

Balloon Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidance

Introduction

Safeguarding is a responsibility we have:

1. to ensure that our employees, volunteers, consultants, partners and businesses we work with do no harm to children, young people and vulnerable adults as defined below.
2. That we do not expose them to risk of discrimination, neglect, harm and abuse.
3. That any concerns are reported promptly, and we take action including reporting to the appropriate authorities.

Safeguarding is also the responsibility we have to protect our staff and volunteers when/if they are vulnerable e.g. is during the period of violence leading up to the last elections in Kenya.

Child protection is a central part but not separate to safeguarding.

Over recent years there has been a spotlight on the way children can be abused when there is a power imbalance and it is our responsibility to include safeguarding in our programme design risk management and monitoring processes.

We recognise that the good practice we seek to introduce may exceed the requirements of some countries where we work.

This policy has been drawn up in line with International law and policy guidance.

This policy is complemented by others that consider elements of safeguarding. (see list of related policies at the end of this policy document).

Purpose

Balloon believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind. We are committed to delivering all aspects of our work in a way that keeps them safe and as protected as possible at all times

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect children, young people and vulnerable adults in all the interactions we have through staff, volunteers, others who act in our name and the businesses we support.
- To protect staff and volunteers who may themselves be vulnerable or at risk.
- To provide staff, volunteers and others with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding;
- To provide clarity to anyone acting in the name of Balloon Ventures what is expected of them.
- To give confidence to stakeholders and funders, that we treat safeguarding with the utmost seriousness.
- To detail the responsibilities in the organisation including recruitment selection and training.

Overall Scope

Balloon's Scope of work with Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, anyone who acts in the name of Balloon Ventures and businesses we support.

Balloon recruits, trains and invests in small businesses in Kenya and Uganda that have the potential to grow and create good jobs. We do not work directly with children, young people or vulnerable adults, although we support businesses (e.g. schools, hospitals) that directly interact with these groups and with the local communities.

Balloon sometimes runs programmes through local and international volunteers. All staff, volunteers and business owners we work with are over 18.

Any breach will be treated as a disciplinary matter which may result in dismissal or return home for a volunteer and reporting to the police or relevant local authority.

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Definitions

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult.

- Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.
- Including pornography. Children may be abused in a family, in an institutional or in a community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.
- Abuse of children can be physical, sexual, emotional, financial or due to neglect.
- Abuse of vulnerable adults can vary from treating someone with disrespect in a way which significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical suffering.
- Abuse can be a single or repeated act or omission, which causes harm or distress. Abuse of vulnerable adults can be physical, financial, discriminatory, due to neglect or omission, psychological, sexual, organisational or as a result of self-neglect, modern slavery, or domestic violence.

Bullying, which could include physical intimidation.

- This includes verbal intimidation, including racist and sexist remarks; emotional intimidation for example, excluding or isolating someone.

Adult Safeguarding is protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

- It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.
- This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

Child - anyone under the age of 18 irrespective of the age of majority in the country where a child is located.

Child Protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare and is the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Child Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children:

1. protecting children from maltreatment;
 - preventing impairment of children's health or development;
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
 - acting to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Vulnerable adult - any person aged 18 or over who is or may need care and support (e.g. health care, relevant personal care or social care) and is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and, as a result of this, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk or experience of neglect or abuse

Policy statement

Balloon has a zero-tolerance policy to exploitation and abuse of children and vulnerable adults and have put in place all reasonable measures to provide safeguards.

Our guiding principles are:

- The welfare of the child or vulnerable person is paramount.
- All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse.
- Some children and young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues. Balloon will always take these into account, where they are known.
- Cultural sensitivity is needed to work effectively with communities in East Africa. However, we endorse the United Nations Convention on the Rights of children and culture must not be a reason to ignore abuse.
- Balloon will take positive action to promote safe practices and protect children and vulnerable adults in the businesses we support.
- Balloon will train staff on what is accepted and unacceptable and what to do if they suspect abuse **including the use of the whistleblowing help line.**
- Respect confidentiality of information we hold on individuals as defined in our data protection policy.

Our approach is to:

- Value and listen to children and vulnerable people.

- Provide effective management of staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training;
- Designate a specific person to handle safeguarding issues. This role is performed by the Chief Operating Officer (COO);
- Recruit staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks (DBS or equivalent) are made;
- Share information about safeguarding and good practice with staff, volunteers, anyone who acts in our name and with the entrepreneurs we support.
- Share concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and young people appropriately.

Responsibilities:

Who this applies to

This policy and guidance apply to all staff, volunteers and anyone acting in our name.

Balloon requires all the businesses it supports to work in ways that are consistent with best practice, relevant local laws, and with the safeguarding principles and practices outlined in this policy.

The Board through The BV senior management team is responsible for

- 1 delivering our duty of care
- 2 ensuring that the organisation has clear policies and processes that are reviewed on an annual basis.
- 3 Safe programme design.
- 4 A clear data protection policy and guidelines which include how to handle safeguarding issues. (see data protection policy)
- 5 Ensuring that safeguarding **risks** are covered in the organisational and project risk registers with mitigations and overall ownership and monitoring.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer (the COO of Balloon) is responsible for

- 1 Managing the overall process
- 2 Monitoring incidents and concerns
- 3 Providing guidance and advice to staff and others.
- 4 On boarding training for volunteers (if there are any programmes) to include safeguarding.

In Country Directors are responsible for

1. ensuring that safe recruitment and vetting procedures are carried out including taking references (and CRB checks if necessary)
2. Providing induction training as soon as possible after the start of employment and managing performance including behaviours on a regular basis.
3. Making information on reporting and handling safeguarding issues widely available.
4. Acting promptly when an issue is reported.
5. Delivering our duty of care to staff.
6. Monitoring and reporting incidents to the designated safety officer (The COO of Balloon)

7. Foster a culture within their teams of honesty, fairness and integrity which encourages good safeguarding practices.

All staff, volunteers and those who act in our name are responsible

1. For reading and understanding what is expected of them.
2. Everyone is expected to sign the code of conduct which states that they have read and understood this and other key policies.
3. To act with integrity, honesty and be a role model in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
4. Without exception to report incidents, concerns and suspicions on the clear understanding that it is not their responsibility to decide if abuse has taken place but to raise this with the appropriate manager. (detailed guidelines are provided as internal documents)
5. It is essential that reporting of Safeguarding issues should be done with confidentiality. Sharing information which could identify a child, vulnerable adult or an alleged perpetrator, should be on a 'need to know' basis and always in line with Balloon's Data Privacy Policy. Unless abuse has actually been proved to have occurred, it should always be referred to as 'alleged abuse' or other such language as appropriate.
6. To use social media appropriately including use of images of children.

Businesses we support will be expected to agree basic standards of behaviour and safeguarding for their staff. Their contract with Balloon details their social and environmental responsibilities, which include fair treatment and safeguarding their staff.

Confidentiality

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Staff response to safeguarding issues should be in line with the Responding to Safeguarding Incidents Procedures.

Related policies

- Whistleblowing
- Anti-Bullying
- Code of Conduct
- Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
- Sexual Harassment and Assault
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- Health and Safety.

Reviews

All documents are reviewed annually at the same time

Policies apply to the Balloon group of companies
Last Annual Update December 2019