



Child Protection Policy and Procedures Purposes

Status May 2024

In line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which declares that all children have a right to protection, Gooliver APS believes its duty and obligation to protect and care for the children for whom we are given responsibility during our activities. We rely on the definition given by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which states: “[...]a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.”

In particular, the purpose of this Child Protection Policy is to:

- take into account, in all of our planning and activities, the interests and well-being of children;
- respect the rights, wishes and feelings of the children with whom we are working;
- take all reasonable steps to protect children from neglect and physical, sexual, psychological and emotional abuse;
- treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status;
- not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
- empower children: discuss their rights with them, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem.

Our responsibility to children extends to any contact we have with them, be it direct, by phone, text, chat, social network sites etc.

In the use and production of images, pictures and films we are committed to the following rules:

- before photographing or filming a child, assess and endeavour to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images;
- before photographing or filming a child, obtain consent from the child and a parent or guardian. As part of this, we must explain how the photograph or film will be used;
- ensure photos, films, videos and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
- ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts;
- ensure file labels do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically.

In particular, when addressing minors during research or training activities, parents/guardians and the minors themselves will be asked to sign a specific informed consent declaration where all aspects of children's involvement will be clarified. Before publishing any image of a minor, written permission from the parents/guardians is required.

Recruitment and Application of the Policy

This policy ensures that all the staff of Gooliver APS and all stakeholders involved in the project are aware of this Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Recruitment procedures include checks on suitability for working with young people. Concerning youth workers, the recruitment procedure includes background checks, and criminal records must be provided by all staff who will work with children. In particular, we ensure that the staff of Gooliver APS is clear on what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children.

At the beginning of all projects, the management team is committed to briefing partners' representatives and staff on the Child Protection Policy, how to reduce risks and create child-safe environments, how to promote child-safe practices which keep children safe during the project and in their community, and provide information about child protection to the children and communities in which we work, especially for the staff working directly with children.

This information will also concern how to report child abuse if they have concerns about a staff member of Gooliver APS and information on state, provincial and local laws regarding what individuals must do when aware of youth in potentially harmful situations.

This Child Protection Policy applies to all part-time and full-time employees and independent contractors, freelance and other experts, interns and volunteers, associate firms and sub-contractors working with Gooliver APS on the project.

Contrasting and reporting child abuse

Gooliver APS is committed to providing a management strategy to prevent child abuse and protect children in the course of its work, delivering to the staff clear information on what to do in the case of suspected child abuse to respond to all suspicions and allegations of abuse swiftly and appropriately.

In the case of suspected or actual child abuse, our priority is always for the safety and welfare of the child and that no child is ever left in an unsafe situation. Information about suspected abuse must be accurate and a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure or when the concern arises. Where it is suspected that any form of criminal behaviour is happening during a programme, the appropriate local authorities should be informed immediately and their advice followed.

Guidelines for adults working with children within the projects of Gooliver APS

Adults acting in the projects of Gooliver APS are called to treat each minor with respect and care, ensuring that minors are supervised at all times, thus providing them with a safe environment. The same professional standards should always be applied and sensitive to differences expressed through culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual identity. Adults should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm and demeaning or insensitive comments towards children and young people is not acceptable in any situation.

All adults who work with, and on behalf of children are accountable for how they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources, and safeguard children and young people.

Adults, should work and be seen to work, openly and transparently. Whenever possible, an additional adult supporting the already present responsible staff will be present when working with minors in an unsupervised setting. Meetings with children and young people outside the agreed working arrangements must be authorised in advance by managers and parents or carers.

Adults who work with children are responsible for their actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct that leads any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions. They are expected to refrain from the use of alcoholic beverages and tobacco products in the presence of youth. Adults should always maintain appropriate and professional boundaries to avoid behaviour when working for Gooliver APS.

They should report and record any incident with this potential. Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Adults should address their interactions, especially with youth, on social networking sites as if they were happening in public, in front of other adults and young people. In other words, if it is inappropriate to say to a young person in public, it should not be written as a comment on a social networking site.

All documents bearing personal information, including registration forms, medical information forms, permission to treat forms, etc., are to be treated as confidential, to minimise the number of people who have access to any such documents and to secure the documents at all times. Each Gooliver APS project partner organisation will inform and educate its members on these guidelines, providing a copy to each staff member and answering any doubts, questions or complaints that may arise from them.

President

