



Safe services

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Policy Summary

This policy outlines our commitment to keeping the children and young people who engage with the Red Cross safe. It outlines the expectations around how our people should act to make or keep a child safe from harm, and outlines the context within which we deliver our safeguarding role. It also provides a clear framework for our approach to safeguarding children by setting out principles for the effective safeguarding of children and young people.

Policy owner	Executive Director, UK Operations
Policy lead	Development Officer, Children and Young People's Safeguarding
Audience	All staff, volunteers, delegates and any other representatives of the British Red Cross.
Legislation and regulation	<i>Children Act, 1989; Children (Scotland Act) 1995; Children (Northern Ireland) Order, 1995; Children Act 2004; Social Services Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014; Female Genital Mutilation Act, 2003; Counter Terrorism and Security Act, 2015; Modern Slavery Act 2015.</i>
Formally endorsed by	Board of Trustees
Endorsement date	December 2016
Next review	December 2019

1 Introduction

- 1.1 As an agency that increasingly has contact with children our role could be crucial in alerting the authorities to the suffering of a child and in triggering the process of stopping it.
- 1.2 The British Red Cross is committed to developing and maintaining a thorough, fit for purpose and transparent safeguarding approach so that the children and young people who receive our services and who are involved in our work in the UK and overseas receive maximum safeguards. We believe the welfare of children is best served by the development and maintenance of open and transparent ways of working and by addressing poor practice as it arises. We are committed to embedding an open culture around our work with children.

2 Policy statement

- 2.1 The British Red Cross strives to ensure that children and young people who engage with the organisation do so in safety. We are committed to providing children with the highest attainable standards of safeguarding and protection. We strive to ensure our people understand the duties that this policy places upon them and know how to respond appropriately when they have concerns about the welfare of a child or young person.

Purpose and aims

- 2.2 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that we:
 - > Safeguard and protect children and young people;
 - > Provide our people with appropriate training and support;
 - > Comply with external legislation and regulation, as well as standards set by partner and commissioning organisations;
 - > Manage and report internal risks within the organisation; and
 - > Monitor the safeguarding standards and expectations that we have set ourselves.

Scope

- 2.3 This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, delegates and other representatives of the British Red Cross.

Standards

- 2.4 The British Red Cross believes that everyone who comes into contact with a child has a responsibility to safeguard and promote the child's welfare, and to protect them from all forms of harm and abuse. Child abuse is never acceptable. **We accept our responsibility to ensure the safety of all the children and young people who have contact with us.**
- 2.5 We have significant contact with children in a number of different contexts and we believe that they all have an equal right to protection irrespective of their gender, disability, ethnicity, sexuality, religion or age. **Our children and young people's**

safeguarding policy and procedures will be applied to all children without discrimination.

- 2.6 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as relevant UK legislation will inform our work with children as appropriate. This includes a commitment to safeguard the children with whom we have contact. **Where relevant to the British Red Cross' services and humanitarian mission we will uphold and advance the rights of all the children with whom we work.**
- 2.7 We believe that all children have the right to grow up safe from harm without threat to their health, safety and welfare. Further they should not be prevented from fulfilling their full potential. We will value and respect the children that our work, in all its forms, brings us into contact with. **We will listen to children and promote their right to be heard and their right to participate in the decisions that affect them.**¹
- 2.8 Our work with children and young people is an essential part of the work that we do and the relationships between adults, children and young people is mutually beneficial. It brings value to the organisation, and it enhances our work. **We will value the contribution that children and young people make to our organisation. We will make the British Red Cross a safe and welcoming environment for children.**
- 2.9 In endorsing this policy we commit to putting the protection of children who have suffered or are at risk of suffering harm due to ill-treatment firmly on the organisation's agenda and the organisation further commits to **ensuring that all our people are equipped to know how to respond appropriately to welfare concerns regarding any child that the British Red Cross engages with.** This is achieved through our recruitment procedures, on-going training and awareness raising and supervision.

3 Responsibilities

- 3.1 Safeguarding children at the British Red Cross is the responsibility of all of our people. Everyone, regardless of role or the service within which they operate, must be vigilant concerning the signs and indicators that a child may have been abused or is at risk of abuse and all must be prepared to act in order to make or keep a child safe from harm, including knowing what to do if they are concerned about a child.
- 3.2 Safeguarding and protection officers (SPO) are the first point of contact for staff and volunteers who have a concern about the welfare of a child or young person. They are based within service lines to increase accessibility and bring service context to the role. They play a key role in how the organisation is able to respond to welfare concerns regarding children. In the UK, they liaise with statutory authorities and ensure that information regarding concerns about a child is forwarded to the

¹ However it is recognised that our people, in the interests of safeguarding the child, may have to override the wishes and feelings of a child or young person if this is necessary to protect a child from harm.

safeguarding lead (head of quality). Internationally they make contact with relevant authorities and agencies to enable them to follow up concerns. They also respond to queries on child protection and safeguarding issues and concerns, reporting and other procedures, and offer support or signposting to appropriate services.

- 3.3 In the UK the SPOs are supported in their safeguarding work by the development officer for children and young people's safeguarding and the youth engagement safeguarding support. Both officers are available for SPOs to discuss immediate and on-going safeguarding concerns, and offer guidance and support when a concern is raised.
- 3.4 Internationally SPOs are supported by the head of international human resources (HIHR), the head of quality and the development officer – children and young people's safeguarding. Relevant staff will also be consulted to assess any possible trafficking concerns. These officers are available to support and advise where a concern is raised. The head of quality and the HIHR will also record and monitor all children's safeguarding concerns and follow up reports.
- 3.5 The safeguarding lead officer at the British Red Cross is the head of quality. They are responsible for the policies, procedures, guidance and all other initiatives used by the organisation to keep children safe and to raise awareness regarding the abuse of children. They are also responsible for the provision of information to the Executive Leadership Team and Board of Trustees, including alerting them to any organisational risks associated with safeguarding; and ensuring potentially serious incidents are reported to the governance support unit.
- 3.6 Line Managers must ensure their direct reports are aware of this policy and that they know what to do if they have concerns about a child. Managers should encourage an open and transparent way of working that facilitates a strong safeguarding culture within their teams and more generally within the organisation.
- 3.7 The Board of Trustees have approved this policy and retain an overview of the safeguarding issues facing children and young people and our responses to them. The board will encourage and support our ability to function as an effective learning organisation specifically in response to incidents, allegations and concerns regarding the safeguarding of children and young people.
- 3.8 The Service Quality and Assurance Committee receive quarterly reports detailing the numbers and categories of concerns and the service lines in which they originate. The Committee will note trends and developments and will liaise with ELT to ensure we maintain a fit for purpose safeguarding response.
- 3.9 The Executive Director of UK Operations has the responsibility for the development, maintenance and adherence to this policy; and UK Directors have responsibility for the adherence to this policy within their service line.
- 3.10 Internationally, the Executive Director, International, is responsible for the development of and adherence to international child protection procedures. They

will hold an overview of child protection issues in our international programmes and/or with our international partners.

- 3.11 Members of the leadership group of the British Red Cross will consider and take account of children's safeguarding issues when policies are developed and decisions are made which are likely to have an impact on our safeguarding work.
- 3.12 Line Managers have responsibility to oversee and ensure that personnel work within the framework of this policy
- 3.13 Service safeguarding leads will act as a point of contact between the safeguarding children and young people development officer and their service including assisting with the initial set up of safeguarding arrangements for their service line, sharing learning and horizon scanning and service overview of safeguarding children's issues.

4 Laws and regulations

- 4.1 Legislation relating to the protection of safeguarding is set within different frameworks across the UK.
- 4.2 In England and Wales Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 creates a duty for the key agencies who work with children to put in place arrangements to make sure that they take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when going about their business. Whilst this duty is aimed at agencies in the statutory sector, we reference this as good practice. The Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 outlines similar voluntary sector responsibilities. Whilst there is no definitive legislative framework conveying similar duties in Northern Ireland it is clearly good practice to adopt a similar approach regarding safeguarding responsibilities.
- 4.3 The Social Services Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 introduced a new duty to report to the local authority any child suspected of being at risk or experiencing abuse or neglect. The Female Genital Mutilation Act, 2003 as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015, introduced a mandatory reporting duty for all regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales. Professionals must report to the police if they are informed by a girl under 18 that she has undergone an act of FGM or if they observe physical signs that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on public bodies to prevent people being drawn into terrorism and places a duty on these bodies to report to the police where they suspect a person is being radicalised to commit offences.
- 4.4 Internationally, the fundamental rights and responsibilities relating to children are set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. At a practical level, the Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC) Task Team on Accountability to Affected Populations and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse aims to foster a culture of accountability and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

at all levels of the humanitarian system, including within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Its work includes the protection of children.

- 4.5 The Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance² recognises that many voluntary agencies are active in taking steps to safeguard the children and young people with whom they work. The guidance states that organisations in the voluntary sector that work with children need to have arrangements in place to safeguard children in the same way as organisations in the public sector. The Sphere Standards and the Do No Harm Standards set standards of protection for affected populations, including child protection and protection from sexual abuse and exploitation, for organisations working in international humanitarian assistance.

5 Monitoring and compliance

We will ensure compliance with the policy and procedures by:

- > Maintaining and reviewing records relating to staff DBS checks (Disclosure Barring Service)³, PVG in Scotland and Access Northern Ireland, and registration with the independent safeguarding authorities;
- > Recording and securely storing our concerns via the Datix reporting system and developing effective retrieval mechanisms to maximise the use of these records;
- > Ensuring our people are informed during induction about the importance the organisation places on our safeguarding responsibilities;
- > Ensuring our people have access to this policy, procedures, guidance and have access to our *Putting Young People First* booklet and that young volunteers have access to our *Looking after Yourself and Your Friends* booklet;
- > Regularly assessing the frequency and relevance of the training available; the numbers attending sessions; the incidence of concerns and their subsequent disposals; the understanding amongst staff of our procedures; and support made available to volunteers and staff called upon to respond to welfare concerns;
- > Where a safeguarding concern is raised from within an activity regulated by the Care Quality Commission⁴ the relevant registered manager will be responsible for notifying the Commission, and will notify the governance support unit. If appropriate they will be supported by an SPO;
- > We will use our annual safeguarding week to raise awareness and increase understanding of safeguarding issues. In doing so we will highlight the importance of compliance with this policy, procedures and guidance.

6 Training and support

² Working Together to Safeguard Children – A guide to inter agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, HM Government 2015

³ This has replaced the Criminal Records Bureau(CRB) checks

⁴ Activities related to ambulances and patient transport vehicles

- 6.1 An introduction to safeguarding children and young people is included in both the Foundation Training Programme and the Retail Training Programme.
- 6.2 Service specific safeguarding children and young people training is to be available for staff and volunteers where this is recognised as being a part of the role description.
- 6.3 Specific training is available for volunteers and staff who undertake the Safeguarding and Protection – Children and Young People Officer role.
- 6.4 A refresher e-learning module is available for our people who have undertaken the now discontinued safeguarding awareness – raising course.

7 Review and maintenance

- 7.1 The Policy is owned by the Executive Director, UK Operations.
- 7.2 The head of quality is the lead safeguarding and protection officer at the British Red Cross.
- 7.3 The Policy will be reviewed annually by the development officer for children and young people's safeguarding to ensure that it meets legislative, regulatory and sector good practice standards with a full review being undertaken every three years. The next review is due in December 2019.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Where necessary, policies may be supplemented, supported or complemented by other documents. At a minimum the appendices should include:
 - > Appendix 1: related documents
 - > Appendix 2: document provenance
 - > Appendix 3: equality impact assessment summary
 - > Appendix 4: safeguarding children - arrangements for voluntary sector organisations

Appendix 1: related documents

Document title	Relationship to this policy
Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedures and Guidance	Guidance on how to apply this policy
Guidelines regarding the use of Social Media and our work with Children and Young People	Provides guidance on engaging appropriately with children via social media
Safeguarding Adults (at risk of abuse) Policy	Outlines policy for responding to concerns about adults at risk of abuse
Raising a Concern Policy and Procedures	Outlines the procedure for raising concerns about suspected organisational wrongdoing
Ex Offenders Policy	Necessary to protect children from offenders whilst recognising which offences are relevant or otherwise
Confidentiality Policy	Safeguarding regarding children should be done so within appropriate boundaries of confidentiality
Risk Management Policy	Offers guidance on how to assess and minimise the risks of safeguarding allegations and incidents
Incident Reporting Policy	Outlines where a safeguarding incident is also a serious incident and provides guidance on what to do
Serious Incident Procedure	This procedure sets out what should be reported and to whom as a serious incident within UK services. It also details the process for investigating serious incidents.
Health and Safety Policy	Offers guidance where safeguarding and health and safety overlap
Lone Working and personal Safety Policy	Offers guidance for situations when staff or volunteers may be working in isolation
Social Media Guidelines	Provides guidance on the safe use of social media
Guidance on Self Neglect	Relevant where adult self-neglect may impact upon a child
Safeguarding adults with insecure immigration status	Contains information that may impact upon children in families with insecure immigration status

Appendix 2: document provenance

Date endorsed	Category	Summarise changes made	Reason for changes	Consulted	Changes endorsed by
Dec 2016	Scheduled review	Transfer to new organisational policy template Changes to titles and roles following recent reshaping of work Listing of recent legislation in Wales and also regarding prevention of terrorism and FGM Minor changes to international reporting	To ensure legal compliance and to reflect structural changes within the Red Cross	UKMT, PPGG, Quality team, SPOs, International and ILD, other stakeholders including HR, Head of Youth Engagement and Diversity, Head of Overseas Branches	Board
Dec 2013	Scheduled Review	Incorporate changes to job titles and roles Reflect legislative changes Reflect new attitudes to child trafficking and FGM Split Policy from Procedures and create two separate documents	To reflect internal and external changes	OSIT, Education and engagement team, Head of Quality and Outcomes, International	Board

Appendix 3: equality impact assessment

An assessment was carried out in October 2016 relating to this policy. The outcome of the EIA was that no major changes were needed to the policy.

Appendix 4: safeguarding children - arrangements for voluntary sector organisations

To fulfil their commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, all organisations that provide services for, or work with, children must have:

- > Clear priorities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, explicitly stated in strategic policy documents;
- > A clear commitment by senior management to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare;
- > A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- > Recruitment and human resources management procedures that take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, including arrangements for appropriate checks on new staff and volunteers;
- > Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers;
- > Arrangements to ensure that all staff undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities effectively, and keep this up-to-date by refresher training at regular intervals; and that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers who work with children, are made aware of the establishment's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and their responsibilities regarding this;
- > Policies for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (e.g. pupils/students), including a child protection policy, and procedures that are in accordance with guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures;
- > Arrangements to work effectively with other organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including arrangements for sharing information;
- > A culture of listening to, and engaging in dialogue with, children – seeking children's views in ways that are appropriate to their age and understanding, and taking account of those views in individual decisions and in the establishment or development of services; and
- > Appropriate whistle-blowing procedures, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed.