



PENHA
PASTORAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

January 2018

Introduction

The Pastoral and Environmental Network in the Horn of Africa (PENHA) 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.

A copy of this document will be kept within the PENHA head office (stored by the acting Director) and will be made available on the website.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice on an annual basis.

PENHA also accepts that due to the nature of the organisation, we will come into contact with vulnerable groups, including refugees and so our practice must reflect this.

Statement of Intent

It is the policy of (organisation name) to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual harm. This organisation is committed to creating a safe environment in which young people can feel comfortable and secure while engaged in any of (organisations programmes/activities). Personnel should at all times show respect and understanding for individual's rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of (organisation name).

Guidelines for all (organisation name) staff and volunteers

ATTITUDES

Staff and volunteers are committed to

- Treating children and young people with respect and dignity.
- Always listening to what a child or young person is saying
- Valuing each child and young person
- Recognising the unique contribution that each individual can make
- Encouraging and praising each child or young person

BY EXAMPLE

- Staff and volunteers will endeavour to
- Provide an example, which we would wish others to follow
- Use appropriate language with children and young people and challenge any inappropriate language used by a young person or child or an adult working with young people.
- Respect a young person's right to privacy

CONTACT

Staff and volunteers will:

- Gain consent from parent/guardians for all meetings
- Take register and record all meetings
- Not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children, away from others. Staff should try to always be visible to others in their contact with children.
- In the unlikely event of having to meet with an individual child or young person make every effort to keep this meeting as open as possible.
- If privacy is needed, ensure that other staff are informed of the meeting and its whereabouts

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Staff and volunteers should never

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay
- Do things of a personal nature for a child or a young person that they can do for themselves. If such an incident arises, for example, where a child or young person has limited mobility, staff should seek a member of school staff or leader of the youth organisation to deal with such an incident
- Allow, or engage in, inappropriate touching of any kind

GENERAL

Staff and volunteers should:

- Be aware that someone might misinterpret our actions no matter how well intentioned
- Never draw any conclusions about others without checking the facts
- Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about, or to a child or young person, even in fun

RELATIONSHIPS

Staff and volunteers who are involved in relationships with other members of staff or volunteers should ensure that their personal relationships do not affect their role

SHARING INFORMATION

Good communication is essential in any organisation. In PENHA every effort will be made to assure that, should individuals have concerns, they will be listened to and taken seriously.

It is the responsibility of the management to ensure that information is available to, and exchanged between all those involved in this organisation and its activities. Some information is confidential and should only be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis.

Children & Young People

Children and young people have a right to information, especially any information that could make life better and safer for them. PENHA will act to ensure they have information about how, and with whom, they can share their concerns, complaints and anxieties.

When sharing information, PENHA personnel will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as to the level of responsibility, of the people with whom they are sharing.

Parents

Parents / persons with parental responsibility are ultimately responsible for their children's welfare at all times, and they should be assured that their children are involved with a credible organisation.

We achieve this by:

- Publicising information on all our (primary, post-primary, youth and parenting work)
- Publishing the named Designated Child Protection Person(s) and how to make a complaint on the website
- Publishing a full copy of the Child Protection Policy on the website

Staff & Volunteers

As an organisation, which offers support and guidance to children and young people, it is imperative that each member of the PENHA staff is aware of their responsibilities under the Child Protection legislation and has a working knowledge of (organisation name) procedures. Each member of staff will receive updated training in Child Protection every three years.

Other Bodies

A copy of our Child Protection Policy will be made available to any other appropriate body.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

In any case where an allegation is made, or someone in PENHA has concerns, a record should be made. Details must include, as far as practical:

- Name of child or young person
- Age
- Home Address (if known)
- Date of Birth (if known)
- Name/s and Address of parent/s or person/s with parental responsibility
- Telephone numbers if available

Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of somebody else? If so, record details;

- What has prompted the concerns?
- Include dates and times of any specific incidents
- Has the child or young person been spoken to?

If so, what was said?

- Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser?

If so, record details

Who has this been passed on to, in order that appropriate action is taken? E.g. school, designated officer, social services etc

Has anyone else been consulted?

If so, record details

DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION PERSONS

A designated Child Protection Officers (Sara Sandvall Email: s.sandvall@penhanetwork.org and Tesfaldet Okubayes Email: tes.okubayes@penhanetwork.org) should be informed of any concerns or reports and Child Services should be notified immediately. PENHA contact number is: 00442072420202.

City of London's Child Services can be contacted with details listed below:

- Call **020 7332 3621** - Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm only
- Call **020 8356 2710** - at all other times, including weekends and bank holidays

Confidentiality must be maintained and information relating to individual children and young people /families shared with staff on a strictly need to know basis.

ALLEGED ABUSE BY STAFF, MANAGERS, VOLUNTEERS OR TRUSTEES

When an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, then the allegation must be passed direct to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

TRAINING

The designated person and his/her deputy must receive training every 2 years in child protection.

All staff and volunteers shall have access to appropriate training on a regular basis, at least every 3 years.

An introductory course is available here : <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/get-expert-training/child-protection-introduction/>

All PENHA members will be advised to enrol

RECORD-KEEPING

- All records, information and confidential notes will be kept in separate files in a locked drawer or filing cabinet.
- Only the designated Persons will have access to these files.

DISCLOSURE

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as Child Protection will always have precedence over any other issues.
- Listen to the child, rather than question him or her directly.
- Offer him / her reassurance without making promises
- Allow the child to speak without interruption
- Accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not overreact.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement
- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on.

- Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event,
- Use the child's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the child was trying to say.
- Contact one of (organisations Designated Persons) for advice / guidance.
- The Designated Person may then discuss the concern / suspicion with the relevant organisation, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral.
- If Designated Person is not available, or it is inappropriate to approach them, the volunteer / member of staff with the concern should make direct contact with the relevant organisation themselves
- Record any discussions or actions taken within 24 hours.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about what to do if you are worried a child is being abused, contact the NSPCC or the local council

PENHA contact information:

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Portpool Lane

London

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United Kingdom

Tele: 00442072420202

Email: info@penhanetwork.org

Website: www.penhanetwork.org