

Kijana Kwanza (Young People First)

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

This policy is also available in Swahili.

Sera hii inapatikana kwa Kiswahili.

1. Purpose

This policy sets out Kijana Kwanza's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people under the age of 18 years in its care, supervision, or programmes.

It establishes clear principles, rules, and procedures to:

- prevent harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- ensure safe environments for children and young people
- respond promptly and effectively to safeguarding concerns
- ensure accountability across all levels of the organisation.

2. Scope

This policy applies to Kijana Kwanza across all entities, recognising that operational delivery is primarily based in Tanzania while ensuring oversight across the UK and USA entities.

It covers:

- all staff, volunteers, interns, foster parents and board members¹
- visitors, contractors, and consultants
- partner organisations and representatives.

It applies to all Kijana Kwanza activities including:

- residential care settings
- education and vocational training programmes
- extracurricular and community outreach activities
- online and digital engagement.

This policy should be read alongside the Photography and Consent Policy, Staff & Volunteer Code of Conduct, Safeguarding Reporting Form, Whistleblowing Policy, and the relevant Recruitment and Selection Policy applicable within each Kijana Kwanza entity, which together support the organisation's approach to safeguarding, accountability and risk management.

3. Principles

3.1 Regulatory Alignment

¹ Peer to peer abuse is covered separately in the Student Code of Conduct

This policy is aligned with:

- Law of the Child Act (2009), Tanzania
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- UK Charity Commission

3.2 Safeguarding Commitment

Kijana Kwanza's commitment is to:

- prevent harm and promote wellbeing
- ensure safe environments for children and young people
- respond promptly and effectively to safeguarding concerns
- build awareness and understanding of child rights among children and young people under our care.

3.3 Guiding Principles

- The welfare of the child or young person is the paramount consideration in all decisions.
- All children and young people have an equal right to protection from harm, regardless of their background or circumstances.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Effective safeguarding requires strong governance, accountability and oversight at every level of the organisation.
- Children and young people have the right to be heard and to have their views taken seriously.
- All safeguarding concerns are taken seriously and responded to promptly.
- Kijana Kwanza operates a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, neglect and exploitation.

4. Policy Rules

4.1 Definitions

- Child or young person: Any person under the age of 18 years.
- Safeguarding refers to all actions taken to prevent harm and promote wellbeing.
- Child protection refers to actions taken in response to concerns that a child or young person may be at risk or has been harmed.

Forms of abuse include:

- Physical abuse, including corporal punishment, excessive physical discipline, or any act causing physical harm
- Emotional abuse

- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Exploitation

4.2 Code of Conduct

Staff and volunteers must:

- treat all children and young people with respect and dignity
- use appropriate language and behaviour
- ensure interactions with children and young people are transparent and accountable
- conduct themselves in a manner that can be openly explained and justified at all times
- ensure any physical contact is culturally appropriate and in the best interests of the child or young person
- use only positive discipline approaches
- remain vigilant to the conduct of others and report any behaviour that may place a child or young person at risk
- all staff must read the Staff & Volunteer Code of Conduct in full and sign to confirm their understanding and agreement with its provisions.

Staff must not:

- engage in any form of abuse or exploitation
- form inappropriate relationships with children and young people
- use corporal punishment
- engage in private, unauthorised, or secretive meetings, relationships, or communication with children and young people outside organisational knowledge or approved activities
- give personal gifts, money, or special treatment to a child or young person outside approved organisational support
- engage in any form of sexual exploitation or abuse, including the exchange of goods, services, or favours for sexual activity

Any such behaviour will result in disciplinary action and referral to external authorities where appropriate.

4.3 Safer Recruitment

Kijana Kwanza will:

- assess suitability to work with children and young people

- require a Police Clearance Certificate where a role involves unsupervised or one-to-one contact with children and young people
- ensure visitors and short-term personnel are supervised at all times when engaging with children and young people
- communicate safeguarding expectations prior to engagement
- provide a safeguarding briefing or induction before any unsupervised contact with children and young people
- require individuals to complete a declaration confirming they have read, understood, and will comply with this policy.

Where formal background verification is limited, greater emphasis will be placed on supervision, observation, and ongoing monitoring of conduct.

4.4 Safeguarding in Operations

- Risk assessments are required for all activities
- Activities presenting unacceptable safeguarding risk must not proceed until risks are reduced to an acceptable level
- Appropriate supervision must be maintained at all times
- Children and young people must not be left without appropriate supervision or awareness of their whereabouts
- Staff must ensure they know where children and young people are, who they are with, and that activities are appropriate to their age and level of risk
- Any periods of independent activity must be planned, appropriate, and within safe and known boundaries
- Children and young people must only access approved and supervised environments
- Transport arrangements must prioritise safety
- Residential care settings must ensure continuous and appropriate adult supervision, clear staff responsibilities, and safe arrangements for sleeping, personal care, and daily routines
- All arrangements must ensure that children and young people are cared for in a manner that protects their privacy, dignity and safety at all times.

4.5 Communication and Online Safety

Kijana Kwanza recognises that communication and digital platforms form part of daily programme delivery and must be used in a manner that protects the safety, dignity, and privacy of children and young people.

To support this:

- digital platforms must be used safely, including the use of appropriate security, filtering, and safeguarding controls on organisational devices

- communication between staff and children and young people must be appropriate, transparent, and for legitimate purposes
- where personal phones are used, communication must remain professional and not secretive
- staff must not arrange to meet children and young people outside Kijana Kwanza activities without prior authorisation
- children's images require appropriate consent and must be managed in line with the Photography and Consent Policy.

4.6 Partnerships

Kijana Kwanza will only work with partners who uphold safeguarding standards consistent with this policy. Prior to commencing work with a partner organisation, Kijana Kwanza will consider safeguarding risks and take reasonable steps to satisfy itself that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place.

4.7 Safeguarding Awareness and Culture

Kijana Kwanza is committed to promoting a safeguarding culture in which children and young people feel safe, concerns are taken seriously, safeguarding responsibilities are understood across the organisation, and safeguarding principles and responsibilities are embedded in daily practice in accordance with this policy.

Safeguarding forms part of the organisation's wider governance and risk management framework. Safeguarding risks, trends and serious incidents will be monitored and reviewed by senior management and the UK Board of Trustees as appropriate.

To support this:

- staff and volunteers will receive a safeguarding briefing as part of induction and required to attend annual safeguarding training appropriate to their role
- children and young people will receive an annual safeguarding briefing covering rights, safety, appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, and reporting pathways
- safeguarding practice will be reviewed annually during the organisation's staff review day to ensure it remains effective, understood and embedded across all programmes.

5. Procedures

For all safeguarding concerns, the following steps must be followed and documented where appropriate.

Failure to report a safeguarding concern, or knowingly ignoring concerning behaviour, may result in disciplinary action.

5.1 Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Kijana Kwanza encourages all staff, volunteers, children, young people and other stakeholders to report safeguarding concerns promptly and without fear.

Concerns may be reported directly to a Designated Safeguarding Lead, through another member of staff, through the organisation's Whistleblowing Policy, or by using a Safeguarding Box where direct reporting is not possible. Safeguarding Boxes are secure reporting points located at sites where children and young people access Kijana Kwanza services.

Individuals who raise safeguarding concerns in good faith will be treated respectfully and appropriately. No person shall suffer disadvantage, retaliation, victimisation, or adverse treatment for reporting a genuine safeguarding concern.

5.2 Process follow a Report

Step 1: Immediate Safety & Escalation

- assess the immediate safety of the child or young person and take protective action where risk is identified (immediately)
- report to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (within 1 hour)
- where reported to another staff member, escalate to a Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay (within 2 hours)
- complete a Safeguarding Reporting Form to record the concern (within 24 hours)
- contact external authorities immediately where a child or young person is in immediate danger
- concerns may also be reported through the organisation's Whistleblowing Policy where appropriate.

Step 2: Initial Response

- acknowledge and log the concern (within 24 hours)
- review the immediate safeguarding position and any protective actions already taken
- take any additional protective action required without delay.

Step 3: Decision and Investigation

- determine next steps (within 48 hours)
- initiate an investigation where required (within 48 hours)
- consider suspension of any staff member involved where necessary (immediately)
- inform external authorities where required (within 72 hours).

Step 4: Case Management and Outcome

- document the case in full (within 7 days of closure or decision point)
- review outcomes by senior management or Safeguarding Panel (within 14 days)
- implement appropriate actions without delay (within 30 days)
- ensure ongoing support is provided to the child or young person.

Step 5: Reporting to UK Charity Commission

Where a safeguarding concern meets the threshold of a serious incident, it must be reported to the UK Board of Trustees and the UK Charity Commission. A safeguarding concern may meet the serious incident reporting threshold where there is:

- Actual harm to a beneficiary or another person connected with the charity.
- Alleged or actual abuse by a trustee, employee, volunteer or person acting on behalf of the charity.
- A serious safeguarding incident that is being investigated by the police, local authority or another statutory body.
- A significant failure in safeguarding systems that exposes people to risk.
- A safeguarding incident that creates a serious risk to the charity's reputation or ability to operate.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 All Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers are responsible for complying with this policy, maintaining appropriate professional conduct, and reporting safeguarding concerns immediately.

6.2 Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

Kijana Kwanza appoints the Chief Executive Officer and the Children's Services Manager as Designated Safeguarding Leads.

They are responsible for safeguarding decision making, managing concerns, and liaising with external authorities.

In line with their additional responsibilities, they will receive enhanced safeguarding training to ensure they remain fully equipped to carry out their role.

6.3 Safeguarding Panel

The Safeguarding Panel comprises the Chief Executive Officer, Children's Services Manager, and Human Resources Manager.

The Panel provides oversight of complex or high-risk cases and supports decision making.

6.4 Safeguarding Support and Advisory Function

The Monitoring and Development Officer may support safeguarding reviews, investigations, compliance checks, and capacity strengthening.

The role provides independent oversight and organisational support but does not override DSL authority.

6.5 UK Board of Trustees

Trustees have ultimate responsibility for safeguarding oversight within the organisation. They must ensure appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures, training, reporting mechanisms and resources are in place, review significant safeguarding risks and

serious safeguarding concerns, and determine whether incidents require reporting to the Charity Commission or other relevant authorities.

7. Record Keeping

Safeguarding concerns, actions and outcomes must be documented appropriately and retained in accordance with organisational requirements.

To protect confidentiality and the welfare of children and young people:

- All safeguarding records are stored securely in a password protected digital folder
- Access to safeguarding records is strictly limited to those with a legitimate need to know
- Information is shared only where necessary and on a need-to-know basis

Safeguarding records may be reviewed periodically by senior management for the purposes of oversight, compliance, risk management and organisational learning, subject to appropriate confidentiality controls.

8. Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains appropriate and compliant.

This policy may also be reviewed following a major safeguarding incident, serious near miss, or significant change in relevant legislation or organisational operations.

Policy adopted: 26 December 2020

Last reviewed: 21 May 2026

Next review due: 21 May 2027