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Definitions

- **Child abuse:** child abuse is all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power (WHO, 1999 & 2002).
- **Sexual Exploitation of Children:** Engagement in any type of sexual conduct with a person under the age of consent as defined previously. IRW's position on sexual engagements with under-aged children can never be legally consensual making it either a case of rape or indecent assault to be treated as a crime i.e. child abuse. *IRW adheres to the universal legal age of consent marked at 18, which means that any breach by staff even if consensual and legal in the particular context of operation will still be treated as a breach of this Child Safe Guarding Policy and of the organization's Code of Conduct and will warrant disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal and termination of contract.
- **Children-at-risk:** are persons under 18 who experience an intense and/or chronic risk factor, or a combination of risk factors in personal, environmental and/or relational domains that prevent them from pursuing and fulfilling their potential. Unlike an adult at risk they might not be able to communicate/ request access to care and as such adequate sensitive reporting referral mechanisms need to be in place to respond to their needs.
- **Child grooming:** Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children can be groomed online (through social media or online platforms) or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know (NSPCC, 2016).
- **Child Safeguarding focal point:** in order to implement the Child Safeguarding Policy, Islamic Relief has designated child safeguarding focal points, globally (at IRW) and locally (in each IR field office) who are responsible for supporting management implement the Child Safeguarding Policy, as well as receiving and managing concerns and complaints in accordance with the CSP.
- **Child protection:** child protection is the prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children (and refers to a subset of children's rights). It also describes the work being undertaken to strengthen laws, policies and systems which are designed to protect children (CPWG, KCS). Child Protection is part of an overall safeguarding umbrella policy and refers to the actions an organization takes to address a potential or befallen risk on a child beneficiary as a result of coming into contact with staff and stakeholders.

- **Child Safeguarding:** Child safeguarding is the responsibility that organisations have, to make sure their staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organisation has about children’s safety within the communities in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities (KCS, 2014). Child safeguarding encompasses the prevention of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and maltreatment of children by employees and other persons whom the company is responsible for, including contractors, business partners, visitors to premises and volunteers (Adapted from the UNICEF def.)
- **Child:** a child is every human being below the age of 18 years (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).
- **Code of conduct (or code of behaviour):** an agreement on rules of behaviour for a group or organisation. Islamic Relief has its own internal Code of Conduct which applies to all its staff members. In addition, they are bonded by the code of behaviour relating to children outlined in this policy.
- **Islamic Relief (IR) or Islamic Relief Family:** a collective reference to all IR operations in various countries that operate under the licence agreement and logo of Islamic Relief. This includes those focusing on program implementation (field offices), or fundraising (IR Partners) as well as the International Office.
- **Child Safeguarding Policy (CSP)** describes the organisation’s commitment to preventing and responding appropriately to harm to children. A child safeguarding policy provides the organisation with a formal approach to managing its duty of care. The primary object of pushing the policy notwithstanding (children welfare) it also protects the organization’s reputation. By setting clear standards of conduct, a properly implemented policy can reduce the risk of litigation by preventing or reducing the number of situations in which children suffer harm as a result of the organisation failing in its duty of care.
- **Informed Consent:** Capacity to freely give consent based on all available information, according to the age and evolving capacities of the child. If a child is asked to engage in a process they must be made aware of the time it will take, what exactly will be involved, their roles and responsibilities and possible consequences, only then will they be able to give their “informed consent”. Involving a guardian is also necessary to complete the consensual process.
- **Safeguarding Complaint:** a specific concern raised by someone who have themselves witnessed or experienced a failure by Islamic Relief or its representatives to meet its values, Code of Conduct or organisational policies and/or been alerted to such malpractice by others. Information provided, whether by a complainant

or any other person (source),
indicating conduct that may be in
breach of the Standards of conduct
but that has yet to be assessed.

- **Zero Tolerance Approach:** An organizational position on the misconduct of staff or stakeholders is prohibited and that every transgression will be acted upon.

1. Introduction

For Islamic Relief (IR) there is no greater priority than ensuring our work has the greatest positive impact on the people we serve. Inspired by our Islamic faith and guided by our values, we envisage a caring world where communities are empowered, social obligations are fulfilled and people respond as one to the suffering of others. Children are the heart of every community, and have been at the core of Islamic Relief's work over the past 30 years. In working with vulnerable children around the world, Islamic Relief takes seriously its responsibility to uphold the safeguarding of children from all types of abuse including sexual exploitation in the context of humanitarian and development response, all in an effort to uphold children's rights and promote Islamic teachings to provide safeguards from harm.

Islamic Relief's Child Safeguarding Policy aims to address protection concerns through a number of ways keeping in mind cultural, religious and traditional practices which do not expose children of all abilities to risk of violence, abuse and exploitation in all its forms. This document provides an introduction and insight into safeguarding of children by highlighting methods and approaches through which children are protected and tools which equip staff to deal with issues of child safeguarding. It states IR's commitment to protecting children (Section A), and outlines a set of processes and procedures that the organisation and all associated staff, representatives and members have to put in place in order to comply with these commitments (Section B) hereinafter referred to as Safeguarding . The annexes provide useful safeguarding templates, and additional Islamic guidance (Section C). Specifically, these policy guidelines aim to address four aspects of child safeguarding by ensuring:

1. Islamic Relief Worldwide and its field offices have up to date safeguarding policies that incorporate the principles and main procedures of the Islamic Relief policy document;
2. A code of behaviour for staff and volunteers is maintained and staff are aware of them;
3. There are adequate recruitment processes and ongoing training and induction on child safeguarding issues;
4. A clear complaints and response mechanism is implemented through a set of procedures that ensure complaints and concerns related to child safeguarding are dealt with effectively and professionally.

2. Context

For the purpose of this policy, Islamic Relief regards children as those under the age of 18 years and this policy applies to all children of different abilities with whom Islamic Relief has contact, regardless of age, gender, ability, religion, ethnicity, class or other form of social identity. *In the context of dealing with PSEAH, IR's age standard holds regardless of the context in which the office operates. Any sexual activities with minors and or beneficiaries or unlawful exchange of services will be considered as misconduct/ criminal act punishable under the organization's observed code of conduct.

This policy forms part of a wider framework for the general safeguarding of those who are vulnerable, and provides guidance for appropriate behaviour and conduct with beneficiaries, whether they are children, men or women. Islamic Relief has established safeguarding, PSEAH, complaints, whistle blowing, dignity at work, health and safety, orphan sponsorship programme, people at risk, and disaster response policies which all help to ensure the safety and welfare of children of different abilities and thereby complement this policy.

Important note: The following guidelines conform to UK law, international standards and good practices in achieving child safeguarding requirements.

I. Who does the Child Safeguarding Policy apply to?

Child safeguarding policy applies to all trustees, staff, volunteers, donors, contractors, implementing partners, and representatives working with and in the Islamic Relief family of organisations and any third part stakeholders contracted through our programs. They form the basis for our procedures in implementing any programmes or projects involving children of all abilities. Whilst local laws and regulations may vary with regard to child safeguarding, we expect this document to form the basic content and structure of Islamic Relief field office child safeguarding policy, whilst integrating local legal obligations. IR upholds high standards of child safeguarding in both humanitarian and development contexts and therefore this policy covers all of IR's programmes and projects across all operational contexts.

This document is not intended as sector strategy, and does not aim to provide guidance on addressing concerns of abuse that happen within the community and would require a programmatic response (although it provides a reference point for action). Therefore the communities IR works in are not bound by this policy.

II. Why does Islamic Relief need a Child Safeguarding Policy?

Islamic Relief's Code of Conduct and values statement sets out our commitment to fulfil the rights, welfare and respect the dignity of each person, especially those children and young people with disabilities we work with because of their increased vulnerability to exploitation and abuse. In accordance to Islamic teaches, child have the right to a safe, loving and nurturing environment to play and grow in. Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) said: *"Every one of you (people) is a shepherd. And every one is responsible for whatever falls under*

their responsibility. A man is like a shepherd of his own family, and he is responsible for them."¹ It is therefore our responsibility to ensure that those who fall under our care are given the knowledge and tools to make the distinction between right and wrong, and between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour as outlined by code of conduct.

Islamic Relief recognises that child abuse happens in all societies, cultures and organisations, and that IR staff are therefore likely to face concerns relating to child safeguarding. What is important to us as a humanitarian agency is to ensure that every effort is made to guarantee that our programmes and projects prevent child abuse and violence in all forms including sexual exploitation.

Research shows² that vulnerability of children increases during emergencies and IR is committed to uphold equally high standards to protect children in both emergencies and other programme approaches.

Emergencies impact on children through:

1. undermining protection mechanisms such as family or community protection, legal protection, social services, social norms;
2. exacerbating existing child protection threats such as child labour, exploitation, restricted access to justice, trafficking, violence in educational settings;
3. presenting new risks and threats to children such as family separation, recruitment into armed forces, psychosocial distress, violence and abuse, and often reducing access to education and development opportunities.

IR therefore recognises the need for strong procedures supporting child safeguarding policy to ensure it is implemented and mainstreamed throughout IR's humanitarian responses, protecting children of all abilities in all areas of our work. This includes ascertaining that adequate measures are put in place for localised recruitment and partnerships in emergency contexts. Specific guidance is also outlined in IR's Disaster Response Handbook.

III. Child Safeguarding within Islam

"They (the true believers) give food, out of love for Allah, to the poor, the orphan and the slave, saying: We feed you only for Allah's pleasure – we desire from you neither reward nor thanks" (Quran 76:8 – 9).

Islam provides extra measures to protect people at risk, in particular those who may be weak and vulnerable such as the elderly, women, people with disabilities and children, are a special creation of Allah and are to be honoured and protected from any kind of abuse and violence. Allah (swt) says: *"Indeed We have honoured the Children of Adam"* (peace be upon him) [Quran 17:70].

¹ Hadith reported by Bukhari and Muslim

² A matter of life and death. CPWG. 2015

Islam views anything under one's authority as an *Amanah* (trust). As a custodian of this trust, it is our duty to fulfil this custodianship according to our best ability, through protecting the faith, life, mind, honour and dignity as well as material possessions of every child and adult under our custodianship. One of the higher objectives of Islam is to protect, preserve and honour human life. In fact, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *"Every one of you is a Protector and Guardian for those who are placed under your care"*³. The custodianship (*Amanah*) is further emphasised with the command of not betraying the trust. Allah (swt) says: *"Betray not knowingly your Amanah (things entrusted to you) [Quran 8:27]*.

Another important principle in Islam in relation to safeguarding is the prohibition of causing harm and abuse. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *"There is not to be any causing of harm, nor is there to be any reciprocating of harm"* [Ibn Majah]. This tradition is regarded by Islamic jurists as one of the fundamental 'Legal Maxims' in Islamic law, and by using this principle, Islamic scholars have categorically prohibited any kind of abuse or harm caused to any fellow human being, in particular people at risk and children who are entrusted to someone's custody and put under their care.

We do recognise that in some Muslim communities or traditions the definitions of childhood and maturity vary from the United Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) or even from national legislation. Wherever this is the case, IR recognises the importance of abiding by international obligations and complying with local legal requirements.

3. Defining Child Exploitation and Abuse

Child abuse according to WHO⁴ is maltreatment that constitutes all forms of physical and or emotional mistreatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligent treatment and or commercial or other form of exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Universal categories of child exploitation and abuse

These are the universal categories of child abuse and exploitation:

Physical abuse - physical injury to a child, such as hitting, kicking or shaking, where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

Emotional abuse - harm done by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection, such as degrading punishments, threats, denial of care or bullying, resulting in adverse effects on the behaviour and emotional development of a child or young person. All abuse involves ill-treatment.

³ Bukhari & Muslim

⁴ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment>

Sexual abuse – forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in any kind of sexual activity, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to what is happening. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, but also includes non-contact activities, such as encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, pornography or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

IRW's position on sexual engagements with children can never be legally consensual making it either a case of rape or indecent assault to be treated as a criminal offence. IRW adheres to the universal legal age of consent marked at 18, which means that any breach by staff even if consensual and legal age varies in their particular context of operation will warrant reporting to authorities and disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal and termination of contract.

Neglect – persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caretakers and which result in serious impairment of a child's or young person's health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, medical care or neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.

Exploitation – abuse of a position of vulnerability or trust for commercial or sexual purposes.

4. Circumstances under which staff might suspect child abuse and exploitation

A child safeguarding concern may come to the notice of a staff or representatives in a number of ways:

- A child makes a direct allegation;
- A child makes a comment which seems to suggest abuse;
- A child displays obvious signs of physical abuse;
- A child's behaviour suggests indications of abuse;
- You may simply suspect a child is at risk from another child or adult. If so, these are grounds to report;
- Behaviour of a staff member or representative contradicts safeguarding, PSEAH and code of conduct protocols making him/her unsuitable to work with or care for children;
- A third party (guardians, social workers, and partners) report allegations of child abuse.

Staff will receive training on how to respond to each of these situations. The designated child safeguarding focal point will be trained to recognise the obvious behavioural or physical signs of abuse.

The Quran speaks out against abuse whether in the form of language, emotion or through actions. *You who believe do not let one (set of) people make fun of another set. Do not defame one another. Do not insult by using nicknames. And do not backbite or speak ill of one another.*" (Quran 49:11-12)

SECTION A: CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

5. Islamic Relief's Child Safeguarding Policy – Core Statement

Islamic Relief believes that all children of different abilities have a right to personal dignity and safeguarding from all forms of abuse, violence and exploitation. It recognises the special responsibility and duty of care it bears to create a safe environment for children within the projects and programmes it manages and supports. The interest of child safety and protection should be paramount to any other interest which might compromise it.

We will achieve this by:

- Setting in place and implementing policies and procedures specifically designed to protect and safeguard all children of different abilities from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse ;
- Maintaining a code of conduct for all IR representatives, including staff, volunteers, IR trustees, IR partners, implementing partners, contractors, donors or guests when visiting IR field offices, and making them aware of it;
- Conducting risk assessments of programmes and operations and putting in place strategies to mitigate against potential risk of harm to children;
- Regularly monitoring and auditing IR field offices, programmes and projects to ensure standards are observed;
- Ensuring that this child safeguarding policy is observed in IR's recruitment procedures, staff induction and training;
- Ensuring that Islamic Relief's beneficiaries are aware of children's rights and by what means they can report any concerns of child abuse, violence or exploitation;
- Ensuring that any allegations of abuse are investigated and properly dealt with in accordance with our procedures; survivors and victims are supported and perpetrators reported to the relevant authorities and appropriate sanctions are taken by IR such as termination of employment;
- Ensuring that the organisations we fund and work with maintain equivalent standards through the provision of robust service level agreements;

Islamic Relief's commitment to Child Safeguarding

6. Organisation and field offices' responsibilities

It is Islamic Relief's policy to provide a safe and secure environment in which children of different abilities can thrive and develop, and where all aspects of their welfare are protected. In order to do this we will take all the necessary measures to mitigate risks of all forms of abuse of children by those in a position of trust (such as staff, partners, donors, contractors) and will observe the following code of responsibilities with a zero tolerance approach:

1. Islamic Relief's commitment to child safeguarding will be stated in appropriate corporate documents which will be made available to beneficiaries and on our website and to whoever requests it.
2. Islamic Relief field offices will strive to prevent situations in which abuse, violence or exploitation of children of different abilities might occur and maintain an up-to-date and dynamic child safeguarding policy.
3. Islamic Relief's senior management and senior staff will ensure that all staff are aware of the child safeguarding policy and have access to a copy and will remind them of its provisions when the need arises. The induction programme for all staff will include an explanation of the policy and all staff will be expected to complete mandatory online child safeguarding and safeguarding training.
4. Security assessments of programmes and projects should take account of our code of conduct and any risks pertaining to children of all abilities.
5. Any child using Islamic Relief services and anyone acting on behalf of such a child may complain to the management about safeguarding, PSEAH or any service they receive. There is a simple, confidential and transparent complaints process which allows complainants the right of appeal to an independent person/agency if they are dissatisfied with the way the complaint is handled.
6. Any indication that a child might be suffering from abuse will immediately trigger the Islamic Relief field offices child safeguarding procedures. These procedures are consistent with local law and good practice.
7. In recruiting staff, paid or voluntary, full-time or part-time, the Islamic Relief field offices will follow a systematic recruitment and selection process designed to assess the applicant's suitability for any position involving contact with children. Extra vigilance will be given to recruitment in the context of IR's humanitarian responses to ensure same standards are upheld, as staff turnover is higher and situations request for quick actions.
8. Checks will be made to ensure that all the information provided by the candidate is accurate and within the limits of existing procedures. Candidates will be investigated to establish whether any offences against children have been committed through the Inter-Agency Misconduct Disclosure Scheme.
9. As per our Human Resources Policy, no candidate will be appointed to any position at Islamic Relief without two suitable references being provided. For positions where responsibility towards or contact with children is involved, all referees must be persons who can comment on relevant and recent aspects of the applicant's work with children.

10. All staff appointments to Islamic Relief field offices are subject to a probationary period during which they will receive close supervisory attention.
11. All paid and voluntary staff of Islamic Relief will have clear roles and responsibilities set out in a job description, particularly where they come into contact with children of different abilities.
12. The supervision of staff ensures that all children using the services of Islamic Relief receive adequate and appropriate protection.
13. Where staff members occupy high-risk posts, or are working in high risk situations (dependent on the level of contact with children), the Islamic Relief field office will ensure they receive regular supervision and support meetings.
14. All implementing partners, contractors and service providers who have extended contact with children will be made aware of Islamic Relief's child safeguarding policy and code of conduct as part of their contractual agreement.
15. Islamic Relief will ensure that child safeguarding issues receive continuous attention and will regularly review compliance with these principles. A log of child safeguarding cases and lessons learnt will be regularly updated to further improve safeguarding measures.
16. Field offices will identify and budget for required resources for the implementation of the child safeguarding policy.
17. Partners which Islamic Relief funds or supports to carry out work involving all children must be made aware and compliant through contractual agreements of their obligation to maintain commitment to IRW's safeguarding policy framework.

6. Staff Code of Conduct– Safeguarding from Abuse, Violence and Exploitation

Abandon all harm (ithm), whether committed openly or in secret. (Quran 7:33)

Islamic Relief’s code of conduct sets the expectations it has of its staff and others to ensure all children are protected and prevent them from being abused in any shape or form. All Islamic Relief staff are expected to comply with the standards set out in the following code of conduct:

- Managers and senior staff should promote a culture that ensures all children are listened to and respected as individuals;
- Staff and representatives must treat all children with respect, recognising their right to personal privacy;
- They must take care to avoid showing favouritism towards particular children;
- Staff and representatives must not make racist, suggestive or sexist remarks;
- Staff and representatives must plan and organise project activities so that risks are minimised;
- Staff and representatives must not spend time alone with any children – they must plan activities so that more than one person is present, or at the very least, other people are within sight and hearing;
- As much as possible, staff and representatives should ensure that a parent or guardian is present while interacting with the child particularly those with disabilities;
- They must not stay overnight - in the same room - with any child.
- Staff and representative must not do things for any child of a personal nature which they are capable of doing for themselves.
- They must avoid inappropriate physical contact with all children, especially that forbidden or advised against in Islamic teaching⁵;
- They must not trivialise or exaggerate child abuse issues;
- All disciplinary measures/sanctions must be non-violent and must not humiliate any child;
- Staff and representatives must not take images of any child which are detrimental or explicit and undermine the child’s dignity;
- They must not rely on just their good name to protect themselves, and must not put themselves in positions where they could be falsely accused of something;

⁵ See annexe for more details

- Staff must ensure they prevent the abuse of younger or weaker children or children with disabilities by older or stronger children capable of bullying and cruel or humiliating initiation rituals;
- Remember that someone else may misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned;

In relation to sexual exploitation, Islamic Relief adheres to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. These apply to all children, families and communities and apply irrespective of whether there is an emergency situation or not:

1. "Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
2. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.
3. Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.
4. Sexual relationships between humanitarian workers and beneficiaries are strongly discouraged since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
5. Where a humanitarian worker develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not, he or she must report such concerns via established agency reporting mechanisms.
6. Humanitarian workers are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of their code of conduct. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment."

Islamic Relief will seek to report to the relevant authorities any staff member, volunteer or associate who breaks the law applying nationally with regard to any aspect of child abuse. Islamic Relief makes a direct link between breaches of the code of conduct and its disciplinary procedures.

7. Communications About all Children

Islamic Relief strongly supports the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which makes the best interests of the child a primary consideration and states that every child has the right to privacy and safeguarding from all forms of exploitation and abuse.

Communication materials such as photographs, films, case studies and messages are an important element in communicating our work to the general public and other stakeholders and for raising funds. When collecting such material, we strive to maintain the dignity of everyone with whom we work. We will not use communication material that is disrespectful or demeaning.

Increasing access to technology⁶, such as the internet and social media means that there is potential for charity materials featuring particular children to be seen in their communities. The identification of children can have a number of consequences. Those wishing to target particular children can more easily track them down therefore particular care should be taken.

Social media offers new opportunities for tracking and identifying children and therefore an opportunity for exploitation and abuse both online and offline, including by donors where child sponsorship programs exist⁷. Children who have access to social media can also be exposed to cyber/online bullying (use of digital technology to threaten, tease, upset or humiliate someone else) or online grooming (use of the internet to trick, force or pressure a young person into doing into something abusive). When NGOs use social media as a form of engagement with children and youth, it is essential for them to ensure that potential risks created by the use of social media are mitigated and that safeguarding standards are maintained⁸.

All Islamic Relief employees, and representatives and guests will therefore follow strict guidelines on communication materials featuring any child in order to keep them safe:

- Always put the best interests of the all children above other considerations.
- Always explain to the beneficiary the likely use of the communication material collected, inform them that they are in no way obliged to participate, and explicitly request their consent to participate.
- Consider if the child, particularly those with a disability is comfortable with taking part – remember they have a right to privacy. Beneficiaries have the right to withhold consent if they do not wish to be involved and their decision will be respected at all times.
- Obtain images and any other private information for publication purposes in a safe and confidential manner.
- Obtain general consent for the gathering of communication materials at the beginning of a programme or a project – do not wait until the material is needed.

⁶ Well over half the people in the developing world have access to cell phones according to the UN

⁷ Please refer to IRW's "Orphan's Sponsorship Policy" regarding contact between donors and sponsored children.

⁸ For more information regarding online safety, please refer to "Keeping Children Safe Online" guidance.

- Always seek permission from the community/site you are visiting to take media materials and explain its purpose and use – all children should have an option not to take part.
- Always seek permission when taking photographs or video footage of individual children or small groups and where necessary from their parent or caregiver
- Gain consent when taking and using individual photographs, videos and case studies for publicity, fundraising and awareness-raising (if this is not possible, consent will be gained from at least a sample of parents). Consent should be sought from parents or those with parental responsibility, or from the children directly when they are of sufficient age and understanding.
- The names of children should always be changed to protect their identity, unless the child and his guardian explicitly state a preference to use his genuine name (as long as security implications are not a factor). Never publish a child's full name, contact or location details, or any information that could lead to identifying a child. Where names have been changed, state that the name has been changed and withhold the child's genuine name when passing on the material.
- Children should have the opportunity to communicate their stories themselves, in their own words, as much as possible.
- Portrayals of all children must be accurate and balanced, recognising their right to personal privacy and dignity. Do not manipulate the subject in a way which distorts the reality of the situation.
- Special consideration will be given to communication material depicting children with disabilities, refugees and those in situations of conflict and disasters, to accurately portray context and maintain dignity.
- Where the risk of harm and stigma is high, take mitigating steps; for example, by concealing faces, using pseudonyms and vague geographical locations, and by non-disclosure of personal information (for example HIV status).
- All children must be appropriately dressed according to their country of origin. In countries where children wear few items of clothing, be particularly careful about the images you take.
- Those collecting communications material will not spend time with or have access to children without supervision.

Those sent to the field on behalf of IR (IR staff, volunteers, including external photographers and journalists) will be carefully briefed regarding the collection of suitable communication material and should always be accompanied by a local staff member. External media staff should also carry clear identification at all times.

- Those sent to the field (including external photographers and journalists) to collect communications material will be asked to undergo a background check through the disclosure service of the Criminal Records Bureau or a national equivalent, if practically possible.
- Those sent to the field to collect communications material on behalf of IR (with special attention to external photographers, journalists and guests) will be made aware of these guidelines and sign IR's child safeguarding statement.

- Personal relationships between staff and beneficiaries are against all policies linked to Safeguarding and PSEAH.
- In line with IR *Orphan's Sponsorship Policy*, direct contact between the sponsor and the sponsored child, or any of their family members, isn't allowed and this applies equally to social media.
- Before initiating specific projects which engage children of all abilities through social media or technology, make sure you set up clear safeguarding measures to ensure the safety of all children online.

The country director or the safeguarding focal point can check any media materials produced in their country prior to being shared or used. IR reserve the right to confiscate any communication material not in line with this child safeguarding policy.

8. Designated roles and responsibilities

The following designated roles will lead on the implementation and compliance of the IR Child Safeguarding Policy:

- Islamic Relief has a designated global safeguarding lead and child protection advisor in IRW. S/he is responsible for advising IRW and its field offices on the implementation of the child safeguarding policy and processes and provides support and advice in dealing with allegations or reports of child abuse and sexual exploitation.
- Country directors/heads of mission are ultimately responsible for child safeguarding in their respective areas and for ensuring that local procedures are established and operational in line with IR's child safeguarding policy.
- Each Islamic Relief field office/mission must identify a country child safeguarding or safeguarding focal point from the staff who will ensure that the child safeguarding policy of Islamic Relief field office is kept up to date and acted upon and will be available for consultation if a child safeguarding concern should arise (see annexe for Terms of Reference for child safeguarding focal points).

SECTION B: PROCEDURES

9. Responding to Concerns of Child Abuse and Exploitation

Child safeguarding is not just about responding to specific allegations or incidents, it is also about the suitability of staff to work with all. .

Allah (swt) has given another directive, reminding us that we must do what is right, even if it is against those closest to us. *O you who have faith, stand up firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even if it is against yourselves or your parents and close family.* (Quran 4:135)

All staff have a duty of care to report child safeguarding concerns to the Islamic Relief country director and/or safeguarding or child protection focal point immediately. All staff and representatives have direct access to global safeguarding lead too.

Failure to do so could result in a child being harmed.

I. General procedures to be followed in all cases

- When a child alleges abuse, or a staff member becomes suspicious, write down what the complainant said or the details observed noting names of people involved, dates, times, places and witnesses using the designated template (see annexes), as soon as possible whilst the information is fresh in the staff member's mind.

As soon as a child alleges abuse, write down complaint using the designated template (see annexes).

- Report the matter immediately to the country director and/or local safeguarding focal point who should report the matter to IRW through the general complaints or safeguarding email:

complaints@irworldwide.org or safeguarding@irworldwide.org.

~~Internal Audit will inform the global safeguarding lead within 24h maximum.~~

Report immediately to CD and/or local safeguarding focal point orally and submit written complaint.

CD or safeguarding focal point reports to global safeguarding lead directly or via :

safeguarding@irworldwide.org or complaints@irworldwide.org

- The global safeguarding lead will inform the Director of International Programme Division, Human Resources, Governance and where need Legal– ensuring strict confidentiality. Together they will agree on the necessary steps that need to be taken (which could include conducting an internal investigation or reporting the matter to relevant authorities).

IRW Global Safeguarding Lead informs IPD, HR, Governance and Legal confidentially.

Action completed within 3 days (72h) from the complaint being received.

- The only exception to this reporting procedure is where the subject of complaint is a senior member of staff part of the reporting

Bypassing process only if person in charge is suspected (report

process, whereupon they should be bypassed in the reporting process immediately (report directly to global safeguarding lead who can be contacted at any point).

- Staff member who receive direct complaint from any child should let the child speak and only ask questions if they are necessary to clarify information. As soon as it becomes clear that the child is alleging abuse, all further questions must be left to trained staff or specialist.
- Based on the evidence of the country team, with the support of the global safeguarding lead and relevant IRW directors, the management team will decide on the necessary course of action. This might include reporting to the relevant authorities or carrying out an internal investigation to establish the facts.
- If abuse is strongly indicated, an immediate safety plan (including medical attention where necessary) will be drawn up for all concerned. This is the responsibility of investigation management committee.
- If the child of different abilities makes a clear allegation about a specific person, untrained staff should not take it upon themselves to question the subject of complaint.
- Report substantiated suspicion (by internal investigation) to law enforcement authorities in consultation with investigation management committee. IRW will consider its legal obligation to report those concerns to relevant and competent authorities.
- This procedure stresses the best interest of all children taking into account s/he is a possible victim or survivor of abuse and should be considered throughout the investigation process.
- If the staff member making the complaint is not satisfied that appropriate steps have been taken, the matter can be brought up directly with the global safeguarding lead or internal audit.
- Upon closure of the case, a final report will be sent to the global safeguarding lead who will inform International Programme Division, Human Resources, Governance and Legal where appropriate
- Any allegation, suspicion or witness of abuse external to IR (against non IR representatives) follow a different reporting pathway than that stated in this Policy. These cases should be referred to relevant authorities (such as social services, partners or local authorities as relevant in the local context) keeping the best interest of the child at heart of all interventions.

directly to complaints email, or global safeguarding lead as relevant)

Do not interrogate the child. Further information needed by trained staff.

Decision on course of action (CD, Global Safeguarding Lead, IPD director, HR and Legal).

Action completed within 28 days

Immediate risk and safety assessment conducted.

Do not question subject of complaint.

Report to legal authorities where appropriate.

Best interest of the child.

Escalating channels.

Closure of the case - IRW CP Focal point, IPD, HR and internal Audit are informed of outcome.

Appropriate referral mechanism to refer safeguarding cases external to IR.

II. Guidance on dealing with a child's allegation or suspicion of abuse

- Staff should not promise any child that they will keep information secret until they know what the information is. If evidence of abuse or an exploitative relationship exists staff must disclose it.
- It may be necessary to ask the child of different abilities or the parent about a mark or about unusual behaviour. Suspicion is usually aroused more by evasive or unconvincing answers than by the mark or the behaviour itself.
- If any child seems to be suggesting abuse, but it is not clear, staff should try to find a suitable time and place to talk to the child which will allow him/her to speak freely.
- The staff member should listen carefully; remember that a young child may not have the vocabulary to explain clearly what is causing distress. Make sure another member of staff/family member is present when talking to the child.
- Once the matter has been reported, allow time for the child to speak freely.
- Although staff should always take the child seriously, it should not be assumed everything the child says is factually correct.
- If an allegation is made about a member of staff or for any other reason suspicion falls on a member of staff, the Islamic Relief field office will follow the advice of the global safeguarding lead and senior management from IRW.
- When suspicion falls on a staff member, there are three possible outcomes:
 - It may be satisfactorily proven to the Islamic Relief field office that the staff member is guilty of child protection and safeguarding allegations;
 - It may be satisfactorily proven to the Islamic Relief field office that the staff member is not guilty of child protection and safeguarding allegation;
 - The inquiry may be inconclusive where there is no evidence but lingering suspicion about the staff member's behaviour leading to a loss of trust.
 - The last of these possibilities always raises sensitive issues and it is important that the Islamic Relief field office has a policy in place to deal with this scenario.

III. Co-operating with child safeguarding inquiries and administrative investigations

- Child safeguarding inquiries are carried out by the relevant government authorities and the police, usually acting together to see if the law has been broken. Administrative investigations are carried out by trained staff and are internal in nature to understand if codes of conduct, rules and regulations have been breached.
- Staff are expected to co-operate with inquiries and investigations as far as possible within their respective roles at Islamic Relief. The relevant authority and/or police may not always be clear about the specific role and purpose of the Islamic Relief field office, where this is the case staff members can and should question any requests which appear inappropriate.

- If an allegation is made about a member of staff or for any other reason suspicion falls on a member of staff, the Islamic Relief field office will liaise with the global child safeguarding focal point about referral to the relevant authorities. The Islamic Relief field office disciplinary procedure also applies here.

SECTION C: ANNEXES

10. STANDARD COMPLAINTS FLOWCHART

11. COMPLAINTS REFERRAL FORM

12. CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT FOR STAFF

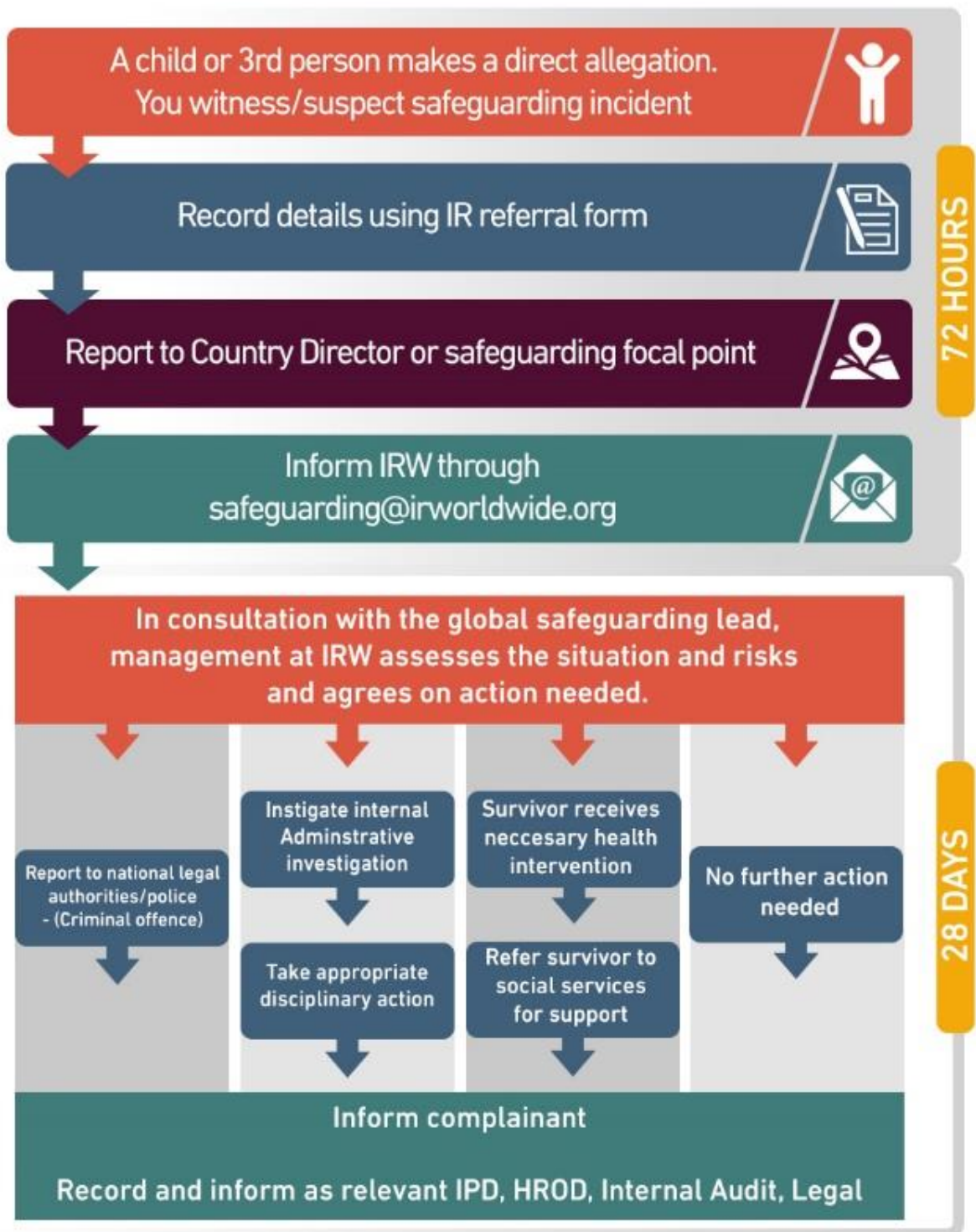
13. CONSENT FORM FOR THE USE OF COMMUNICATION ON CHILDREN

14. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CHILD SAFEGUARDING FOCAL POINTS

15. ISLAMIC GUIDANCE: SAFEGUARDING BEHAVIOUR

10. Standard Complaints Flowchart

STANDARD COMPLAINTS FLOWCHART



11. IR Complaints Referral Form

Name of complainant:	
Ethnic origin/nationality: address/contact details:	
Age:	Sex:
Relationship with the victim:	
Identity/passport number:	

Name of victim:	
Ethnic origin/nationality:	
Address/contact details:	
Age:	Sex:
Identity/passport number:	
Name (s) and address of parents, if under 18:	
Has the victim given consent to the completion of this form? Yes: No:	

Date/time of incident (s):
Location of incident (s)
Physical/emotional state of victim (describe obvious signs/symptoms):
Witnesses' names/contact information:
Brief description of incident (s) (attach extra pages if necessary):

Name of the accused person (s)	
Job title/organisation of accused person (s)	
Address of accused person (s)	
Age:	Sex:
Physical description of accused person:	

Have the police been contacted by anyone? Yes: No:
If yes, what happened?
If no, does the victim want police assistance, if not, why?

Has the victim been informed about available medical treatment? Yes:	No:
If yes, has the victim sought medical treatment for the incident? Yes:	No:
If yes, who provided treatment?	
What is the diagnosis and prognosis?	

What immediate security measures have been undertaken for the victim?
Who is responsible for ensuring the safety plan (name/title/organisation):

Any other pertinent information provided in interview (including contact made with other organisations, if any):
Details of referrals and advice on health, psychological, legal needs of victim made by person completing report:

Report completed by:
Name/position/organisation:
Date/time/location:
Has the complainant been informed about IR's procedures for dealing with complaints? Yes: No:
Signature/thumb print of the complainant signalling consent for this form to be shared on a 'need to know' basis:

Date Report forwarded to CD/ safeguarding focal point,:
Date Report received by CD/ safeguarding focal point:
Name:
Signature:

12. IR Child Safeguarding Statement for Staff

Islamic Relief Worldwide

Child Safeguarding Policy Statement



Islamic Relief believes all children of different abilities have a right to personal dignity and protection from violence, abuse and exploitation. IR recognises the special responsibility and duty of care it bears to create a safe environment for all children within the projects and programmes it manages and supports. The interest of child safety and safeguarding should be paramount to any other interest which might compromise it.

As a corporate document and Islamic Relief Worldwide's mandate to children, this Child Safeguarding Policy applies to all IR staff and representatives as part of their contractual obligations to the Islamic Relief family of organisations. It also applies to IR trustees, volunteers who work with Islamic Relief or in Islamic Relief's name, as well as any IR Partner, implementing partner, contractor, donor, representative or guest when visiting IR field offices.

We ask that all persons declare the following:

- I have never been convicted of any offence involving any type of harm to children, received a warning or been subject to any administrative measure of investigation for criminal acts or breach of conduct concerning any type of harm to any child or children.
- I have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in Islamic Relief Worldwide's Child Safeguarding Policy. I agree with the principles contained in it and accept the importance of implementing Child Safeguarding Policy and practices while working with Islamic Relief Worldwide.
- I understand that if I withhold any relevant information, or present false or inaccurate information, that I may be subject to the organisation's Disciplinary Procedures and could be removed from my post, whether paid or voluntary, without notice.

I have read and understood the above statement:

- Full name of employee:
- Job title/role:
- Signature of employee:
- Place:

Date:

13. IR Consent Form for the use of communication on children

Part A: Consent by a child under 18, with the necessary age, maturity and understanding

I agree to Islamic Relief Worldwide:

- speaking to me and recording my words at _____ (choice of venue)
- taking my photograph
- making a video or any other recording
- sharing my photo with my sponsor

I agree for Islamic Relief Worldwide to use:

- My story
- photographs of me
- my condition (for example HIV+)

I understand that my photo and/or information may be used for:

- Educational purposes
- Promotional purposes
- Reporting purposes

- other (specify) _____

Name*: _____

Signature or thumb-print

Location: _____ Age: _____ Date: _____

Part B: Consent by parent/carer

- I confirm that I agree for Islamic Relief Worldwide to carry out the above
- I have authority to sign this form on their behalf (if unsigned above)
- I confirm that the child has also agreed to this

Name*: _____

Signature or thumb-print:

Relationship to child: _____

Witness (IR Staff name) _____

Date: _____

14. Terms of Reference for child safeguarding focal points

Child Safeguarding Focal Point Terms of Reference

The implementation of IR's Child Safeguarding Policy (CSP) and procedures requires all country directors to nominate a staff member to act as the child safeguarding focal point for their respective field office. The nominated staff will be responsible for providing support to the country director in implementing IR's Child Safeguarding Policy and procedures and receive and manage concerns and complaints in accordance with the CSP.

Key competencies and experience:

- An interest in the well-being of children, safeguarding and child protection matters.
- A willingness to challenge opinion, where necessary, and to drive the child protection and safeguarding agenda.
- Where possible work closely with wellbeing team – PSEAH focal point, child protection focal and or protection and inclusion lead.
- Strong listening skills and the ability to deal with sensitive situations with integrity.
- The confidence and good judgment to manage situations relating to the poor conduct/behaviour of others towards a child.
- Necessary skills and commitment to taking on additional role.
- Sufficient level of seniority. If not available the focal point will require support from a senior responsible officer who has the necessary status and authority within the country management team to ensure the policy is implemented effectively.
- Professional competences and experience of working directly with the local communities.
- Awareness of appropriate international conventions and legal frameworks.
- Fluent in English and local languages.

In countries with a wide geographic area, a number of focal points, possibly one in each project location, should be appointed as necessary, which will be led and coordinated by the local safeguarding focal point.

Duties and responsibilities include:

A. Receiving child safeguarding concerns

- Act as a first point of contact for staff and beneficiaries on all child protection and safeguarding issues.
- Responsibility for escalating a concern to the CD and global safeguarding lead.
- Take a lead role in raising awareness about the organisation's Safeguarding and PSEAH measures including the Code of Conduct and provide training and advice to staff and volunteers on these measures.
- Provide advice and support to staff concerned about child safeguarding and protection issues and decide what action to take.
- Ensure that all staff, representatives and staff of partner agencies are made aware of the contact details of their respective focal points for receiving concerns/complaints.
- Lead the mapping process to identify local child protection and safeguarding resources, child welfare specialists, health and law enforcement stakeholders and attend the relevant coordination meetings.
- Make appropriate referral, as appropriate, to organisations/law enforcement agencies that can provide emergency and ongoing support to child abuse cases.
- Maintain basic management and statistical information to give a local picture of the extent and nature of reported abuse and exploitation, compliant with confidentiality and data protection.

B. Provide overall support to the implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy.

- Support country directors in implementing the Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Work with programme managers and programme heads to ensure that child protection and safeguarding is being prioritised by the country office in all activities and programmes.
- Monitor child protection and safeguarding risks associated with the design and implementation of projects and take appropriate protective actions.
- Ensure that all new recruits receive a thorough child protection and safeguarding induction and arrange for relevant capacity building of staff.
- Ensure that awareness is regularly raised amongst beneficiaries (especially children of all abilities) on the Child Safeguarding Policy and mechanisms for raising concerns / complaints about staff.

Provide technical and co-coordinating support to the team of focal points to ensure standardised approaches are taken, lessons learned are documented and disseminated, and child protection and safeguarding expertise is built.

15. Islamic Guidance: Safeguarding Behaviour

Islam encourages spiritual growth and provides guidance on how to conduct oneself when dealing with family, work and wider society. It equips people with the knowledge and moral compass as well as the necessary skills and tools which define a universal standard by which actions may be deemed moral or immoral.

Everybody is equal regardless of race, religion, creed and gender. This falls in line with one's character and credentials that are part of who we are and must also be considered. *The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: "O people! Your God is one and your forefather (Adam) is one. An Arab is not better than a non-Arab and a non-Arab is not better than an Arab, and a red (i.e. white tinged with red) person is not better than a black person and a black person is not better than a red person, except in piety".⁹*

The key to virtue and good conduct is a strong relationship with God, Who sees all, at all times and is everywhere. He knows the secrets of the hearts and the intentions behind all actions. Therefore, Islam enjoins moral behaviour in all circumstances; God is aware of each one when no one else is, therefore you cannot deceive Him.

How to ensure child safeguarding:

- To have appropriate attire. Business dress should be reflected in accordance with the organisation's handbook.
 - Staff are representatives of Islamic Relief. As such, both attire and behaviour should always be professional and reflect high standards and uphold the values of the organisation.
 - To be mindful of the country in which you are working in and their cultural or religious practices.
 - Your professional appearance and behaviour reflect on you as a professional. Islamic Relief welcomes individuals who dress appropriately and respectfully within the countries they work in.
- When interacting with children, *Muhammad (pbuh) said, "If a man and a woman are alone together in an isolated place, then the third is Shaitan"¹⁰.*

Khalwa (isolation) takes place when one man or more than one man is alone with one woman/child in a place where no one can see them or enter. If there are two women and a man, for example, this is not khalwa. However, when there is only one woman, this situation is considered as seclusion, and becomes unlawful. This is for the safeguarding and protection of all children, women and men of different abilities from allegations or harm.

Therefore:

- Ensure that there are two members of staff and /or a family member is present when dealing with a child.
- Make sure you are never in isolation or closed environment with a child alone.
- Ensure there is safe distance when sitting with a child.

⁹ Hadith Ahmed

¹⁰ Bukhari

- Ensure that any children who have been adversely affected are made safe, and are looked after and supported by you and colleagues from within your organisation.
- Where possible female staff should attend to the needs of a female child when reporting cases of abuse to allow for a comfortable environment given the sensitivity of the situation and vice versa for a male.
- Guarding your gaze is a good practice that fosters modest interaction between the sexes. What guarding the gaze means is that you should refrain from staring at one's face, however this does not mean keeping one's eyes glued to the ground. Guarding one's gaze indicates respect for the other person's space and modesty.
- When relating to children, any unnecessary physical contact should be avoided and staff should respect local customs and cultural practices.
- The prophet is reported to have said "A Muslim is he who other Muslims are safe from the harms of his tongue and his hands"¹¹. Staff should be mindful of their tone and language when speaking to children. It should not be loud and domineering or slow and lustful.
- *'O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be [against] rich or poor...'* (An-Nisaa': 135). Justice represents moral rectitude and fairness, therefore it is of utmost importance that you remain just in your actions in everything that you do including speaking out against your own colleagues. You have an obligation to report any action which causes concern or witness inappropriate behaviour by colleagues towards children.
- If you find yourself having to respond to sexually inappropriate behaviour from the child; you might also find that the intensity of your own emotions is difficult to cope with. It is important that you try and stay calm so that you can keep a clear head and make the right decisions about how to protect children/young people who you have discovered may be at risk. You should also try to be non-judgemental as the children/young people who are being sexually inappropriate towards others may themselves have been abused by others.

¹¹ Bukhari