



**LightForce International Child Protection & Positive Discipline Policy.**

**Uganda.**

**Reviewed January 2019.**

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## **Glossary of Terms.**

These definitions are taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children: July 2018.

### **A form of maltreatment of a child.**

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

*(Definition provided by Working Together 2018)*

### **Physical abuse:**

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### **Emotional Abuse:**

- The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.
- It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.
- Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual Abuse.**

- Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.
- They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Sexual Exploitation:**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

### **Neglect.**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
  - protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
  - ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
  - ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

LightForce International is a pioneering charity which is committed to taking good news to the poor and practical help to those in need. At LightForce International we recognise the importance of our ministry to children and young people and the responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted in the care of LightForce International. We firmly stand by and adhere to the UNCRC (United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child).

As part of its mission, LightForce International is committed to:

- Safeguarding and promoting the interests and well-being of all children and young people in our care - valuing, listening to, and respecting them at all times.
- Ensuring that all staff/volunteers working with children and young people are recruited safely, have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities.
- Taking all reasonable practical steps to protect children and young people from harm, discrimination or degrading treatment as well as adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- Upholding the ethos and guidelines of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

LightForce International recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. It also acknowledges that children and young people can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect. Therefore the organisation has adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereafter). It also recognises the need to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary child protection agencies.

### **Safe recruitment procedure.**

Staff- staff or volunteers recruited in projects outside of the UK will be subject to reference checks and an interview.

Volunteers- any volunteer from outside of our project country will need to go through the process of a DBS check (UK) or check associated with their country of origin.

### **Procedures for reporting suspected abuse.**

6) A person who witnesses an abuse against the rights of a child shall, as soon as possible, report the matter to the police or any authority responsible for child welfare. (*The Uganda Children (Amendment) Act, 2016*).

### **Violence and Abuse.**

42A- The Ugandan Children (Amendment Act, 2016)

Every child has a right to be protected against all forms of violence including sexual abuse and exploitation, child sacrifice, child labour, child marriage, child trafficking, institutional abuse, female genital mutilation, and any other form of physical or emotional abuse.

### **Sexual abuse.**

8A- (*The Uganda Children (Amendment) Act, 2016*).

2) For avoidance of doubt, it shall be unlawful for any person to use:

- a) inducement or coercion in the encouragement of a child to engage in any sexual activity.
- b) children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices and
- c) children on pornographic performances or materials.

### **What to do when you suspect a child is being abused**

If a member of staff or volunteer suspect a child is being subject to some form of abuse they must notify the senior member of LightForce staff:

George Ridley (Director)

If George is not currently in Lira at this time then concerns must be passed on to Ocepa Andrew who will be able to refer concerns to the above person.

In the event of allegations or suspicions of abuse, the above members of staff will:

- Record what has been told to them exactly as it was said.
- Refer directly to local authorities/ LC1 (Local Council) where they will follow the procedures and policy in place by the Ugandan authorities.
- If the report was against a member of the LightForce staff or a volunteer, this procedure must still be followed and George Ridley along with the authorities will make a decision as to their future employment.
- If a report is made against a volunteer then again, a referral will be made to the correct authorities where they will advise as to the procedure to be followed in regards to the volunteer and their stay in the area.
- If a volunteer was to be found responsible for the acts, LightForce will have a duty to report the incident to the authorities in their country of origin.

### **Basic guidelines for dealing with disclosures**

1. Remember that the child's welfare and interests must be the paramount consideration at all times.
2. Listen carefully and actively to the child. At this stage there is no necessity to ask questions. Let the child guide the pace.
3. Do not show shock at what you are hearing. This may discourage the child from continuing their disclosure as they will feel that the adult receiving the information is unable to cope with what they are hearing and may be thinking badly of the child.
4. Do not investigate. If you need to clarify what is being said and whether the child is at risk, ask open questions (what, when, who, how, where, do you want to tell me anything else? etc.) but only to the point of clarification being achieved. Avoid the question 'why?' as this can imply guilt / responsibility on the child.
5. Stay calm and reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to you.
6. Never promise to keep a secret or confidentiality.
7. Write down exactly what was said, not your opinion.

### **Corporal punishment in LightForce International Day Nursery and Primary School and Care Home.**

106A Corporal Punishment in Schools.

- 1) A person of authority in any situation of learning shall not be subject a child to any form of corporal punishment.
- 2) A person who subjects a child to corporal punishment commits an offence and is liable to imprisonment or a fine (*The Uganda Children (Amendment) Act, 2016*).

At LightForce International we prohibit any form of corporal punishment used against a child and will in every circumstance take action as an organisation.

### **Procedure for when Corporal Punishment is carried out by a member of staff.**

- Record what has been told or seen exactly as it was said.
- Refer directly to local authorities/ LC1 (Local Council) where they will follow the procedures and policy in place by the Ugandan authorities.
- If the report was against a member of the LightForce staff or a volunteer, this procedure must still be followed and George Ridley along with the authorities will make a decision as to their future employment.
- If a report is made against a volunteer then again, a referral will be made to the correct authorities where they will advise as to the procedure to be followed in regards to the volunteer and their stay in the area.
- If a volunteer was to be found responsible for the acts, LightForce will have a duty to report the incident to the authorities in their country of origin.

### **If reports refer to Director or School Advisor.**

If an allegation is made about the Director of LightForce International or the school advisor then it is the responsibility of the person to report to the local authorities themselves. This will then be processed and investigated by the authorities.

### **Employment terms after an allegation is made about Employed Staff.**

The member of staff whom the allegation involves will not automatically be suspended. The decision to suspend will be a neutral decision (not disciplinary) and will only be taken after consultation with the local authorities. Suspension may take place at any time within the investigative process. Suspension will only take place when:

- where a child or children is/are at risk;
- where serious allegations may lead to gross misconduct
- where suspension is necessary to allow investigation to proceed unimpeded

### **Confidentiality.**

It is imperative that any reports of suspected abuse are discussed with only the Director, School Advisor or Local Authorities. Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made and kept in a secure place.

### **How we protect students within the Nursery & Primary School**

- DBS checks (UK Police Checks) for all volunteers/ visitors coming to the school
- Children are to be supervised by an adult at all times whilst in the classroom and out at break times
- When children are unwell they are dealt with, parents are informed and children will go home if necessary
- All other guidance within this policy helps to maintain our children's safety

### **Procedure for Staff and Volunteers in LightForce International Care Home.**

The following are guidelines to keep staff members 'safe' and to allow for a transparent system of care for our children.

- At no point should staff members be in bed with any child under their care.
- Doors to the children's bedrooms will remain open during the day.
- 'Wash times' must take place with LightForce staff members only.
- There should not be any reason for volunteers to be alone with a child in a room, relaxing and rest times will take place outside or in the main areas of the home.

### **Procedure for Staff and Volunteers in LightForce International Health Care Clinic.**

- Examinations on children should always be carried out with another adult present.

### **How we protect students within the Agricultural College**

- Any relationships outside of the professional teacher, student relationship is strictly prohibited
- Relationships between staff members of LightForce International and students is strictly prohibited
- Students will 'dorm' with people of the same sex and at different site locations to the opposite sex

### **How we will protect volunteers under the age of 18.**

- Volunteers will always be accompanied by an adult.
- Volunteers will never be expected to be alone with children in a classroom, examination room or room within the care home.
- Volunteers under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult from their education setting, church, organisation or parent/ carer.
- All LightForce staff or volunteers over 18 years old have gone through a safe recruitment procedure appropriate to their country of origin.
- Any staff or volunteers with convictions or suspicions of abuse relating to children will not be recruited or employed by LightForce International.

Please see Volunteer Agreement as well as LightForce International- Safeguarding Guidance for Volunteers

## **Positive Discipline Policy**

### **for students of Nursery & Primary School and Agricultural College.**

We understand that at times we don't see the behaviour we expect from students whom we teach or support. Our approach to dealing with this behaviour is to encourage a person's self-discipline, promoting honesty, trust, integrity and acting as role models to those around us.

#### **Dealing with challenging behaviour and in-discipline**

- At LightForce we are strongly against and forbid any form of physical punishment towards students or co-workers.
- All in-discipline issues must be discussed with department leaders and in some cases the Director or Assistant to the Director of LightForce.
- In cases where corporal or physical punishment is carried out we will follow the procedures outlined within this policy and in line with local and government guidelines

#### **We always:**

- Talk issues through
- Listen to all sides of the story
- Not take matters into our own hands
- Guide people in seeing the way their behaviour was wrong
- Communicate problems or challenges with our leaders