



THE RHINO ARK KENYA CHARITABLE TRUST

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CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Date of Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy: November 2022

Policy approved by: Christian Lambrechts

Signature:

Overall responsibility for policy: Board of Directors

Person responsible for implementation of the policy: Human Resources Officer

Policy applies to: Staff, Directors, contractors, suppliers, volunteers and associated personnel engaged with work or visits related to Rhino Ark, including consultants and programme visitors, partners of Rhino Ark, as well as any external party who wishes to raise a concern about malpractice in the organization.

Date of next Review: November 2025

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1 POLICY STATEMENT

The Rhino Ark Kenya Charitable Trust (thereafter referred to as RA) is committed to safeguarding the well-being of all the children and young people with whom our project comes into contact. Our policy on child protection is in accordance with applicable Kenyan and international laws for the protection and enhancement of the welfare of children.

We are committed to promoting these rights in our projects by vigorously applying the doctrine of prevention through good practice and in collaboration with our partners.

The RA has a zero-tolerance policy against all forms of abuse meted out against children.

2 PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility.

Organizations and professionals who work with children are required to ensure that their policies and practices reflect this responsibility. This policy therefore clearly defines what action is required in order to keep children safe, and ensuring consistency of behaviour so that all staff follow the same process.

3 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 The Constitution of Kenya, 2010

Article 53 of the Constitution of Kenya details the rights of a child which include the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, all forms of violence, inhuman treatment and punishment, and hazardous or exploitative behaviour. The provision further embodies the Best Interest Principle as a matter of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.

3.2 The Children's Act, 2001

The Children's Act of 2001 is the guiding statute with regards to children's matters.

4 WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse can take the form of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect. Child abuse can have long term and significant effects on a child or young person's development. RA is committed to responding without delay to any suspicions of child abuse.

4.1 Types of Abuse

4.1.1 Physical Abuse

This abuse occurs when a person intentionally injures or threatens to injure a child or young person. The injury may involve: slapping, kicking, punching, shaking, burning, shoving, grabbing, pinching, biting, strangling or any other form of behaviour causing physical injury.

4.1.2 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is when a person uses their power over a child or young person to involve them in sexual activity. Sexual abuse covers a wide range of sexual activities including both contact and non-contact situations. Non-contact abuse can involve obscene calls or remarks made in any written form. It involves exposure to pornography or being photographed for pornography.

4.1.3 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse involves a consistent attack on the child or young person's self-esteem to the extent that it is affecting the child or young person's physical, emotional, social and/or intellectual development. It can take the form of rejection, put-downs, intimidation, threats, frightening or isolating the child or young person.

5 CODE OF CONDUCT

All RA staff MUST abide by this Policy.

Staff and volunteers (both from internal and from partners) must:

- a) Never physically assault or abuse children or advocate for such abuse among children and others or engage in any acts of violence in front of children;
- b) Never develop any physical/sexual relationships with children or act in any way to suggest so;
- c) Never discriminate against children on the basis of their gender, race, religion, or physical condition, among others;
- d) Never use language that is inappropriate in front of children; and,
- e) Never use or promote the use of any form of drugs in front of children.

6 PARTNERS CODE

We work with different partners during the planning and execution of our projects. Our partners are carefully selected to promote our values and standards in relation to children protection. While we seek to work with as many partners as possible, we reserve all rights to decline partnerships where we deem such may be detrimental to the wellbeing of children.

In most cases we work with schools in our projects. The goal is to share our values with these important partners and to properly coordinate to ensure the children have a safe, meaningful, authentic, practical, enjoyable and engaging experience.

It is therefore paramount that we offer the children a safe environment where they can grow and learn.

7 INCIDENT REPORTING PRINCIPLES

RA has the following guiding principles in relation to responding to concerns about a child or young person's safety and welfare:

- a) The right of the child /young person to be listened to, protected and supported;
- b) The right of the child/young person and their families to have their concerns acted on;
- c) The right of the alleged perpetrator to a fair process;
- d) Everyone's right to privacy; and,
- e) The responsibility of RA to ensure all concerns are dealt with promptly and in a respectful manner.

8 INCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURE

Reporting shall be in written form for purposes of proper record keeping. If the child is reporting in person, then the designated person receiving the report shall cause it to be in writing, taking care to note down the specific acts of commission or omission, as well as the specific dates or the period within which the abuse occurred. More specifically, the reporting procedure is as follows:

- a) The employee or volunteer who has received a disclosure of child abuse or who has concerns about a child should bring them to the attention of the Designated Team Leader immediately.
- b) Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes them to harm or of risk to harm pending intervention.
- c) Where the Designated Team Leader considers that a child protection or welfare concern meets the reasonable grounds for concern, then the Designated Team Leader

shall refer the matter to the Executive Director of RA for action and where appropriate and after consultation, the matter shall be referred to relevant authorities.

- d) Under no circumstances shall RA fail to report or fail to cause to report the matter to the relevant authorities when the matter is of a criminal nature.

8 FILMING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Our projects are often documented by filming and taking pictures. Only commissioned persons will be involved in this work and are briefed on our values and standards as relates to the protection of children. Any materials collected are used in conformity with the laws of Kenya related to photography and video coverage involving children.

9 DESIGNATED TEAM LEADERS

All efforts must be made to have the Designated Team Leaders to be persons who have a professional relationship with the children who participate in our projects. These may be teachers from schools where the children come from.

Where this is not possible the Designated Team Leaders MUST have undergone at least one day's training on child abuse and creating a child-safe environment to fulfill this role. The organization shall maintain on record, evidence that this training has been provided.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

All programmes and activities at RA are required to undergo regular child protection risk assessments. This will be carried out by a Designated Member of Management of RA Kenya. The risks are evaluated and strategies developed to minimize the likelihood of harm occurring.

11 REVIEW AND MONITORING

The policies and procedures outlined in this document are to be formally reviewed annually. Feedback on the policy will be sought from: staff and volunteers, children and young people attending, and from anyone else involved with the programme.

The review will assess:

- a) Whether all parts of this policy and related procedures are being successfully adhered to and whether any alterations are necessary; and,
- b) Changes or updates in information and/or law related to Child Protection.

12 PUBLICATION OF THE POLICY

12.1 This Policy will be posted on RA's website at www.rhinoark.org.

APPENDIX I - ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ACCEPTANCE FORM

I (Name of Employee), ID Number of Rhino Ark do hereby acknowledge that I have read and understood and agreed to comply with the Child Protection and Safeguarding.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witnessed by (Name): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____