

Child Protection Policy

(Name, address and brief outline of organisation plus contact details)



Yellow highlighted sections should be amended as necessary to reflect the situation in individual establishments

Introduction

It will be the unequivocal policy of (*name of organisation*) that child abuse, in any form, will not be tolerated.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

- All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children.
- The duty bearers are accountable to eradicate child abuse.

Definitions

- A **child** means every human being below the age of eighteen years.
- **Child abuse** means sexual abuse or other physical or mental harm deliberately caused to a child.
- **Child Protection Policy** is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to protect children from harm, and clearly defines what is required to protect the children attending (*name of organisation*) or participating in any functions related to (*name of organisation*). The policy will be followed by administrators, employees, visitors, students, and any other person who comes in contact with the children of (*name of organisation*).

Statement of Commitment

While providing a quality education to the students attending (*name of organisation*), the first priority will be protecting the safety of the students. (*name of organisation*) is committed to ensure that the children are not exposed to abuse, exploitation, violence or neglect.

Best Interests of the Child

All decisions and actions concerning a child will take the best interest of the child as the most important consideration. It will be the policy of (*name of organisation*) that decisions or actions regarding any child or group of children should ensure that the positive impact of the decision or action will outweigh any negative impact.

Non-Discrimination

It will be the policy of (*name of organisation*) to enforce a policy of non-discrimination at all times. All children will be treated with respect and will be treated with equal consideration.

Participation and Self-Determination

(*name of organisation*) abides by the principle that a child has the right to have his or her views taken into account in accordance with their age development in major decisions affecting their life. They will be given the opportunity to express their ideas and views and be heard on matters affecting them.

(*name of organisation*) will in all cases give serious consideration to the child's wishes (and those of their legal guardians where appropriate) throughout the decision-making process.

The guidelines in this Child Protection Policy protect both the child from abuse and adults from false accusation.

It will be the policy of (name of organisation) to:

- Respect the rights and dignity of the children, families and communities with whom we work, and always act according to the best interest of children
- Demonstrate commitment to actively preventing child abuse
- Take positive action to prevent child abusers becoming involved with (name of organisation), and will enforce stringent measures against any associate of (name of organisation) who commits child abuse

To ensure the above commitment, (name of organisation) is committed to upholding the:

- United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child
- Cambodian constitution, especially articles 41 and 42 (Please see appendix I)
- The Cambodian current and future laws and tools on child rights
- Positive traditional practice

Policy Participants

This policy applies to all associates of (name of organisation) including teachers, administrators, volunteers, and any other employee. It will also apply to any visitors to the premises including, but not limited to, tourists, contractors, consultants, friends, parents or visiting officials.

(name of organisation) will appoint a Child Protection Officer (CPO) who is responsible for ensuring that the Child Protection Policy is distributed and understood by all associates of (name of organisation).

All employees and regular visitors to (name of organisation) shall receive a copy of the relevant policies and shall acknowledge their receipt of, and their responsibilities under, the policy.

The School Administrator and the Child Protection Officer will advise and assist all employees of (name of organisation) about the child protection policies will be responsible for the effective implementation of the policy.

Visitors to (name of organisation)

- Visitors to the school should make advanced arrangements with the School Administrator prior to their visit
- Visitors should remain accompanied by a staff member, and no visitor shall be left alone with children during their visit
- Photography is permitted with permission from the School Administrator or a senior member of the staff

Personnel Recruitment, Screening and Orientation

- All prospective teachers or other employees will be informed of (name of organisation)'s Child Protection Policy
- Screening of applicants will include a personal interview and receipt of a valid form of identification. During the interview process, applicants will be asked about previous work with children
- Where possible and permissible by local law, applicants for positions as a staff member or volunteer are requested to give permission for a criminal record or police check for any conviction related to child abuse or other relevant offences. Expatriates will be subject to the same background checks as possible and permissible by law in their home countries
- (name of organisation) reserves the right to terminate a contract if reference checks (and background check in the future) reveal that the person is not suitable to work with children or for any reason that may put children at risk

- The Child Protection Policy will be reviewed during new staff orientation, and the CPO shall ensure all new personnel acknowledge in writing their receipt and understanding of the policy, with signed copies of their acknowledgement kept in the personnel files

Code of Conduct for (name of organisation) Personnel

A code of conduct gives guidelines deemed to be appropriate and proper behavior for (name of organisation) associates when interacting with children. They are primarily designed to protect children but are also intended to protect personnel from false accusations of inappropriate behavior or abuse.

- No child is to be taken on a motorbike, tuk-tuk, or car without making prior arrangements with the administrator or CPO
- No child is to be taken to any employee's home, guesthouse, hotel or accommodation
- **Teachers and associates** are not permitted to take any child to a café, restaurant or buy them food, unless permission has been given by the Administrator or CPO
- No presents are to be bought for the children without prior approval from the Administrator or the CPO
- (name of organisation) teachers and associates should not act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children or perpetrate any form of emotional abuse
- (name of organisation) associates must display appropriate language, actions and relationships with children at all times. Extra care should be given to protecting the reputation of both female children and (name of organisation) staff by ensuring that language and behavior at all times reflect appropriate male-female relationships, which are respectful of Cambodian culture and customs
- The (name of organisation) Staff must take extreme care when interacting physically with the Children. Members of the staff must not fondle, hold, kiss, hug or touch minors in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way. Under no circumstance should any physical contact be or have the appearance of being sexual in any way
- (name of organisation) personnel must not exert inappropriate physical force when dealing with the Children. This includes pushing, shoving, hitting, slapping or any other action that could cause fear, intimidation or distress
- (name of organisation) personnel are responsible for their actions and reactions to children at all times. The adult is always considered responsible for his or her actions regardless of how a child behaves towards them
- Where possible and practical staff should implement the 'two-adult' rule, whereby two or more adults supervise all activities with Children. If for any reason an individual conversation or counseling session is warranted with a child, another adult must be within visual contact
- Inappropriate conduct toward children, including failure to follow the behavior standards stated above, is grounds for discipline, up to and including dismissal from employment and/or police notification and legal action

Reporting and Investigating Abuse or Suspected Abuse

(name of organisation) takes child abuse very seriously. Child abuse in any form including physical, emotional or sexual abuse is a serious offence. Any infringements of this type will be prosecuted to the full extent of law. Child abusers are not likely to remain in an environment where workers are trained to identify and report suspicious behavior. For these reasons, all personnel are responsible for reporting suspected child abuse or exploitation of any kind.

Any person who has knowledge of, suspects, or has witnessed a potential child protection issue involving (name of organisation) personnel should immediately contact **the CPO or the School Administrator**. A report should be made immediately, within 24 hours, to allow for early intervention and a prompt investigation. This verbal report should be followed with a written statement within a further 48 hours. Failure to report suspected child abuse or misconduct may result in disciplinary action.

Appendix 1.

Royal Government of Cambodia Constitution (unofficial translation)

Article 41: Causing wounds on purpose:

- Anyone who beats/fights another person on purpose resulting in permanent disability must be punished by putting them in prison for 1 to 5 years.
- If they cause temporary disability less than 6 months they must be punished and put in prison for 6 months to 2 years.
- If it doesn't cause disability they are to be punished by putting them in prison for 2 months to 1 year.
- If using any kind of weapons must be punished 2 times more.

Article 42: Rape

- Anyone who rapes another, even the same sex or opposite sex by touching or actions involving sex must be punished to put in prison for 1 year to 3 years.
- If the rape is conducted by coercing a victim younger than 16 years old then the person who commits this must be punished 2 times more.