

Defence for Children International - International Secretariat Child Safeguarding Policy

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Child Safeguarding Policy of the International Secretariat of Defence for Children International (DCI-IS)

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Table of Contents

Introduction	4
About Defence for Children International – International Secretariat (DCI-IS)	4
DCI-IS interactions with children	4
Objective of the policy	4
Safeguarding commitment.....	5
Scope of the policy	5
Part 1. Prevention/Preventative Action.....	5
Risk assessment and risk mitigation	5
Safe recruitment	7
Education and training.....	8
Roles and responsibilities.....	8
External communication on the Policy	9
Safe programme design and implementation.....	9
ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) and data protection.....	10
Part 2. Response.....	11
Reporting a concern	11
Responding to concerns.....	11
Acting on a concern.....	12
Sanctions.....	13
Reporting flowchart	14
Part 3. Implementation and review.....	15
Implementation and budgeting	15
Review.....	15
Appendices:	15
Appendix 1: Defence for Children International (DCI) Movement Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct signed by DCI-IS Executive Director	16
Appendix 2 – DCI-IS Code of Conduct to be signed by all DCI-IS staff.....	19
Appendix 3 - Definitions (for the purposes of DCI’s Child Safeguarding Policy and Principles).....	22
Appendix 4 – Guidance on indicators of abuse.....	27
Appendix 5 – If a child discloses abuse to you: some do’s and don’ts	30
Appendix 6 – Template to report a child safeguarding concern.....	32
Appendix 7 – Acceptance form of the DCI-IS Child Safeguarding Policy to be signed by all staff	35
Appendix 8 – Multimedia Consent Form	36
Appendix 9 – Informed Consent Form for Children Participating in DCI-IS Activities.....	38
Appendix 10 – Reporting Record to the SPMi concerning a child in danger	39
Appendix 11 – Joint agreement of procedure for partnerships	41
Appendix 12 – Risk assessment form	42



Introduction

About Defence for Children International – International Secretariat (DCI-IS)

[Defence for Children International \(DCI\)](#) is a leading child rights independent international organisation and a membership-based grassroots movement, founded in 1979, the first international year of the child. DCI promotes and protects the human rights of children at the local, national, regional and international level, in accordance with international standards, as set out in its [statutes](#). DCI has national sections (full members) in [30 countries worldwide](#), and an international secretariat in Geneva, together referred to as “the Movement”. Furthermore, in paragraph 1.2.10 of the [code of ethics and gender policy](#) annexed to the statutes, DCI commits to abide by the Keeping Children Safe standards. DCI is a member of the [Keeping Children Safe network](#).

The International Secretariat of DCI (hereafter referred to as DCI-IS), based in Geneva, plays a crucial role in lobbying and advocating for children’s rights within United Nations human rights mechanisms whilst working with National Sections on the ground on the implementation and running of local or regional projects.

Within DCI, our work with children is grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Every child is recognised, respected and protected as a rights holder, with non-negotiable rights to protection. Every child is treated with dignity and as a unique and valuable human being with an individual personality, distinct needs, interests and privacy, with due regard to the child’s right to participation. We understand the need to empower children to protect themselves and to claim their rights. Children must be involved in decisions that concern them, including the development, monitoring and evaluation of child protection strategies, policies, programmes and services.

DCI-IS interactions with children

DCI-IS interacts with children directly in their programmes and daily work (e.g. capacity-building among girls and boys on rights, involving individual children and/or groups of children in project work, organising and coordinating their participation in events, and conducting training sessions with child human right defenders). DCI-IS also interacts indirectly when advocating on their behalf or has access to information on children in the context of the organisation’s work, such as children’s names, locations (addresses of individuals or projects), photographs and case studies, or provides funding for other organisations that work directly with children.

Objective of the policy

As a child rights organisation which has direct or indirect contact with children and which aims for the highest standards of protection for children, the full enjoyments of their rights and putting the best interests of the child first, DCI-IS understands that it is crucial that internally we apply the same principles. The child safeguarding policy will help to ensure that DCI-IS staff, operations and programmes do no harm to children, 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. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that DCI-IS has in place procedures to prevent and respond to actions of its staff, partners and visitors that (could) result in violence against children. It also aims at informing children we work with of DCI-IS responsibilities regarding child safeguarding and the avenues for reporting incidents.

Policy review completed by March 2023

The DCI International General Assembly held in November 2022 in Nouakchott discussed child safeguarding and those discussions informed the review process completed by March 2023. The review



took account of experience in implementing the 2020 policy. During the review, all staff (permanent staff, volunteers, interns), DCI-IS Youth Ambassadors, the International Executive Council and the Advisory Committee were consulted. The main changes concerned:

- Drafting, consulting children and adopting a child-friendly version of the child safeguarding policy
- Provisions on systemised safeguarding in staff recruitment
- Systemisation of the informed consent of 2 years maximum for the use of multimedia materials
- More emphasis on care of the child victim and the addition of the necessity for a DCI-IS representative to report to authorities in case a criminal offence has taken place.
- Ensure that the risk assessment activities will be reviewed by the project lead and the Focal Point within 10 days of the project or activity to assess whether the risk assessment captured all risks and noting any learning for future projects or activities.
- Protection of whistle-blowers who bring forward a complaint and provision on malicious complaints
- Overall clarification of who does what.

Safeguarding commitment

DCI-IS recognises that violence against children is prevalent throughout the world and in all societies. Violence against children includes physical or mental violence, neglect/negligent treatment, sexual exploitation and abuse. Furthermore, children may be in a vulnerable situation and more at risk due to, for example, age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, disability or illness. DCI-IS is committed to the safeguarding, protection and promotion of children's rights and in so doing adheres to the principle of 'do no harm', and of preventing the abuse of children involved directly or indirectly in the organisation's related activities. This also implies that when a concern is raised, there is an appropriate and timely response by the organisation.

Scope of the policy

This policy covers anybody who represents DCI-IS. This means that all the following people must implement and uphold the policy and adhere to its requirements: all staff – whether permanent, temporary, or interim, contractors, interns, volunteers, regional desk officers, the World Service Foundation coordinator, as well as all council and committee members. All those covered by the policy are required to sign an Acceptance Form ([Appendix 7](#)) and Code of Conduct.

Partners: When working with partners, DCI-IS understands the importance of establishing which organisation is responsible for all aspects of child safeguarding from concept design and planning through to implementation and follow-up and taking action in the case that a concern is raised, or an incident takes place. To this end, when joint activities or projects are intended to be carried out with a partner, a joint agreement of procedure will be signed by all parties involved ([Appendix 11](#)) in order to clarify child safeguarding roles and responsibilities. This agreement does not impede DCI-IS or the partner from meeting its own reporting obligations and referring any issue to relevant authorities in case of a disagreement on the appropriate course of action.

Part 1. Prevention/Preventative Action

Risk assessment and risk mitigation

For all activities, projects, programmes or events, involving children, a specific risk assessment will be carried out. The table below sets out some of the more general child safeguarding risks relating to DCI-IS.



Areas of risk	Risk identified	Risk significance	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
Management	Child safeguarding is not prioritised within the organisation	Medium	Conduct trainings on an annual basis, nomination of a child safeguarding Focal Point (hereafter called the Focal Point) present at all meetings with children, regular agenda items in DCI-IS internal meetings and IEC quarterly meetings, streamline safeguarding concerns within strategic documents.
Staff	Non-compliance with DCI child safeguarding policy and principles	Medium	Designation and training of a Focal Point, training of all staff of the IS. Specifically, all staff will follow an online training course (Tusla module in 2020, pending availability of KCS training) and a half-day meeting for all staff will focus on child safeguarding once the DCI-IS policy is adopted, so that all staff know who the Focal Point is and reporting procedures, the content of the code of conduct, and so that any questions can be addressed, etc. For all activities involving children, the Focal Point will be involved from preparation through to review to ensure due focus on child safeguarding.
	Staff are not trained on child safeguarding	High	Capacity building and training for staff upon induction and on a yearly basis thereafter (refresher course)
Contact with children	Child makes a disclosure to a member of staff about being harmed in any way by a DCI representative or during a DCI activity	High	Staff members are trained on the appropriate conduct and response mechanisms
	Ad hoc request by child to meet with DCI	Medium	Ensure staff training and induction covers the Two Adult Rule so that staff act appropriately for ad hoc and any other requests
	Children and families in contact with our organisation are not aware of or do not understand our child safeguarding policy	High	<p>For any activities with children, the consent forms and other preparatory materials introduce the child safeguarding policy.</p> <p>At the start of any activities with children, there is an introduction by the project lead and reminder of what child safeguarding is and how it applies to that activity, explained in accessible language.</p> <p>Child friendly materials: a child-friendly version of the policy was developed in early 2023, posted on the website and distributed during activities or event with children.</p>
Events/Activities	A child is not sufficiently prepared to participate in an event/activity (particularly with regard to their safety,	High	Systemised briefing in child friendly language is disseminated by the project lead prior to all events. The briefing also covers child safeguarding and reminds children of the voluntary nature of their participation. After the briefing and before the event, children are invited to contact DCI-IS (the project lead or the Focal Point) if they have any questions or concerns.



	including for virtual events)		<p>Event preparation starts in good time to ensure that all steps are adhered to and everyone is well prepared.</p> <p>For all activities with children, the Two Adult Rule is adhered to. One DCI-IS staffer, typically the Focal Point, focuses entirely on safeguarding during the event.</p> <p>All activities involving children are subject to a review convened by the project lead within 10 days of the activity or event, to include the Focal Point, to assess child safeguarding for that event, note what went well or less well, review the risk assessment against the reality, identify areas for improvement, and take any necessary follow-up action.</p>
	Child who could face threats or reprisals after speaking publicly	High	<p>The risk is assessed by the project lead with the assistance of the Focal Point during preparation, taking account of context and country-specific situations, and there is a discussion with children on disclosures and safety.</p> <p>DCI policy to protect children’s privacy and identity are adhered to and checked prior to events (no posting of a child’s full name, etc.)</p> <p>DCI Staff will provide follow-up protection as needed and referred to relevant assistance services</p>
	Activities with children are not sufficiently supported by a chaperone who is not appropriately trained on safeguarding	High	<p>For all activities with children, the Two Adult Rule is adhered to. One DCI-IS staffer focuses entirely on safeguarding during the event.</p> <p>Chaperones for activities receive child safeguarding training ahead of time.</p>
ICTs	DCI policy on consent is not adhered to (consent not properly obtained, consent has expired)	Medium	<p>Address consent during event preparation and follow up and before using any material, or re-using material, a check is conducted to ensure consent policy is adhered to.</p>

Safe recruitment

The responsibility of DCI-IS staff and partners is to protect, promote and ensure respect of the human rights of the child, and promote their well-being. Thus, the process of recruitment of staff/interns/volunteers/consultants is crucial to ensuring effective safeguarding within the organisation, by hiring qualified and skilled persons capable of fulfilling their position in a manner safe to children.

DCI-IS ensures that position vacancies, terms of reference (ToRs) and work contracts clearly outline child protection responsibilities that will apply to the person appointed via a standardised clause stating that anyone working for DCI-IS shall respect the policy in their position and in their private life. The policy will be accessible from the position vacancy, ToRs, or contract through a link. Child safeguarding and protection concerns will be addressed when interviewing a candidate to ensure that the person would not pose a risk of causing harm directly or indirectly to a child. All interviewees will be informed of the



existence of the child safeguarding policy. New recruits will be required to sign an [acceptance form](#) for the policy and code of conduct. Child safeguarding will be part of the induction programme of all new recruits.

Prior to recruitment, DCI-IS will undertake the necessary identity, qualifications, and background checks (including criminal record checks and full reference checks for staff members, including with regard to child safeguarding) in order to avoid unsuitable applicants (i.e., if the prospective employee has been convicted of any offences related to children).

Education and training

By end 2020, pending development of central online learning, DCI-IS, will implement mandatory training for all staff on safeguarding, and further training for those in safeguarding focal roles, particularly with regard to reporting.

Since 2020, all staff and all new recruits have completed a [1.5 hour basic course](#) on child safeguarding, preceded by a briefing and followed by a debriefing, both led by the Focal Point.

As stated above, staff members, interns and volunteers will receive a comprehensive child safeguarding induction upon joining DCI-IS, to ensure that the Policy is well understood, and a read receipt will be kept. The induction will include inter alia training on risk assessment and mitigation, appropriate conduct and actions when dealing with children directly or indirectly, safe programme design and the correct reporting line and procedure for raising a concern or reporting an incident. The Code of Conduct for the DCI movement establishes the appropriate conduct and expected standards of behaviours towards children ([Appendix 1](#)). A refresher training course is mandatory on an annual basis for all staff. Child safeguarding induction and training are documented, and records are kept on file by the Focal Point. Paper files are in a locked cabinet and electronic files are password-protected.

Furthermore, the Focal Point is responsible for keeping up to date on child safeguarding knowledge and skills, also with regard to local/national reporting procedures.

Roles and responsibilities

All Advisory Board members, International Executive Council (IEC) members, staff, consultants, volunteers and interns will:

- Comply with this Policy and Code of Conduct
- Follow the Child Safeguarding Procedures in Annexes
- Be aware of risks to children

All staff, consultants, volunteers and interns will:

- Familiarise themselves with this policy and comply fully with its procedures
- Report any concern about the safety of children as per the reporting procedures and participate in any inquiry if requested
- Participate in DCI-IS designated training on child safeguarding

The Executive Director will:

- Manage the process of implementation of the policy and associated procedures in staff policies (recruitment, training, appraisal) as well as in activities and operations
- Lead by example, prioritising child safeguarding and ensuring it is implemented for all activities and operations throughout all phases
- Report regularly to the IEC on progress
- Be accountable to the IEC for ensuring that DCI-IS meets its commitment as outlined in the policy



- Take all reasonable precautions to ensure that all staff, consultants, volunteers, partners, visitors, interns, etc., do not pose a risk to children

The Focal Point will:

- Be responsible for the management of the reporting procedure
- Manage the induction training process and organise yearly refresher training
- Commit to responding appropriately and referring safeguarding concerns promptly to the relevant authorities as required
- Participate in specific training to be able to fulfil their role appropriately
- Take all reasonable precautions to ensure that all staff, consultants, volunteers, partners, visitors, interns, etc. do not pose a risk to children

External communication on the Policy

The policy is a public document available on the website of DCI-IS and shared widely on social media networks.

Children, as well as their parents/guardians, who are in contact with DCI-IS or who are directly involved in any DCI-IS related activities, will receive information on child safeguarding, so that the child understands the types of unacceptable behaviour from an adult, and the child's rights to freedom from all forms of violence, with language and materials that are appropriate to their understanding. Children and parents/guardians will be briefed by the project lead upon their arrival in the DCI-IS offices (in the case of in-person activities or events) or through a virtual briefing by the project lead in advance of an online event. This also encompasses explaining the procedures in place to ensure their safety, how they can go about raising a concern, to whom they can report to and what steps will be taken.

The Focal Point of DCI-IS is at the disposal of the wider public, staff and children to answer any further questions or clarifications on child safeguarding and the reporting mechanisms in place.

Safe programme design and implementation

In programming, child safeguarding measures are paramount to prevent harm to children. In accordance with a child rights-based approach, children are involved in the design and delivery of programmes to ensure that programmes meet their needs. While child safeguarding is the responsibility of adults, programmes are designed to optimise the further empowerment of children, so that they can better protect themselves and their peers, and claim their rights, including their right to be heard.

During the conception phase of a project or activity a risk assessment will be carried out by the project lead using the Risk Assessment Template ([Appendix 12](#)), with the involvement and advice of the Focal Point. A copy will be kept on file by the Focal Point. The assessment will identify possible risks that staff/partners or the running of the programme itself may pose to children, and establishes mitigation strategies for these risks, which must be monitored throughout the duration of the programme and reported on in all progress meetings. The risk assessment activities will be reviewed by the project lead and the Focal Point within 10 days of the project or activity to assess whether the risk assessment captured all risks and noting any learning for future projects or activities.

If, during the running of a programme or an activity, it is suspected or reported that a child has suffered harm or abuse, the Focal Point is notified immediately, and measures are taken to protect the child from further harm and to prevent harm to other children.

Any costs (e.g., training) of implementing the DCI-IS Child Safeguarding Policy must be reflected in DCI-IS operational plans, budgets and funding proposals.



ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) and data protection

DCI-IS ensures that all communications involving children directly or indirectly both online and offline will respect the dignity of the child and that their safety and/or that of their family/community will not be compromised due to these communications whether directly or indirectly.

Informed consent

- The use of photographs and images of children in publications is subject to the informed written consent of the child and their parents/legal guardian. Informed consent implies that the child and parent/guardian understand the circumstances under which the image will be used and all the possible consequences of its publication, distribution, or circulation. All pictures and/or videos of children and individuals that have interacted with DCI-IS can only be published if consent has been given. In order for consent to be given, the child and their parent/guardian must sign and date the official DCI Media Release form ([Appendix 8](#)) of which a copy, electronic or otherwise, must be filed.
- The consent of use of image is limited to a time period of two years starting from the date that the consent was expressly given, after that period expires the images of the child in question will be archived and no longer used in any form of internal/external or online/offline communications.
- Personnel must never share with unauthorised persons any information that could identify families or children or make them accessible to the public without the consent of the family and, where possible, of the child.

Content gathering

- Personal information about a child and pictures of children are kept in a safe place (i.e. a safe place constitutes a secure internal server that is not accessible by third persons to DCI-IS).
- Every child has a right to be accurately represented through both words and imagery. The organisation's portrayal of a child or a group of children must not be manipulated or sensationalised in any way but provide a balanced depiction of their life and circumstances. Children must be presented as human beings with their own identity and dignity preserved.
- Children should not be stigmatised, and the organisation should avoid categorising children and descriptions of children that put them in danger of harm, abuse, discrimination, or exclusion by their community.
- When interviewing a child, the context of the story or image should be chosen with care, the number of people present should be kept to a minimum, and the child should be interviewed as few times as possible. Staff should aim to put the child at ease, and they should be encouraged to speak freely without interference or pressure of others, including the interviewer. When video or audio recording, ascertain that the choice of background (images/sounds) does not negatively impact the image of the child and/or their life and story. Through demonstrating their home, community or general living circumstances, it should be made sure that the child is not being exposed to danger, discrimination or disadvantage.

Reporting on children in vulnerable situations

- Extreme caution is required when reporting about children in vulnerable situations. We consider this the case if a child, to our knowledge:
 1. Is very ill (for instance HIV-positive or infected with AIDS);
 2. Is a current or former child soldier;
 3. Is otherwise involved in armed conflict;
 4. Is in mental or physical distress;
 5. Is the perpetrator of physical or sexual abuse;
 6. Is the victim of any form of violence against children;



7. Is accused or convicted of a misdemeanour;
8. Is a child affected by migration, or
9. Is a child with different abilities or disabilities.
10. (Other cases may apply)

When using the real identity of the child, he/she still needs to be protected against any kind of harm, stigmatisation and/or possible retributions.

Part 2. Response

Reporting a concern

It is crucial that when a concern over child safeguarding appears or an incident occurs that swift action is taken by reporting according to DCI-IS policy and procedures. As mentioned above ([Education and training](#)) all persons working at or with DCI-IS receive all the necessary information and training as to who the Focal Point is. If there is a concern, it must always be treated as a matter of urgency and immediately brought to the attention of the Focal Point.

All persons falling under the scope of the policy understand that when a child safeguarding concern arises it is essential to act immediately as the protection of children is always the most important consideration. These persons may be alerted to a potential safeguarding concern when a number of behaviours arise, either on the part of a child or an adult. Guidance on indicators of abuse is provided in [Appendix 4](#).

Whistleblowers

Keeping children safe from harm is the paramount consideration for DCI. Anyone representing or identified with DCI is required to report any child safeguarding concerns they have. It is important to note that any person falling under the scope of the policy who reports a concern will not suffer any reprisal or disciplinary action if the report is made in good faith under the legitimate concern over the welfare of a child. While keeping children safe will always be the paramount concern, DCI will follow KCS guidance¹ to respond to unsubstantiated, unfounded and/or malicious allegations.²

Responding to concerns

If a child discloses child abuse to any person falling under the scope of the policy, it is critical they are able to handle the situation in the appropriate manner (as set out in the guidance on handling disclosure [Appendix 5](#)) and then report it according to the [reporting flowchart](#).

If a child discloses child abuse to you, it is critical to be prepared to handle the situation in the appropriate manner and then report it to the appropriate authorities. The guiding principle in responding to any concerns around child protection is that the safety and welfare of the child should always take precedence. No child should be put at more risk by any action you undertake. **You should do all you can to remove the child from immediate danger and ensure she or he is comfortable. You should**

¹<https://codeofgoodpractice.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/KCS-Management-of-Child-Safeguarding-Allegations.pdf>

² **Unsubstantiated** (Inconclusive): An unsubstantiated allegation means that there is insufficient identifiable evidence to prove or disprove the allegation on the balance of probabilities. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence. **Unfounded** (Unproven): The term 'unfounded' means that there is no evidence or proper basis that supports the allegation being made, or there is evidence to prove that the allegation is untrue. There is the possibility that the allegation may be malicious (see below), but it might also indicate that the person making the allegation had misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what he/she saw, or was not aware of all the circumstances. **Malicious**: The term 'malicious' implies that an allegation, either wholly or in part, has been made with a deliberate intent to deceive or cause harm to the person subject to the allegation. For an allegation to be classified as malicious, it will be necessary to have evidence to prove the intention to cause harm. Care should be taken in dealing with such allegations as some facts may not be wholly untrue. Some parts of an allegation may have been fabricated or exaggerated but elements may be based on truth.



respect the two-adult rule and you should do all you can to minimise delays. See Appendix 5 for guidance on handling disclosure.

Acting on a concern

All persons falling under the scope of the policy must immediately report any safeguarding concerns to the Child Protection Focal Point or the designated next most appropriate person who will implement the procedure and decide on the appropriate course of action. An exception lies if the concern directly relates to the Child Protection Focal Point in which case the designated next most appropriate person should be notified instead.

A written record of all complaints or concerns raised must be completed in accordance with [Appendix 6](#) and filed by the Child Protection Focal Point. Once a complaint or report is made and the Child Protection Focal Point is notified the principle of confidentiality around the procedure must apply in order to protect the child's privacy and dignity. Information about the complaint should only be disclosed on a need-to-know basis (in principle only with the child protection Focal Point and/or the director as well as the IEC). All Incident reporting forms must be kept in a safe place in accordance with confidentiality rules.

If a DCI representative has a concern that a child is in immediate danger, they should, as a matter of urgency, call the police or the Service de Protection des Mineurs (SPMi) as set out in the reporting flowchart below, and then inform the Child Protection Focal Point.

DCI-IS (either the Focal Point or the Executive Director) must immediately notify the IEC of any cases reported to the relevant national, regional or local authorities, where a DCI-IS representative is suspected of causing harm to a child.

After a complaint is made, the Focal Point may need to consult or directly alert the local authorities (i.e. the police where a child is in danger) or social services which is the Service for the protection of children (Service de Protection des Mineurs, SPMi) in Switzerland. The SPMi receives reports from families, young people, professionals or the courts to intervene, in the best interests of the child with families, in the form of socio-educational interventions:

- without judicial mandate (from simple advice to long-term support);
- with a trusteeship mandate, for example (educational assistance, organization and supervision of visitation rights or management of the minor's property);
- with guardianship mandate (if parental authority is withdrawn from the parents);
- with penal warrants (ordered by the Juvenile Court).

The SPMi is the main actor in the fight against mistreatment of children.

If a concern is not reported to the authorities or the Swiss Service de Protection des Mineurs by the Focal Point, the following steps must be taken:

- The reasons for not reporting are logged within the template for reporting a concern ([Appendix 6](#));
- If any other actions are taken as a result of the concern, these must be logged;
- The person who raised the concern should be given a clear written explanation of the reasons why the concern is not being reported further;
- The person should also be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to make a report to the authorities or the Swiss Service de Protection des Mineurs³.

³ [https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Tusla - Child Safeguarding - A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Tusla_-_Child_Safeguarding_-_A_Guide_for_Policy,_Procedure_and_Practice.pdf)



Sanctions

Breaches of this policy will be investigated in accordance with the code of conduct and contractual agreements, and/or a referral may be made to statutory authorities for criminal investigation under the law of Switzerland (Canton of Geneva), where DCI-IS is based.

The Swiss penal code - Article 187 on 'Endangering the development of minors / Sexual acts with children' specifically condemns sexual assault on children under 16 years of age⁴. According to the law, any situation of sexual assault on a minor can be denounced. Sexual assault is an offence prosecuted ex officio and is automatically the subject of a police investigation.

Breaches of this policy may incur sanctions including disciplinary action leading to possible dismissal, termination of all relations including contractual and partnership agreements, and where relevant, appropriate legal or other such actions.

⁴ <https://www.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/19370083/index.html#a187>



Reporting flowchart

Concern arises or complaint made about suspected, witnessed, reported or potential abuse of a child /children arises through:

- ▶ member or members of staff
- ▶ visitors to the project / DCI-IS premises
- ▶ another child/children in the project / involved with DCI-IS / partner organisations / anyone else

Report to Child Protection Focal Point ASAP

Name: Sasha Richards,
 Title: Advocacy Officer
 Contact Details:
sasha.richards@defenceforchildren.org
 +41 (0)227340558

If your concerns involve this specific person or she is absent...

...Report to the next most appropriate person

Name: Alex Kamarotos, Title: Executive Director
 Location: Geneva, Switzerland
alex.kamarotos@defenceforchildren.org, +41 766258244
If the concerns involve this specific person...

...Report to the IEC represented by the President

Name: Khaled Quzmar, Title: President of DCI movement
 Location: Ramallah, Palestine khaled.quzmar@dcips.org

Action will be taken by the Focal Point or the next most appropriate person to ensure the child's safety is the primary consideration and s/he will then proceed to investigate the matter, guided by the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

(See *Part 3. Response*)

The Focal Point should make sure the referral system is immediately activated, where the concern needs to be reported to local/national authorities, in order for the matter to be promptly investigated by the relevant authorities and for the child to receive all the support s/he needs. The internal safeguarding procedures must be applied and any necessary follow up on action taken by authorities assured.

**Police – 117
Ambulances
– 144**

Service for the protection of children (Service de Protection des Mineurs, SPMi), Bvd de St-Georges 16, 1211 Genève, +41 22 546 10 00

Consultations LAVI (loi fédérale sur l'aide aux victimes d'infractions) Support to victims of physical and sexual violence (applicable to cases of abuse that have taken place in Switzerland)
 Adresse: Bvd de St-Georges 72, 1205 Genève, +41 22 320 01 02, info@centrelavi-ge.ch



Part 3. Implementation and review

Implementation and budgeting

To ensure effective implementation of the policy and related procedures, child safeguarding should be included in budgetary and organisational planning, in order to allow for the proper implementation, training, review measures to be put into place. The Executive Director has the overall responsibility to ensure that the issue of child safeguarding is mainstreamed throughout the work of the organisation.

The Executive Director of DCI-IS has the obligation to lead by example, to prioritise child safeguarding within the organisation, to support and develop systems which maintain an environment which prevents harm, exploitation and abuse, and to maintain oversight of the implementation of child safeguarding policy and procedures and the code of conduct for all DCI-IS activities.

Child safeguarding will be a permanent agenda item for the quarterly DCI International Executive Council (IEC) meetings for members to monitor implementation activities and to flag any possible gaps or shortcomings. The IEC is responsible for oversight of child safeguarding within DCI-IS and will hold DCI-IS accountable for rigorous implementation of the policy.

Review

This document will be reviewed within two years of the date of its adoption by DCI-IS and every two years thereafter in line with international procedures and standards, taking account of implementation experience and practice and feedback from children, staff, partners and funders, as well as the IEC.

In 2020, and as part of child safeguarding reviews thereafter, DCI-IS will complete the Keeping Children Safe self-assessment process and follow up on results. DCI-IS will also include a section on child safeguarding in its annual report.

Adopted	November 2020
Reviewed	January-April 2023
Next review	January-April 2025

Appendices:

1. [Code of Conduct for DCI-IS \(signed by executive director\)](#)
2. [Code of Conduct for staff \(to be signed by all DCI-IS representatives\)](#)
3. [Definitions](#)
4. [Guidance on indicators of abuse](#)
5. [Do's and don'ts for child disclosure](#)
6. [Template for reporting a child safeguarding concern](#)
7. [Acceptance Form](#)
8. [DCI Media Release form](#)
9. [Informed Consent Form for Children Participating in DCI-IS Activities](#)
10. [Fiche de signalement au Service de Protection des Mineurs](#)
11. [Joint agreement of procedure for partnerships](#)
12. [Risk Assessment Template](#)



Appendix 1: Defence for Children International (DCI) Movement Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct signed by DCI-IS Executive Director

As a leading child rights independent international organisation and a membership-based grassroots movement, DEFENCE FOR CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL (DCI) promotes and protects the human rights of children at the local, national, regional and international level, in accordance with international standards, as set out in its statutes.

As set out in Article 10 of the statutes, National Sections are legally and financially independent from the international organisation and the Movement as a whole. At the same time, each national section, whilst abiding by institutional requirements of respective national legislation, must comply with the principles, guidelines, objectives and policies established by the DCI Movement.

The DCI Movement Child Safeguarding Policy and Principles set a standard for all National Sections and the International Secretariat in Geneva in order to safeguard children with whom DCI has direct or indirect contact.

This DCI Movement Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct provides guidance on appropriate and expected standards of behaviour of adults towards children. It has been designed to give all organisations which are part of the DCI Movement the confidence to carry out their roles and to ensure that positive relationships are developed.

The primary purpose of this code of conduct is to protect children from any harm done by us but also to protect adults from false accusations of inappropriate behaviour or abuse. This is not an exclusive or exhaustive list and should be interpreted in a spirit of common sense and in consideration of the holistic view on children laid down in the UN Convention on the rights of the child.

As a member of the DCI Movement:

- Our organisation recognises every child as a rights holder
- Our organisation is deeply committed to eradicating violence against children and take very seriously our duty to safeguard all children and young people and promote their wellbeing. Everyone should avoid actions or behaviour which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour towards children, and should ensure that a culture of openness exists, thereby empowering children. Our organisation does not tolerate any form of violence against children, even if a specific form of violence is not (yet) explicitly sanctioned under national law
- Our organisation adheres to the principle that everyone who works for (including all those affiliated with the organisation: staff members, contractors, interns, volunteers, board members, etc) must take all possible precautions to protect the children with whom they come into direct or indirect contact. As people affiliated with the organisation are effectively representations of the organisation, this applies to their DCI-related activities as well as in their private life. They should avoid actions or behaviour which may constitute poor practice, potentially harmful and/or abusive behaviour and/or any action which is not in the best interests of the child, young person or otherwise vulnerable person or which could even constitute a child rights violation. We commit to ensuring that where applicable clear child safeguarding measures are put in place for working with partners (assessment, agreement, support, capacity-building and monitoring and evaluation)
- Our organisation has a clear child safeguarding policy aligned with the Keeping Children Safe standards - covering the four standards under policy, people, procedures and accountability - that prevents harm to children and outlines clearly what measures are in place to respond when safeguarding concerns arise
- Our organisation commits to embedding child safeguarding risk assessment and risk mitigation in our strategy



- Our organisation understands the priority to be given to child safeguarding and understands that any concerns regarding child safeguarding should be discussed with the designated, trained child protection Focal Point immediately - it is never appropriate to wait and see or reflect when a child may be at risk of serious harm

This means when working with children, representatives of our organisation must NEVER:

- act in ways that may be abusive or place children at risk of abuse
- hit, physically assault or physically abuse children or threaten to do so
- use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse, discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others
- engage in behaviours that are physically inappropriate or sexually provocative
- engage in sexual activity or have a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of 18 years irrespective of the age of majority/consent or local custom
- expose children to inappropriate images, films, music and/or websites including mature content, indecent images (pornography) and/or violence}
- stay alone overnight with one or more children benefitting from the organisation's programmes and who are not part of their family, whether in a compound, hotel, project premises, other accommodations or elsewhere, with a non-relative DCI representative
- have a child beneficiary, who is not a part of their family, visit their home or stay overnight at their home
- condone, or participate in, illegal, unsafe or abusive behaviour towards any child
- allow allegations or complaints made by a child or concerns raised about their welfare to go unrecorded
- fail to follow up on or act on any allegations or complaints made by a child

This means when working with children, representatives of our organisation must ALWAYS:

- recognise, respect and protect every child as a rights holder, with non-negotiable rights to protection
- treat every child is treated with dignity and as a unique and valuable human being with an individual personality, distinct needs, interests and privacy, with due regard to the child's right to participation
- understand the requirement to respect children's agency, and to further empower children to protect themselves and their peers and to claim their rights
- Involve children in decisions that concern them, including the development, monitoring and evaluation of child protection strategies, policies, programmes and services
- plan activities in advance to ensure they take into account the age range, gender and needs, and ability of all participants
- always conduct child safeguarding risk assessments in the context of activities, operations and programmes (identify potential impact on or contact with children, identify and analyse the potential risks of that impact or contact, evaluate the risks in terms of likelihood they could occur and the seriousness of the impact on children, implement strategies to minimise and prevent risk, review and revise risks and preventative measures, communicate and consult regarding risks)
- avoid working alone and spending excessive time with a child and be aware of situations which may present risks



- use the Two-Adult Rule⁵ because it: (1) significantly reduces the risk of an incident of abuse; (2) protects against false accusations; (3) reduces liability and a possible claim of negligence; and (4) offers additional help if there is an accident or emergency
- avoid inappropriate physical contact with a child. If a child is hurt or distressed, comfort or reassure him/her without compromising his/her dignity or doing anything to discredit the child's own behaviour
- behave appropriately, model good behaviour, ensure that language is moderated in the presence of children and refrain from jokes or comments which are clearly inappropriate
- pay attention to what children say, and respond/report appropriately
- be aware of the power imbalance between an adult and a child and avoid exploiting that imbalance
- empower children: inform them on their rights, teach them what is acceptable behaviour of adults towards them, what is not appropriate or unacceptable, and what they can do if something occurs
- be familiar with the organisation's reporting procedure. This means that you must report to the designated child protection Focal Point any concern relating to the safety of a child immediately or as soon as it is safe to do so
- maintain confidentiality and respect children's privacy, while respecting national child protection laws with regard to reporting, mandated or otherwise, of known or suspected child abuse

I agree to abide by the DCI Movement Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct and the DCI- IS Safeguarding Policy and Principles. Furthermore, I take responsibility for the implementation of the policy and for ensuring that all persons working for/affiliated with my organisation are fully informed of our child safeguarding policy.

I understand that any breaches of the DCI Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct will be reported and appropriate action, in accordance with the policies and procedures in place, will be taken.

Organisation: DCI - International Secretariat

Name: Alex Kamarotos

Title/Role: Executive Director

Date: 16/11/2020

Signature:

⁵ The Two-Adult Rule requires that no fewer than **two adults** be present at all times when with a child.



Appendix 2 – DCI-IS Code of Conduct to be signed by all DCI-IS representatives

As a leading child rights independent international organisation and a membership-based grassroots movement, DEFENCE FOR CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL (DCI) promotes and protects the human rights of children at the local, national, regional and international level, in accordance with international standards, as set out in its statutes.

The primary purpose of this code of conduct is to protect children from any harm done by us but also to protect adults from false accusations of inappropriate behaviour or abuse. This is not an exclusive or exhaustive list and should be interpreted in a spirit of common sense and in consideration of the holistic view on children laid down in the UN Convention on the rights of the child.

DCI-IS has a clear child safeguarding policy aligned with the Keeping Children Safe standards - covering the four standards under policy, people, procedures and accountability - that prevents harm to children and outlines clearly what measures are in place to respond when safeguarding concerns arise

As a staff member/consultant/volunteer/intern/representative of DCI-IS, I:

- recognise every child as a rights holder
- am deeply committed to eradicating violence against children and take very seriously the duty to safeguard all children and young people and promote their wellbeing. Everyone should avoid actions or behaviour which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour towards children, and should ensure that a culture of openness exists, thereby empowering children. Our organisation does not tolerate any form of violence against children, even if a specific form of violence is not (yet) explicitly sanctioned under national law
- must take all possible precautions to protect the children with whom they come into direct or indirect contact. As people affiliated with the organisation are effectively representations of the organisation, this applies to their DCI-related activities as well as in their private life. They should avoid actions or behaviour which may constitute poor practice, potentially harmful and/or abusive behaviour and/or any action which is not in the best interests of the child, young person or otherwise vulnerable person or which could even constitute a child rights violation. We commit to ensuring that where applicable clear child safeguarding measures are put in place for working with partners (assessment, agreement, support, capacity-building and monitoring and evaluation)
- understand the priority to be given to child safeguarding and understands that any concerns regarding child safeguarding should be discussed with the designated, trained child protection Focal Point immediately - it is never appropriate to wait and see or reflect when a child may be at risk of serious harm

This means when working with children, I must NEVER:

- act in ways that may be abusive or place children at risk of abuse
- hit, physically assault or physically abuse children or threaten to do so
- use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse, discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others
- engage in behaviours that are physically inappropriate or sexually provocative
- engage in sexual activity or have a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of 18 years irrespective of the age of majority/consent or local custom
- expose children to inappropriate images, films, music and/or websites including mature content, indecent images (pornography) and/or violence}



- stay alone overnight with one or more children benefitting from the organisation's programmes and who are not part of their family, whether in a compound, hotel, project premises, other accommodations or elsewhere, with a non-relative DCI representative
- have a child beneficiary, who is not a part of their family, visit their home or stay overnight at their home
- condone, or participate in, illegal, unsafe or abusive behaviour towards any child
- allow allegations or complaints made by a child or concerns raised about their welfare to go unrecorded
- fail to follow up on or act on any allegations or complaints made by a child

This means when working with children, representatives of our organisation must ALWAYS:

- recognise, respect and protect every child as a rights holder, with non-negotiable rights to protection
- contribute to create and/or uphold an environment where children are listened to and feel empowered and respected as individuals.
- always recognise, respect and protect the concept of dignity attached to each child as a rights holder and as a unique and valuable human being with an individual personality, distinct needs, interests and privacy.
- adopt a culture of support, respect and tolerance, always attentive to children's needs and responding to them in a positive manner.
- ensure to be a positive role model. For example, treating everyone equitably and always apologising for any mistakes.
- treat every child is treated with dignity and as a unique and valuable human being with an individual personality, distinct needs, interests and privacy, with due regard to the child's right to participation
- understand the need to empower children to protect themselves and their peers and to claim their rights
- Involve children in decisions that concern them, including the development, monitoring and evaluation of child protection strategies, policies, programmes and services
- plan activities in advance to ensure they take into account the age range, gender and needs, and ability of all participants
- always conduct child safeguarding risk assessments in the context of activities, operations and programmes (identify potential impact on or contact with children, identify and analyse the potential risks of that impact or contact, evaluate the risks in terms of likelihood they could occur and the seriousness of the impact on children, implement strategies to minimise and prevent risk, review and revise risks and preventative measures, communicate and consult regarding risks)
- avoid working alone and spending excessive time with a child and be aware of situations which may present risks
- use the Two-Adult Rule⁶ because it: (1) significantly reduces the risk of an incident of abuse; (2) protects against false accusations; (3) reduces liability and a possible claim of negligence; and (4) offers additional help if there is an accident or emergency
- avoid inappropriate physical contact with a child. If a child is hurt or distressed, comfort or reassure him/her without compromising his/her dignity or doing anything to discredit the child's own behaviour

⁶ **The Two-Adult Rule** requires that no fewer than **two adults** be present at all times when with a child.



- behave appropriately, model good behaviour, ensure that language is moderated in the presence of children and refrain from jokes or comments which are clearly inappropriate
- pay attention to what children say, and respond/report appropriately
- be mindful of the power imbalance between adults and children and commit to never abuse the power and influence that one has by virtue of one's position over the wellbeing of any child
- empower children: inform them on their rights, teach them what is acceptable behaviour of adults towards them, what is not appropriate or unacceptable, and what they can do if something occurs
- be familiar with the organisation's reporting procedure. This means that you must report to the designated child protection Focal Point any concern relating to the safety of a child immediately or as soon as it is safe to do so
- maintain confidentiality and respect children's privacy, while respecting national child protection laws with regard to reporting, mandated or otherwise, of known or suspected child abuse

I agree to abide by the DCI Movement Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct and the DCI-IS Safeguarding Policy and Principles.

I understand that any breaches of the DCI Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct will be reported and appropriate action, in accordance with the policies and procedures in place, will be taken.

Name:

Title/Role:

Date:

Signature:



Appendix 3 - Definitions (for the purposes of DCI's Child Safeguarding Policy and Principles)

Child	In line with the UN Convention on the rights of the child, every human being below the age of 18
Child safeguarding policy	A written policy aligned with the Keeping Children Safe standards, widely disseminated and also published online, documenting an overarching commitment to preventing harm to children and specifying the organisational procedures and principles to be observed in all areas of the organisation to support child safeguarding, including confidential reporting mechanisms for child safeguarding concerns
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.
Harm	In relation to a child: "Harm" is any detrimental effect on a child's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing. Harm may be caused by abuse or exploitation whether intended or unintended. Harm may also be caused due to inaction or failure to act.
Violence	<p>[...] "Violence" is understood to mean "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse" as listed in article 19, paragraph 1, of the UN Convention on the rights of the child. The term violence has been chosen here to represent all forms of harm to children as listed in article 19, paragraph 1, in conformity with the terminology used in the 2006 United Nations study on violence against children, although the other terms used to describe types of harm (injury, abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment and exploitation) carry equal weight. In common parlance the term violence is often understood to mean only physical harm and/or intentional harm. However, the Committee emphasizes most strongly that the choice of the term violence in the present general comment must not be interpreted in any way to minimize the impact of, and need to address, non-physical and/or non-intentional forms of harm (such as, inter alia, neglect and psychological maltreatment).</p> <p>Paragraph 4 of General Comment No 13 (2011) of the UN Committee on the rights of the child on the child's right to freedom from all forms of violence http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/CRC.C.GC.13_en.pdf</p>
Child abuse	<p>From Tusla (Irish child protection agency) Guidance on definitions of child abuse and on how to recognise abuse:</p> <p>Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child or a stranger. The abuser may be an adult or another child. In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, you should consider it a child welfare and protection issue for both children and you should follow child protection procedures for both the victim and the alleged abuser. The important factor in deciding whether the behaviour is abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the adult/parent/carer. The definitions of neglect and abuse presented in this section are not legal definitions. They are intended to describe ways in which a child might experience abuse and how this abuse may be recognised.</p> <p>See also: Guidance on potential indicators of abuse: https://www.childmatters.org.nz/insights/abuse-indicators/</p>



Neglect	<p>From paragraph 20, GC No 13 UN Committee on the rights of the child: Neglect or negligent treatment. Neglect means the failure to meet children’s physical and psychological needs, protect them from danger, or obtain medical, birth registration or other services when those responsible for children’s care have the means, knowledge and access to services to do so. It includes: (a) Physical neglect: failure to protect a child from harm, including through lack of supervision, or failure to provide the child with basic necessities including adequate food, shelter, clothing and basic medical care; (b) Psychological or emotional neglect: including lack of any emotional support and love, chronic inattention to the child, caregivers being “psychologically unavailable” by overlooking young children’s cues and signals, and exposure to intimate partner violence, drug or alcohol abuse; (c) Neglect of children’s physical or mental health: withholding essential medical care; (d) Educational neglect: failure to comply with laws requiring caregivers to secure their children’s education through attendance at school or otherwise; and (e) Abandonment: a practice which is of great concern and which can disproportionately affect, inter alia, children out of wedlock and children with disabilities in some societies.⁷</p> <p>From Tusla (Irish child protection agency) Guidance on definitions of child abuse and on how to recognise abuse: Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences. Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child’s health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties. The extent of the damage to the child’s health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child’s life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect. Neglect is associated with poverty but not necessarily caused by it. It is strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic violence, and parental mental illness and disability. A reasonable concern for the child’s welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. This may become apparent where you see the child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child once.</p> <p>The following are features of child neglect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision• Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding• Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e. a child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation• Failure to provide adequate care for the child’s medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation• Inadequate living conditions – unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture• Lack of adequate clothing• Inattention to basic hygiene• Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child’s age• Persistent failure to attend school
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⁷ In many countries children are abandoned because parents and caregivers living in poverty do not have the means to support them. According to the definition, neglect is a failure of care when parents have the means to meet their children’s needs. The Committee has often urged States parties to “render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities” (art. 18, para. 2 of the Convention).



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Abandonment or desertion
Emotional abuse	<p>From paragraph 21, GC No 13 UN Committee on the rights of the child:</p> <p>21. Mental violence. “Mental violence”, as referred to in the Convention, is often described as psychological maltreatment, mental abuse, verbal abuse and emotional abuse or neglect and this can include: (a) All forms of persistent harmful interactions with the child, for example, conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, unwanted, endangered or only of value in meeting another’s needs; (b) Scaring, terrorizing and threatening; exploiting and corrupting; spurning and rejecting; isolating, ignoring and favouritism; (c) Denying emotional responsiveness; neglecting mental health, medical and educational needs; (d) Insults, name-calling, humiliation, belittling, ridiculing and hurting a child’s feelings; (e) Exposure to domestic violence; (f) Placement in solitary confinement, isolation or humiliating or degrading conditions of detention; and (g) Psychological bullying and hazing⁸ by adults or other children, including via information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as mobile phones and the Internet (known as “cyberbullying”).</p> <p>From Tusla (Irish child protection agency) Guidance on definitions of child abuse and on how to recognise abuse:</p> <p>Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child’s basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of and unable (for a range of reasons) to meet their children’s emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to recognise because the effects are not easily seen. A reasonable concern for the child’s welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer.</p> <p>Emotional abuse may be seen in some of the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rejection• Lack of comfort and love• Lack of attachment• Lack of proper stimulation (e.g. fun and play)• Lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned)• Continuous lack of praise and encouragement• Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child• Bullying• Conditional parenting in which care or affection of a child depends on his or her behaviours or actions• Extreme overprotectiveness• Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. locking child in bedroom)• Ongoing family conflicts and family violence• Seriously inappropriate expectations of a child relative to his/her age and stage of development <p>There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour.</p>

⁸ “Hazing” refers to rituals and other activities involving harassment, violence or humiliation which are used as a way of initiating a person into a group.



	<p>It should be noted that no one indicator is conclusive evidence of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is more likely to impact negatively on a child where it is persistent over time and where there is a lack of other protective factors.</p>
<p>Physical abuse</p>	<p>From paragraphs 22, 23 and 24, GC No 13 UN Committee on the rights of the child: 22. Physical violence. This includes fatal and non-fatal physical violence. The Committee is of the opinion that physical violence includes: (a) All corporal punishment and all other forms of torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; and (b) Physical bullying and hazing by adults and by other children. 23. Children with disabilities may be subject to particular forms of physical violence such as: (a) Forced sterilization, particularly girls; (b) Violence in the guise of treatment (for example electroconvulsive treatment (ECT) and electric shocks used as “aversion treatment” to control children’s behaviour); and (c) Deliberate infliction of disabilities on children for the purpose of exploiting them for begging in the streets or elsewhere. 24. Corporal punishment. In general comment No. 8 (para. 11), the Committee defined “corporal” or “physical” punishment as any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. Most involves hitting (“smacking”, “slapping”, “spanking”) children, with the hand or with an implement - a whip, stick, belt, shoe, wooden spoon, etc. But it can also involve, for example, kicking, shaking or throwing children, scratching, pinching, biting, pulling hair or boxing ears, caning, forcing children to stay in uncomfortable positions, burning, scalding, or forced ingestion. In the view of the Committee, corporal punishment is invariably degrading. Other specific forms of corporal punishment are listed in the report of the independent expert for the United Nations study on violence against children (A/61/299, paras. 56, 60 and 62).</p> <p>From Tusla (Irish child protection agency) Guidance on definitions of child abuse and on how to recognise abuse: Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child’s health and/or development is, may be, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse. Physical abuse can include the following: physical punishment, beating, slapping, hitting or kicking, pushing, shaking or throwing, pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling, use of excessive force in handling, deliberate poisoning, suffocation fabricated/induced illness, female genital mutilation</p>
<p>Sexual abuse</p>	<p>From paragraph 25, GC No 13 UN Committee on the rights of the child: Sexual abuse and exploitation. Sexual abuse and exploitation includes: (a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful or psychologically harmful sexual activity⁹; (b) The use of children in commercial sexual exploitation; and (c) The use of children in audio or visual images of child sexual abuse; (d) Child prostitution, sexual slavery, sexual exploitation in travel and tourism, trafficking (within and between countries) and sale of children for sexual purposes and forced marriage. Many children experience sexual victimization which is not accompanied by physical force or restraint but which is nonetheless psychologically intrusive, exploitive and traumatic.</p> <p>From Tusla (Irish child protection agency) Guidance on definitions of child abuse and on how to recognise abuse: Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through</p>

⁹ Sexual abuse comprises any sexual activities imposed by an adult on a child, against which the child is entitled to protection by criminal law. Sexual activities are also considered as abuse when committed against a child by another child, if the child offender is significantly older than the child victim or uses power, threat or other means of pressure. Sexual activities between children are not considered as sexual abuse if the children are older than the age limit defined by the State party for consensual sexual activities.



	<p>pornography. Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities. It rarely involves just a single incident and in some instances occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family members. Cases of sexual abuse mainly come to light through disclosure by the child or his or her siblings/friends, from the suspicions of an adult, and/or by physical symptoms. Examples of child sexual abuse include the following: any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child, an invitation to sexual touching or intentional touching or molesting of a child's body whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification, masturbation in the presence of a child or the involvement of a child in an act of masturbation, sexual intercourse with a child, whether oral, vaginal or anal, sexual exploitation of a child, which includes: » Inviting, inducing or coercing a child to engage in prostitution or the production of child pornography [for example, exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means] » , inviting, coercing or inducing a child to participate in, or to observe, any sexual, indecent or obscene act » , showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse, exposing a child to inappropriate or abusive material through information and communication technology, consensual sexual activity involving an adult and a child.</p> <p>It should be remembered that sexual activity involving a child may be sexual abuse even if the child concerned does not themselves recognise it as abusive.</p>
<p>Direct contact</p>	<p>Being in the physical presence of a child or children in the context of the organisation's work, whether contact is occasional or regular, short or long term. Examples from DCI operations include: supporting access to justice for individual children in socio-legal defence centres, capacity-building among girls and boys on rights, involving individual children and/or groups of children in project work, organising and coordinating their participation in events, participating in events and conferences where children are also present, and conducting training sessions with child human right defenders).</p>
<p>Indirect contact</p>	<p>Having access to information on children in the context of the organisation's work. Examples from DCI operations include: advocating on behalf of children, or having access to information on children in the context of the organisation's work, such as children's names, locations (addresses of individuals or projects), photographs and case studies, or provide funding for other organisations that work 'directly' with children. As a child rights organisation, DCI also advocates for the development and implementation of robust child safeguarding policies more broadly, e.g. in working to enhance child safeguarding in sport or in other leisure activities. Indirect contact also has an impact on children and therefore confers upon the organisation responsibility for child protection issues.</p>



Appendix 4 – Guidance on indicators of abuse

Note: This list is not exhaustive and provided for guidance only. Some children may not show any signs and still be victims of abuse. Signs may vary depending on the child's age, experience, gender, etc. (retrieved from: <https://www.childmatters.org.nz/insights/abuse-indicators/>)

Indicators of emotional abuse

There may be **physical indicators** that a child is being emotionally abused. Some examples of this are:

- Bed-wetting or bed soiling that has no medical cause
- Frequent psychosomatic complaints (e.g. headaches, nausea, abdominal pains)
- Prolonged vomiting or diarrhoea
- Has not attained significant developmental milestones
- Dressed differently from other children in the family
- Has deprived physical living conditions compared with other children in the family

There may also be **behavioural indicators** that child or young person is being emotionally abused. Some examples of this are:

- Suffers from severe developmental gaps
- Severe symptoms of depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
- Severe symptoms of self-destructive behaviour – self-harming, suicide attempts, engaging in drug or alcohol abuse
- Overly compliant; too well-mannered; too neat and clean
- Displays attention seeking behaviours or displays extreme inhibition in play
- When at play, behaviour may model or copy negative behaviour and language used at home

There may be **indicators in adult behaviour** that could indicate emotional abuse. Some examples of this are:

- Constantly calls the child or young person names, labels the child or publicly humiliates the child
- Continually threatens the child or young person with physical harm or forces the child to witness physical harm inflicted on a loved one
- Has unrealistic expectations of the child or young person
- Involves the child or young person in “adult issues”, such as separation or access issues
- Keeps the child or young person at home in a role of subservient or surrogate parent

Indicators of neglect

There may be **physical indicators** that a child or young person is being neglected. Some examples of this are:

- Inappropriate dress for the weather
- Extremely dirty or unbathed
- Inadequately supervised or left alone for unacceptable periods of time
- Malnourished
- May have severe nappy rash or other persistent skin disorders or rashes resulting from improper care or lack of hygiene

There may also be **behavioural indicators** that child or young person is being neglected. Some examples of this are:

- Demonstrates severe lack of attachment to other adults
- Poor school attendance or school performance
- Poor social skills
- May steal food
- Is very demanding of affection or attention



- Has no understanding of basic hygiene

There may be **indicators in adult behaviour** that could indicate neglect. Some examples of this are:

- Fails to provide for the child or young person's basic needs, such as housing, nutrition, medical and psychological care
- Fails to enrol a child or young person in school or permits absenteeism
- Leaves the child home alone
- Is overwhelmed with own problems and puts own needs ahead of the child or young person's needs

Indicators of physical abuse

There may be **physical indicators** that a child or young person is being physically abused. Some examples of this are:

- Unexplained bruises, welts, cuts, abrasions
- Unexplained burns
- Unexplained fractures or disclosures

There may also be **behavioural indicators** that child or young person is being physically abused. Some examples of this are:

- Is wary of adults or of a particular individual
- Is violent to animals or other children or young people
- Is dressed inappropriately to hide bruises or other injuries
- May be extremely aggressive or extremely withdrawn
- Cannot recall how the injuries occurred or gives inconsistent explanations

There may be **indicators in adult behaviour** that could indicate physical abuse. Some examples of this are:

- May be vague about the details of the cause of injury and the account of the injury may change from time to time
- May blame the accident on a sibling, friend, relative or the injured child or young person
- Shakes an infant
- Threats or attempts to injure a child or young person
- Is aggressive towards a child in front of others
- May delay in seeking medical attention for a child or young person

Indicators of sexual abuse

There may be **physical indicators** that a child or young person is being sexually abused. Some examples of this are:

- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Bruises, lacerations, redness, swelling or bleeding in genital, vaginal or anal area
- Blood in urine or faeces
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Unusual or excessive itching or pain in the genital or anal area

There may also be **behavioural indicators** that child or young person is being sexually abused. Some examples of this are:

- Age-inappropriate sexual play with toys, self, others
- Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge
- Comments such as "I've got a secret", or "I don't like uncle"
- Fire lighting by boys
- Fear of certain places e.g. bedroom or bathroom



Some examples of this in older children or young people are:

- Eating disorders
- Promiscuity or prostitution
- Uses younger children in sexual acts
- Tries to make self as unattractive as possible

There may be **indicators in adult behaviour** that could indicate sexual abuse. Some examples of this are:

- May be unusually over-protective of a child or young person
- Is jealous of a child or young person's relationships with peers or other adults or is controlling of the child or young person
- May favour the victim over other children
- Demonstrates physical contact or affection to a child or young person which appears sexual in nature or has sexual overtones



Appendix 5 – If a child discloses abuse to you: some do's and don'ts

Drawn from: <http://guides.womenwin.org/gbv/readiness-and-response/response-referral-and-reporting/disclosure-dos-and-donts>

The do's and don'ts are also available in other languages: [FR](#) – [ES](#) - [PT](#)

If a child discloses child abuse to you, it is critical to be prepared to handle the situation in the appropriate manner and then report it to the appropriate authorities. The guiding principle in responding to any concerns around child protection is that the safety and welfare of the child should always take precedence. No child should be put at more risk by any action you undertake. You should do all you can to remove the child from immediate danger and ensure she or he is comfortable. You should respect the two-adult rule and you should do all you can to minimise delays.

If a young person informs you that she/he is concerned about someone's behaviour towards them or makes a direct allegation you can follow the points below.

General points¹⁰

- Accept what the child says
- Keep calm
- Don't panic
- Don't seek help while the child is talking to you
- Take what they say seriously, even if it involves someone you feel sure would not harm them. We know from experience that we must listen to what we are told even if it is difficult to believe
- Be honest
- Look at the child directly
- Do not appear shocked
- Let them know that you need to tell someone else
- Assure them that they are not to blame for the abuse
- Never ask leading questions
- Try not to repeat the same questions to the child
- Never push for information
- Do not fill in words, finish their sentences, or make assumptions
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened
- Take proper steps to ensure the physical safety and psychological well-being of the child. This may include referring them for medical treatment or to a psychologist
- Make certain you distinguish between what the child has actually said and the conclusions you may have made. Accuracy is paramount in this stage of the procedure
- Do not permit personal doubt to prevent you from reporting the disclosure
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens

Things to say or do

- Repeat the last few words in a questioning manner
- 'I believe you'
- 'I am going to try to help you'
- 'I will help you'
- 'I am glad that you told me'
- 'You are not to blame'
- 'You did the right thing by telling me'
- Say I cannot keep this a secret, but I won't tell anyone except for those who must know to help (doctors, police)

¹⁰ National Sexual Violence Resource Centre, retrieved from <http://www.nsvrc.org/elearning/21385> e-learning portal also available in [ES](#)



- Report to the authorities
- Bring the survivor to get external medical and legal help immediately

Things not to say or do

- 'You should have told someone before'
- 'I can't believe it! I'm shocked!'
- 'Oh that explains a lot'
- 'No not...he's a friend of mine'
- 'I won't tell anyone else'
- 'Why? How? When? Where? Who?'
- Doubt the child's disclosure
- Make promises you cannot keep
- Confront the offender
- Wash or fix the survivor if they have been abused (as long as their safety is not jeopardized). The survivor's condition is evidence for prosecution.

At the end of the disclosure

- Reassure the child that it was right to tell you but do not promise confidentiality
- Let them know what you are going to do next
- Immediately seek help, in the first place from the designated child protection officer
- Write down accurately what the young person has told you. Records should be detailed and precise. Sign and date your notes. Keep all notes in a secure place for an indefinite period. These are essential in helping your organisation/ Social Services/ the Police decide what is best for the child, and as evidence if necessary
- Use the reporting form is a sensible way of making sure that you gather all the relevant and important information
- Seek help for yourself if you feel you need support



Appendix 6 – Template to report a child safeguarding concern

If you are concerned or know that a child's safety might be in danger, please complete this form to the best of your knowledge. Please note that child protection concerns must be reported directly to the designated Child Protection Focal Point immediately. You may wish to complete this form before contacting the designated Child Protection Focal Point or you may wish to complete the report after contacting the designated Child Protection Focal Point, according to the best interests of the child. This report is to be used as a tool to develop the most un-biased information-based report possible. For confidentiality reasons, the report should be written and signed solely by you. It should be delivered exclusively to the designated Child Protection Focal Point or to the next most appropriate person. The Child Safeguarding and Wellbeing Report will be held in a safe and secure place and treated in the strictest confidence. A log of incidents/reports will be maintained, including when a decision is taken to not refer to the local or national child protection authorities.

Case number 202__ - 0__ (To be filled out by the Child Protection Focal Point)

About you

Your name _____

Your job title _____

Workplace _____

Your relationship to the child _____

Contact details _____

About the child

Child's name _____

Child's gender / gender identity _____

Child's age _____

Child's parents / guardians _____

About your concern

What is the concern? _____

How do you know about the abuse?

Did the child disclose the abuse to you? _____

Date of the alleged incident _____

Location of the alleged incident _____



Name of alleged perpetrator _____

Job title / relationship with the child _____

Nature of the allegation _____

Your personal observations (visible injuries, child's emotional state, etc.)

[N.B. Make a clear distinction between what is fact and what is opinion or hearsay]

Exactly what the child or other source said to you [about the incident] and how you responded?

Action(s) Taken:

Where is the child / where does the child stay, and who is responsible for him/her?

Name _____

Title _____

Location _____

Contact Details _____

Is this safe? Why? If not, alternative arrangements need to be organised.

Were there any other children/people involved in the alleged incident?



Who else knows about the incident?

What would the child like to happen next?

Any other information not previously covered:

I declare that the information provided by me on the above form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature

Date

Received by the Child Protection Focal Point/Appropriate Person

Signature

Date



Appendix 7 – Acceptance form of the DCI-IS Child Safeguarding Policy to be signed by all staff

I have received and read in full the ***Defence for Children International – International Secretariat (DCI-IS) Child Safeguarding Policy*** and I have discussed the contents with the DCI-IS Child Protection Focal Point and I understand that I am bound by them.

Name :

Position (plus programme/department) :

Location :

Date :

Signature :

To be completed by DCI-IS Child Protection Focal Point:

I have discussed the contents of the ***Defence for Children International – International Secretariat Child Safeguarding Policy*** with the above-named. They have recognised they are bound by them.

Name :

Position (plus programme/department) :

Location :

Date of discussion :

Date :

Signature :



Appendix 8 – Multimedia Consent Form

	YES	NO
I agree to Defence for Children International – International Secretariat (DCI-IS) to take photos of me individually or in a group.		
I give my permission for DCI-IS to make voice recordings or videos of me.		
I give my permission to DCI-IS to use my image for the purposes of promoting, publicising and advertising DCI-IS's work in promoting and defending children's rights.		
I understand the image(s) will remain the property of DCI-IS and may be used in its publications, website, and other publicity and fundraising material and I give permission this use.		
I also understand and acknowledge that once this image is posted onto the DCI-IS website, the image can be downloaded and may be viewed from other websites beyond DCI-IS.		
I certify that I have been made aware by DCI-IS of the circumstances under which the image will be used and all the possible consequences of its publication, distribution, or circulation.		
I understand that consent given of use of image is limited to time period of 2 years starting from the date that the consent was given, after that period expires the images will be archived and no longer used in any form of internal/external or online/offline communications.		
I give my permission for DCI-IS to use, copy and publish original materials created by me (such as artwork, photos, poems, essays)		
I agree to DCI-IS using my first name.		

I understand that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without giving a reason. DCI-IS informed me about what the materials will be used for and I understand everything.



I UNDERSTAND WHAT IS REQUIRED OF ME AND I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PART IN THIS ACTIVITY

Name/Alias

Signature

Date

CONSENT FROM PARENT / GUARDIAN

Name

Signature

Date

DCI-IS STAFF CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

Name

Signature

Date



Appendix 9 – Informed Consent Form for Children Participating in DCI-IS Activities

Project/Event name:

	YES	NO
I confirm that the information sheet concerning this activity has been read to me in understandable language and I understand what is required of me.		
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and DCI-IS replied to all my questions in a manner that I could understand.		
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may leave at any time without giving a reason.		
I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, articles or presentations.		
I choose for my name to remain secret and will not appear in any reports, articles or presentations. I will choose an alias.		
I consent to photographs being taken and used for the activity.		
I consent the activities to be recorded in order to write the reports.		
I want to take part in this activity.		

If you crossed all boxes 'yes', you are ready to sign below and start the activity! If not, you can ask DCI-IS staff member for clarifications or you can return this form.

I UNDERSTAND WHAT IS REQUIRED OF ME AND I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PART IN THIS ACTIVITY		
Name/Alias	Signature	Date
CONSENT FROM PARENT / GUARDIAN		
Name	Signature	Date
DCI-IS STAFF CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY		
Name	Signature	Date



Appendix 10 – Reporting Record to the SPMi concerning a child in danger

Le Service de Protection des Mineurs (SPMi) :

- Adresse géographique Boulevard de Saint-Georges 16-18 1205 Genève
- Adresse postale Case postale 75 1211 Genève 8 B811ER/SPMI
- Téléphone +41 22 546 10 00

FICHE DE SIGNALEMENT AU SPMi d'un(e) mineur(e) en danger dans son développement

Signalant-e	Nom	Prénom
Service		Fonction
Personne de contact	Nom	Prénom
Service		Fonction
Téléphone		Télécopieur
Courriel		

Mineur-e	Nom	Prénom
Date de naissance		Age (ans)
Adresse		NP Localité
École, institution		
Père	Nom	Prénom
Adresse		Téléphone
Mère	Nom	Prénom
Adresse		Téléphone

* Type de danger	Absence de danger	Risque	Maltraitance
Danger physique	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Danger psychologique	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Danger sexuel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Négligence matérielle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Développement de l'enfant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mineur suivi au SPMi	Non <input type="checkbox"/>	Oui <input type="checkbox"/>
Nom de l'intervenant-e en protection de l'enfant		

**Bref résumé**

(faits, contexte, difficultés constatées; chronologiquement, fréquence, avec dates)

Parents

<i>Est informé-e du signalement</i>	<i>Père</i>	Non <input type="checkbox"/>	Oui <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Mère</i>	Non <input type="checkbox"/>	Oui <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Confirme les éléments signalés</i>	<i>Père</i>	Non <input type="checkbox"/>	Oui <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Mère</i>	Non <input type="checkbox"/>	Oui <input type="checkbox"/>
Accord pour une intervention socio-éducative	<i>Père</i>	Non <input type="checkbox"/>	Oui <input type="checkbox"/>
(information pour le SPMi)	<i>Mère</i>	Non <input type="checkbox"/>	Oui <input type="checkbox"/>

Mineur-e capable de discernement

<i>Est informé-e du signalement</i>	Non <input type="checkbox"/>	Oui <input type="checkbox"/>
-------------------------------------	------------------------------	------------------------------

Annexe

<i>Constat médical établi</i>	<i>Date:</i>	Non <input type="checkbox"/>	Oui <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Audition par la Police</i>	<i>Date:</i>	Non <input type="checkbox"/>	Oui <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Autres documents</i>		Non <input type="checkbox"/>	Oui <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Précisions</i>			

Date:**Signature du signalant-e:**

Nota Bene : Si cette fiche de signalement est transmise par courriel, merci de scanner ce document qui contiendra votre signature.



Appendix 11 – Joint agreement of procedure for partnerships

Name of partner:

Name:

Title:

URL to organisation's policy:

Date of policy

Defence for Children International – International Secretariat (DCI-IS)

Name:

Title:

URL to organisation's policy:

Date of policy

We hereby certify that child safeguarding concerns have been integrated when planning joint activities, recognising individuals fall under the scope of their respective child safeguarding policies. Joint risk assessment has been carried out prior to the activities or programme being carried out.

Signed (partner):

Date:

Signed (DCI-IS):

Date:

Copies of the Partnership Arrangements Agreement and the Procedure to be kept with both organisations. Both organisations reserve the right to independently refer child protection/safeguarding concerns to the appropriate authority where there is disagreement on actions to take in order to safeguard children.



Appendix 12 – Risk assessment form

Areas of risk	Risk identified	Risk significance	Procedure in place to manage risk identified