

SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR UK CHARITY 'UZIMA IN OUR HANDS'

Uzima in our Hands is an Isle of Wight based Christian Charity. We support vulnerable children in rural Western Kenya mainly with scholarships to attend school.

Our Mission Statement:

- To support very vulnerable children in rural Western Kenya
- To provide education, food and basic health care for children who live in extreme poverty and need.

GENERAL PRACTICE

In the UK

1. As **Trustees** do not come into contact with children or vulnerable adults in the normal course of events there is no need for them to have a DBS check .
2. All visitors to the Nanderema Project (known in this policy as **Volunteers**) need to obtain a DBS check or show the trustees one completed in the last 2 years, before they travel. They may also need a reference of good character from someone other than family before travel if they are not known to the trustees.
3. Emmy, the Kenyan based Project Leader, has been requested to copy in a trustee to **all communications abroad** associated with the charity. This is to make sure that no one visits/contacts the Project who is not suitable. Communication could be by email or private message.
4. No details of where a volunteer who is under 18 lives or their name, unless specific consent has been given by their parents, will be displayed on **the internet**.

In Kenya

1. Where **Volunteers** may come in contact with children, they will be expected to adhere to the guidelines in the **Code of Conduct** and in the use of **Electronic Communication** (*see below*).
2. Appropriate volunteers may be given responsibility for official **photography**, which, once shared with the Trustees, must be deleted from their personal device.
3. Volunteers who take photos of recognisable individuals or groups of children must not identify them by name; however, supporters may be given access to more personal details where appropriate.
4. The **Safeguarding Policy in Kenya** will be reviewed by Trustees, in the immediate absence of a CBO, on a yearly basis.
5. The visiting trustee/s will take a copy of all the **staff's police checks** which must be renewed every 2 years and make sure to the best of their ability that all other sections of the Policy have been followed.
6. Records will be kept of any **email conversations** regarding safeguarding.
7. **NB Should the Safeguarding Policy not be being adhered to, this will be seen as a serious breach of trust, between the Project and UIOH, with serious ensuing consequences.**

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEERS

Although there will generally be minimal contact between Volunteers and children whilst in Kenya, we do expect all volunteers to adhere to the following guidance, when applicable, in our **Code of Conduct**.

We will always:

- Treat children with respect and dignity;
- Use age appropriate language and tone of voice;
- Listen carefully, noting any body language for better understanding;
- Not engage in any of the following:
 - o Invading the privacy of children when they are using the toilet;
 - o Rough games involving physical contact between a volunteer and a child;
 - o Sexually provocative games/ comments, even "in fun";
 - o Scapegoating, belittling, or ridiculing a child;
 - o Any form of physical punishment.
- If the situation arises, only ever use minimal force to restrain a child as an absolute last resort in order to protect them or a third person from harm (and make Trustees aware of situation as soon as practicable);
- Never accompany any child to toilets or washrooms;
- Not respond to or encourage excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature; and ensure that responses are fair yet appropriately firm where there may be more extreme behaviours;
- Ensure that any (minimal) physical contact is age appropriate, sensitive to the child's needs, within public view, and used only in exceptional circumstances; (Volunteers should be prepared to be accountable to fellow volunteers for their use of touch and physical contact and should listen to the concerns of others if it is felt that boundaries are being crossed.)
- Not plan to ever be alone with children:
- If a child requests a private meeting with a Volunteer for any reason:
 - o Ensure that another Volunteer/member of the Project Team is aware of the meeting and its time and venue and that the child is aware of this too;
 - o Where possible, hold the meeting in a quiet corner of a room with others present;
 - o If not possible, hold it in a public place where there is good visibility;
 - o No volunteer should ever invite a child to where they are staying alone or go to the child's home if they are alone;

USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

These guidelines are for the safe use of Mobile Phones, Instant Messaging Services, Social Networking Sites and Video Calls known as '**electronic communication**'.

General Principles For All Electronic Communication

- There should normally be no electronic communication with a child in the Project.

NB Where a child has left the Project and is over the age of 18, contact may only be established on a personal basis and not under the auspices of the Charity.

- Volunteers should only use electronic means of communication with those young people from whom appropriate consent has been given by their parent/guardian. Unless this has been given, electronic means of communication is not permitted between volunteers and individual children.

- Volunteers should not put any pressure on children to reveal their email address or mobile phone number and should be aware that the Head of the Nanderema Project (as Safeguarding Lead and, where appropriate, in loco parentis) has the right to decide whether this information is known
- Electronic communication with children under the age of 11 should only take place with a teacher/parent or guardian present (for example in a group video call).
- Volunteers should not share any personal information, including mobile numbers or email addresses, and should not request or respond to any request for personal information.
- The Head of the Nanderema Project and involved Trustee must be informed of any concerns.

Texting, Email and Instant Messaging

- It is recognised that messaging applications such as WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger have become a substitute for text messaging and that these services should also not normally be used according to the guidelines above.
- Messaging applications, in and around the Nanderema vicinity, that provide no record of conversation (via automatic deletion) such as SnapChat should **never** be used by volunteers and trustees to communicate.
- When texting, emailing or using other messaging applications “Text speak” (a form of abbreviated language/slang) should be avoided so that there is no misunderstanding of what is being communicated.

Social Networking Sites

- Volunteers/trustees are asked not to become friends or communicate with children in the Project in this way unless parental consent has been given for any child involved.

Photography

- Any photos of children must not have name or where they live attached to photo.
 - Care must be taken about what is said about any children on social media, since **NB** anything posted will also be seen in Kenya!

Relationships between visitors and Nanderema Project staff

Finally, extreme caution is needed with communicating / making friendships between visitors and staff. As it is possible that staff could ask for financial help etc.. or share sensitive information about the Project in Kenya, visitors must remember they are representing the Charity and pass on anything sensitive or matters outside of their remit to Joy/Trustees.

NB In accordance with the remit outlined in our Charity Commission objectives, the Charity is not authorised to make individual gifts in response to individual requests.

Signed.....Joy Mowle.....Name...JOY MOWLE.....

Date.....08.08.2024.....Date of Review.....August 2025.....