented
 - Contact will be made, at the earliest opportunity.
 - The designated persons will communicate as much information about the allegation and related incidents as is consistent with advice from the social services.
 - At all times the safety, protection and interests of the children concerned will take precedence. The care centre will work with and support parents / guardians as far as they are legally able.
 - All members of staff will assist the social services, as far as they are able, during any investigation of abuse. This will include disclosing written and verbal information and evidence and may require attendance at case conferences.

Care Centre staff play a crucial role in helping to identify welfare concerns, and indicators of possible abuse or neglect, at an early stage. The Mier Pamoja Care Centre is committed to referring those concerns via the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to the appropriate organisation, normally the children's department, contributing to the assessment of a child's needs and, where appropriate, to ongoing action to meet those needs.

All staff members should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child.

This policy was adopted by Pamoja UK on8th June 2019.

A signed copy of the Child Protection Policy for the Magina Care Centre is kept in the Office at the Care Centre.