

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### Guiding principles

***“Children have rights as human beings and also need special care and protection.” UNICEF***

*people and places* is in absolute agreement with this statement. We have developed our Child Protection Policy as part of our commitment to protect children and young people wherever we work. This Policy is based on information from our local partners, as well as information on the UNICEF and ECPAT websites.

UNICEF – <http://www.unicef.org/crc> - Convention on the Rights of the Child

ECPAT – <http://www.ecpat.net/EI/index.asp>

End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes

Here are some of the key points in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:

- ***All children should be protected from violence, abuse and neglect, and governments should protect them.*** Article 19
- ***Children should not be allowed to do work that is dangerous or might make them ill, or stop them going to school.*** Article 32
- ***Children have the right to be protected from dangerous drugs, and from the business of making or selling them.*** Article 33
- ***Nobody can do anything to your body that you do not want them to do, and grown-ups should protect you.*** Article 34
- ***No child should be punished in a way that humiliates or hurts them.*** Article 37

All children have a right to feel safe and their welfare is a high priority. It is especially important for us that children will feel safe while sharing in the activities of the projects we support through volunteer placements and participation.

We aim to achieve this during all volunteer placements through:

**Prevention:** *people and places* exercises due diligence through our criteria for volunteer selection. All volunteers are required to provide references and criminal records checks before any project is asked to accept their placements.

**Awareness:** volunteers will be provided with destination-specific codes of conduct, including this Child Protection Policy and that of the relevant project where available. Through awareness and practice, volunteers will minimise the risks to children. *people and places*, through our partnerships with local Project Management Teams (PMTs), provide support and supervision before, during and after volunteer placements. When volunteers are valued, respected and fairly treated they can enjoy their work and the children will benefit.

**Reporting:** volunteers will know what steps to take when concerns arise regarding child safety. A Reporting Procedure is attached to this policy so that it is clear what to do if there is a concern about a

1 Naboth's Nursery, Canterbury Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8AX  
tel +44 (0) 8700 460 479 | email [info@travel-peopleandplaces.co.uk](mailto:info@travel-peopleandplaces.co.uk)

Child Protection matter. Named individuals within *people and places* and our local Project Management Teams (PMTs) are appointed as Child Protection Officers (CPOs) – the *people and places* CPO is Kate Stefanko. It is their responsibility to respond to any complaints made by volunteers, or relevant party.

**Responding:** volunteers can rest assured that our local Project Management Teams (PMTs) will take heed of any such reports and will take action as appropriate.

We value and respect all children and, in partnership with local PMTs, encourage all volunteers to listen to children's views and suggestions on matters that directly affect them.

*people and places*, in partnership with local PMTs, will review this policy annually to ensure that it is still relevant and meets all Child Protection requirements.

## **Criteria for volunteer selection & placement confirmation**

***people and places* will apply due diligence by:**

- Identifying that a volunteer applicant has experience and / or qualifications relevant to the project
- Discussing in advance a volunteer applicant's motivation to work with children
- Requiring information about relevant life experience
- Requiring relevant criminal records screening
- Taking up at least two reference checks by email and / or by phone
- Sharing all relevant information about the volunteer with the local PMT
- Providing volunteers with as much information as possible about the project and local context, including the PMT's Code of Conduct for volunteers
- Providing a placement outline and agreeing the volunteer's role with them
- Requiring volunteers to abide by and sign the Child Protection Policy Code of Conduct

**Local Project Management Teams will:**

- Discuss a volunteer application with the relevant project
- Require the project's acceptance of the volunteer applicant
- Provide *people and places* with an outline placement for the volunteer
- Provide local orientation and project introductions
- Provide emergency contact names and contact details
- Discuss and give appropriate training on child protection issues to accommodation providers.
- Meet regularly with the project and volunteers and accommodation hosts
- Support the volunteers in their agreed role

## **Policy Code of Conduct**

This outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all volunteers, whether long term or temporary. The Code serves to protect children and reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur. It also serves to protect volunteers by avoiding allegations being made.

*people and places*, PMTs and volunteers are required to comply with this Code of Conduct.

### ***people and places* commits to provide full support for volunteers to:**

- treat children and young people with respect, listen to and value their ideas and opinions
- listen to children and take relevant and appropriate action to protect their well-being
- report any violations of these standards of behaviour
- be aware of situations which may present risks and manage them effectively
- be visible and not work alone with the children, as far as possible

### ***people and places* requires that volunteers will not:**

- hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse children
- interact with any child in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- seek to use children in any way to meet adult needs
- use prejudice, oppressive behaviour and language with children
- discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability or sexuality
- develop 'special' relationships or physical/sexual relationships with children
- give gifts or show favouritism
- take a child on or in any form of transport, without prior agreement by the named CPO and PMT
- have a child/children to stay overnight without prior agreement by the child's parent or guardian
- be alone with a child in a room with the door closed, or spend excessive time alone with children away from others – including any children who may be members at their homestay/guesthouse, host's family or community.

This is not a complete list. The basic understanding is that we will all avoid actions or behaviour which may constitute bad practice or potentially abusive behaviour.

## **Photography and Video Code of Conduct**

***"All children have the right to privacy"*** Article 16 - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Children love having their photograph taken, and volunteers enjoy capturing such photographic memories, but we ask volunteers to respect children's right to privacy. Volunteers are expected to ask the children and the adults responsible for them if they can take photographs and we ask that they agree to this code of

conduct. If photographs or videos are intended for fund-raising or awareness-raising purposes, we ask that volunteers discuss this with the local PMT, project manager or *people and places* before publishing.

***People and places* requires that volunteers will agree:**

- to seek informed consent from the child and/or his/her parents or guardian prior to a recording, photograph or image being taken
- to explain how and where this material will be used
- not to use a child's name on any social networking sites, webpage or printed materials. This is for the child's protection. Names may be changed and this change indicated.
- not to post or publish photographs or videos of individual children in such a manner that might lead to that child being identified or put at risk
- not to take images that could be perceived as sexually provocative or degrading

## **Reporting procedure: what to do if you suspect any form of child abuse**

Child abusers are not likely to remain in an environment where staff and volunteers will identify and report suspicious behaviour.

<b>Who can make a report?</b>	Parent, Child, Staff, Volunteer or any concerned person.
<b>What can be reported</b>	Any child safety concerns including a child telling you of - abuse/harm; an accusation; a suspicion or observation of inappropriate behaviour; a break of Code of Conduct; environmental safety issues
<b>How is a report made</b>	Verbal report, letter, email, telephone, meeting.
<b>Who to report to</b>	The designated volunteer coordinator on the project – AND – <i>people and places</i> local partner  (Local partner will inform <i>people and places</i> named CPO by email within 48 hours of report)
<b>What happens next</b>	Internal Process with project to investigate complaint. PMT to follow up with project and <i>people and places</i> Due to privacy issues we may not be able to report back to the volunteer for some time Police or Child Support Network notified. Support offered to child, parent, person who reports and accused staff member/volunteer where required.
<b>Outcome</b>	Investigation; solution decided; relevant staff, volunteers, parents and child notified of outcome. Policies, procedures updated where necessary to avoid the same thing from happening again.

## **Internal Process for Investigating Abuse or Suspected Abuse**

1. Any person who has knowledge of, suspects, or has witnessed a potential child protection issue should immediately contact one of the following: local co-worker if appropriate, project principal or manager, PMT designated Child Protection Officer, *people and places*
2. A verbal and / or written report should be made within 24 hours to allow early intervention and prompt investigation.
3. On receipt of the report the designated CPO will begin an internal investigation.
4. The suspect or perpetrator will be informed that an allegation has been made against him / her and they will be given the opportunity to respond.
5. Where appropriate a complaint will be filed with the relevant Police and / or authorities. Full co-operation will be given to the authorities during any external investigation.
6. Where the suspect or perpetrator is an expatriate, the relevant law enforcement authorities will be informed with due regard given to the potential for extraterritorial proceedings by the expatriate's country of origin.
7. At all times the rights and welfare of the child is of the highest importance. Any investigation will aim to respect the privacy and safety of the child, ensuring that he / she is contacted in a child friendly manner.

## **Response to Investigation**

1. At the conclusion of the investigation, the suspect or perpetrator, the child and his / her family or guardian should be informed of concerns or allegation, the results of the investigation and what corrective action, if any, will be taken.
2. In the event that an allegation is proven to be untrue, or even fabricated, appropriate steps will be taken for follow-up with the person who has been accused, the child, and the person who reported the incident. Efforts will be made to provide assistance to an associate accused of abuse with children, including counselling or other appropriate forms of support.
3. If abuse is proven by the investigation, every effort will be made to assist the child in coping with any physical or emotional trauma he or she may be experiencing. This may include medical treatment, psychological counselling or any other form of assistance deemed necessary and appropriate.
4. If the investigation concludes that abuse has occurred which is subject to criminal prosecution according to national laws, all findings will be reported to the relevant national police authorities and full co-operation afforded them during an external investigation. If the accused is an expatriate, the relevant law enforcement authorities will also be informed with due regard given to the potential for extraterritorial proceedings by the expatriate's country of origin.
5. In the event an associate is discharged for proven child abuse, such information will be disclosed as requested by police, etc. Such disclosures will be made in accordance with applicable law and/or customs.

## VOLUNTEER COMPLIANCE AGREEMENT FORM

I have read this Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Photography Code of Conduct and agree to abide by all terms of it at all times.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_