

Five Talents Safeguarding Policy - UK Staff and Volunteers

Five Talents works with you, its Staff and Volunteers (together “**you**”) to raise funds and operate programmes designed to improve the lives of those in poor communities and support the most vulnerable (“**programme beneficiaries**” or “**beneficiaries**”).

In the course of your duties both when overseas in the field and in your country office, Staff and Volunteers supporting Five Talents’ work may occasionally interact with programme beneficiaries and others whose personal circumstances render them vulnerable to significant harm or exploitation (“**vulnerable adults**”), including women who have suffered gender based violence and children, such as the children of beneficiaries.

These interactions may occur:

- During field visits to Five Talents’ programmes overseas, where you may visit programme beneficiaries, attend social or community events or undertake home visits to assess programme beneficiaries’ living conditions or for pastoral support.
- In your country, where you may visit a church or school to speak on behalf of Five Talents, or attend other events or meetings where you may meet vulnerable adults or children.

No child or vulnerable adult should ever experience abuse. Abuse is defined as any selfish act of oppression and injustice, exploitation and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. It can take a number of forms, including physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional abuse; bullying; neglect; or financial or other forms of exploitation (including via digital means - online, email, text etc) and can consist of inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm.

Any exploitation of children is particularly unacceptable. This includes exploitation through child labour, which deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and is harmful to physical and mental development.

Where Five Talents employs you as a member of Staff or works with you as a Volunteer, we expect you to meet appropriate safeguarding standards as outlined in this safeguarding policy (the “**Policy**”).

We ask you to confirm your acceptance of this Policy by signing and returning a copy of this Policy to us.

In agreeing to implement this Policy, you undertake to:

- Apply the principle of ‘do no harm’ across all its programmes and specifically in relation to vulnerable adults and children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, ethnicity, nationality, religious belief, marital status, gender or sexual orientation, or any other characteristic which may be a cause of discrimination.
- Promote the realisation of the rights of vulnerable adults and children, including their right to protection from violence and abuse.
- Adhere to the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (which all the countries in which Five Talents works have ratified), including protection of children from neglect, abuse,

exploitation, cruelty and discrimination and adherence to their rights to resources, skills and contributions necessary for their survival and full development.

Five Talents undertakes to:

- Appoint a Safeguarding Focal Point to oversee the implementation of this Policy.
- Work with Five Talents' partner organisations with the objective of ensuring that they act consistently with the principles outlined in this Policy.

This Policy has been developed based on law and guidance that seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults including:

- General Principles of Safeguarding Law and Practice
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182
- UN Bulletin on Special Measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse 2003

Your Responsibilities under this Policy

Prevention

General principles

You should:

1. Never abuse or exploit a child or vulnerable adult or act or behave in any way that places them at risk of harm.
2. Contribute to building an environment where children and vulnerable adults are respected and know their rights.
3. Always treat children and vulnerable adults in a manner which is respectful of their rights, integrity and dignity, considers their best interests and does not expose them to, or place them at risk of, harm.

Specific interaction issues

All Five Talents Staff and Volunteers should ensure that to the extent your responsibilities involve any of the following you take appropriate steps to satisfy yourself that these principles are being properly followed:

1. Where personal details of programme beneficiaries or other vulnerable adults or children are collected (e.g. to register them as beneficiaries for a programme), such details are stored securely using the systems and approaches agreed within the relevant organisation. These personal details should only be accessed by people who have a genuine need to access the information to fulfil their role. Any breach of security should be reported to the Safeguarding Focal Point at Five Talents.
2. Any interviews or photographs of children or vulnerable adults are undertaken with sensitivity and with the permission of the subject or, where appropriate, of a parent or guardian. Any physical contact should be appropriate and not an invasion of privacy. Once permission is obtained, it should be recorded alongside other programme information.

3. If during the course of your duties you do have contact with children, wherever possible, you do not spend time alone with those children and you ensure that other Staff and Volunteers are informed of the location and nature of any meeting involving children.
4. Any work carried out by children is not mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous to them.

Staff and Volunteer procedures

1. Five Talents will ensure that:

- During recruitment to any post where DBS checks are required, necessary checks are made and evidence of those background checks is retained where required.
- It undertakes any other necessary background checks on Staff and Volunteers.
- This Policy is accessible to and signed by all Staff and Volunteers when they begin their duties.
- Staff and Volunteers have access to appropriate safeguarding training and/or information.
- Wherever possible, Staff and Volunteers who in the course of their duties have contact with children do not spend time alone with a child. Meetings with children or vulnerable adults should be as open as possible and other Staff and Volunteers should be informed of the location and nature of the meeting.
- Any work carried out by children is not mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous to them.

2. Staff and Volunteers are expected to:

- Familiarise themselves with this Policy.
- Abide by this Policy both inside and outside work.
- Promote good practice by being excellent role models, to contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to involve people positively in developing safe practices.

Reporting

Staff and Volunteers should:

1. Report any abuse or allegation of abuse and any child or vulnerable adult protection concerns they have to the Safeguarding Focal Point at the earliest possible opportunity (typically, within 48 hours). Details of the incident should not be shared with anyone except the Safeguarding Focal Point.
2. Not undertake their own investigations into the incident. The incident should be reported and the Safeguarding Focal Point should be responsible for investigating and supporting the person who reported the incident and the victim.
3. Cooperate fully and confidentially in any investigation of concerns or allegations of child or vulnerable adult abuse.

Safeguarding Focal Point

The Safeguarding Focal Point is appointed by Five Talents to oversee the implementation of this Policy and to handle any reported incidents.

As of the date hereof, the Safeguarding Focal Point is:

Rachel Lindley
Chief Executive Officer, Five Talents UK
Address: Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London, SW1P 3RB
Email: rachel.lindley@fivetalents.org.uk
Mobile: +44 7732 014181

The Safeguarding Focal Point will:

- Support Five Talents Staff and Volunteers in implementing this Policy.
- Act as the first point of contact on all safeguarding issues.
- Record any incidents reported to them. All reported incidents should be treated confidentially.
- Provide support to the individuals involved after receiving a report of an incident. This should include the person who reported the incident; the victim and the alleged perpetrator. The alleged perpetrator should be protected whilst the investigation is ongoing.
- Investigate any incident and involve other local or international agencies as required, in particular if such incident breaches any applicable law or regulation.

From time to time Five Talents may appoint a local or additional person to serve as a safeguarding focal point, howsoever described. Five Talents will advise you on a case-by-case basis of any person so appointed.

Currently, the Safeguarding Lead on the Trustee Board of Five Talents is Sietske van der Ploeg.

Sanctions

Five Talents will investigate all incidents reported to it and any actual or alleged breaches of this Policy. Where a violation of this Policy has or may have occurred, Staff and Volunteers will cooperate with Five Talents to take immediate and appropriate action which may include (but is not limited to) commissioning an independent investigation or temporary suspension or dismissal of a particular member of Staff or Volunteer.

In serious cases Five Talents may also consider whether a report should be made to the Police or other appropriate authority.

Updates and Amendments

Five Talents reviews and updates its safeguarding policies from time to time. Five Talents reserves the right to update this Policy at any time upon written notice to you. Where practicable Five Talents will provide prior written notice of any such updates.

Questions

Any questions in relation to this Policy should be addressed to the Five Talents Safeguarding Focal Point:

Rachel Lindley
Chief Executive Officer, Five Talents UK

Registered Charity No 1113969 | www.fivetalents.org.uk
info@fivetalents.org.uk | 0203 8087 643

Address: Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London, SW1P 3RB

Email: rachel.lindley@fivetalents.org.uk

Mobile: +44 (0) 77 3201 4181

I confirm that I have been made fully aware of, and understand the contents of this Five Talents Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy, and understand my Responsibilities for Safeguarding as set out above.

Signed Name

Position Date

Appendix 1 (Definitions)

Abuse is any selfish act of oppression and injustice, exploitation and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm. Abuse can take a number of forms, including the following: Physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional abuse; bullying; neglect; financial abuse.

A child is anyone under the age of 18.

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This *may* include a person who:

- Is elderly and frail.
- Has a mental illness including dementia.
- Has a physical or sensory disability.
- Has a learning disability.
- Has a severe physical illness.
- Is a substance misuser.
- Is homeless.
- Is unable, for any other reason, to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Child or vulnerable adult protection is the preventative and responsive action taken by Five Talents to protect direct and indirect beneficiaries from abuse.

Safeguarding is the standards employed by Five Talents to ensure that any child or vulnerable adult involved directly or indirectly with our programmes is protected from possible harm or abuse by:

- Protecting children and vulnerable adults from maltreatment.
- Preventing the impairment of children and vulnerable adult's health and development.
- Ensuring that children and vulnerable adults live in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children and vulnerable adults to have the best outcomes.

Staff and Volunteers is anyone directly associated with or anyone working on behalf of Five Talents including:

- Volunteers.
- Employees.
- Interns.
- Agency staff.
- Contractors
- Consultants.
- Board of Trustees.
- Board members.
- Any other person visiting a Five Talents partner or project internationally.

Appendix 2
(Procedures for Dealing with Safeguarding Reports)
[Source: BOND]

The purpose of this document is to provide procedures for dealing with reports of breach of Five Talents' Safeguarding Policy, where the safeguarding violation is:

- Against staff or members of the public,
- Perpetrated by staff, partners or associated personnel (Associated personnel includes (but is not limited to) consultants, volunteers, contractors, programme visitors including journalists, celebrities and politicians).

Procedures

1. Report is received

1.1 Reports can reach the organisation through various routes. This may be in a structured format such as a letter, e-mail, text or message on social media. It may also be in the form of informal discussion or rumour. If a staff member hears something in an informal discussion or chat that they think is a safeguarding concern, they should report this to the appropriate staff member in their organisation.

1.2 If a safeguarding concern is disclosed directly to a member of staff, the person receiving the report should bear the following in mind:

- Listen
- Empathise with the person
- Ask who, when, where, what but not why
- Repeat/ check your understanding of the situation
- Report to the appropriate staff member (see below)

1.3 The person receiving the report should then document the following information, using an Incident Report Form if there is one:

- Name of person making report
- Name(s) of alleged survivor(s) of safeguarding incident(s) if different from above
- Name(s) of alleged perpetrator(s)
- Description of incident(s)
- Dates(s), times(s) and location(s) of incident

1.4 The person receiving the report should then forward this information to the Safeguarding Focal Point or appropriate staff member within 24 hours.

1.5 Due to the sensitive nature of safeguarding concerns, confidentiality must be maintained during all stages of the reporting process, and information shared on a limited 'need to know' basis only. This includes senior management who might otherwise be appraised of a serious incident.

1.6 If the reporting staff member is not satisfied that the organisation is appropriately addressing the report, they have a right to escalate the report, either up the management line, to the Board (or other governance

structure), or to an external statutory body. The staff member will be protected against any negative repercussions as a result of this report. See Five Talents' Whistleblowing Policy.

2. Assess how to proceed with the report

2.1 Appoint a Decision Maker for handling this report

2.2 Determine whether it is possible to take this report forward

- Does the reported incident(s) represent a breach of safeguarding policy?
- Is there sufficient information to follow up this report?

2.3 If the reported incident does not represent a breach of Five Talents' Safeguarding Policy, but represents a safeguarding risk to others (such as a child safeguarding incident), the report should be referred through the appropriate channels (eg. local authorities) if it is safe to do so.

2.4 If there is insufficient information to follow up the report, and no way to ascertain this information (for example if the person making the report did not leave contact details), the report should be filed in case it can be of use in the future, and look at any wider lesson learning we can take forward.

2.5 If the report raises any concerns relating to children under the age of 18, **seek expert advice immediately**. If at any point in the process of responding to the report (for example during an investigation) it becomes apparent that anyone involved is a child under the age of 18, the Decision Maker should be immediately informed and should seek expert advice before proceeding.

2.6 If the decision is made to take the report forward, ensure that you have the relevant expertise and capacity to manage a safeguarding case. **If you do not have this expertise in-house, seek immediate assistance**, through external capacity if necessary.

2.7 Clarify what, how and with whom information will be shared relating to this case. Confidentiality should be maintained at all times, and information shared on a need-to-know basis only. Decide which information needs to be shared with which stakeholder – information needs may be different.

2.8 You may have separate policies depending on the type of concern the report relates to. For example workplace sexual harassment is dealt with through the Five Talents' Non-Harassment policy.

If there isn't a policy for the type of report that has been made, follow these procedures.

2.9 Check your obligations on informing relevant bodies when you receive a safeguarding report. These include (but are not limited to):

- Funding organisations
- Umbrella bodies/networks
- Statutory bodies (such as the Charity Commission in the UK)

Some of these may require you to inform them when you receive a report, others may require information on completion of the case, or annual top-line information on cases. When submitting information to any of these bodies, think through the confidentiality implications very carefully.

3. Appoint roles and responsibilities for case management

3.1 If not already done so (see above), appoint a Decision Maker for the case. The Decision Maker should be a senior staff member, not implicated or involved in the case in any way.

3.2 If the report alleges a serious safeguarding violation, you may wish to hold a case conference. This should include:

- Decision Maker
- Person who received the report (such as the focal point, or manager)
- HR manager (if any)
- Safeguarding adviser (or equivalent) if there is one

The case conference should decide the next steps to take, including any protection concerns and support needs for the survivor and other stakeholders (see below).

4. Provide support to survivor where needed/requested

4.1 Provide appropriate support to survivor(s) of safeguarding incidents. Nb. This should be provided as a duty of care even if the report has not yet been investigated. Support could include (but its not limited to)

- Psychosocial care or counseling
- Medical assistance
- Protection or security assistance (for example being moved to a safe location)

4.2 All decision making on support should be led by the survivor.

5. Assess any protection or security risks to stakeholders

5.1 For reports relating to serious incidents: undertake an immediate risk assessment to determine whether there are any current or potential risks to any stakeholders involved in the case, and develop a mitigation plan if required.

5.2 Continue to update the risk assessment and plan on a regular basis throughout and after the case as required.

6. Decide on next steps

6.1 The Decision Maker decides the next steps. These could be (but are not limited to)

- No further action (for example if there is insufficient information to follow up, or the report refers to incidents outside the organisation's remit)
- Investigation is required to gather further information
- Immediate disciplinary action if no further information needed
- Referral to relevant authorities

6.2 If the report concerns associated personnel (for example contractors, consultants or suppliers), the decision making process will be different. Although associated personnel are not staff members, we have a duty of care to protect anyone who comes into contact with any aspect of our programme from harm. We cannot follow disciplinary processes with individuals outside our organisation, however decisions may be made for example to terminate a contract with a supplier based on the actions of their staff.

6.3 If an investigation is required and the organisation does not have internal capacity, identify resources to conduct the investigation. Determine which budget this will be covered by.

7. Manage investigation if required

7.1 Refer to the organisation's procedures for investigating breaches of policy. If these do not cover safeguarding investigations, use external guidelines for investigating safeguarding reports, such as the [CHS Alliance Guidelines for Investigations](#).

8. Make decision on outcome of investigation report

8.1 The Decision Maker makes a decision based on the information provided in the investigation report. Decisions relating to the Subject of Concern should be made in accordance with existing policies and procedures for staff misconduct.

8.2 If at this or any stage in the process criminal activity is suspected, the case should be referred to the relevant authorities *unless this may pose a risk to anyone involved in the case*. In this case, the Decision Maker together with other senior staff will need to decide how to proceed. This decision should be made bearing in mind a risk assessment of potential protection risks to all concerned, including the survivor and the Subject of Concern.

9. Conclude the case

9.1 Document all decisions made resulting from the case clearly and confidentially.

9.2 Store all information relating to the case confidentially, and in accordance with Five Talents' policy and local data protection law.

9.3 Record anonymised data relating to the case to feed into organisational reporting requirements (eg. serious incident reporting to the Board, safeguarding reporting to donors), and to feed into learning for dealing with future cases.

Dos and Don'ts in allegations of abuse [Source: Wellers Law Firm]

Under no circumstances should you carry out your own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Focal Point
- In the absence of the Safeguarding Focal Point or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Focal Point, then the report should be made to the Deputy Safeguarding Focal Point
- If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Focal Point and the Deputy Safeguarding Focal Point, then the report should be made in the first instance to the Senior lead for safeguarding
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Focal Point, the absence of the Safeguarding Focal Point or Deputy Safeguarding Focal Point should not delay any referral to Social Services or the Police where deemed necessary.
- The Trustees will support the Safeguarding Focal Point in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.

When dealing with disclosures of abuse:

Do:

- Explain that you cannot be asked to keep a secret in an abuse incident.
- Listen patiently to the child or vulnerable person, let them express their feelings and emotions without interruption, and accept what is said verbatim.
- Reassure the child or the vulnerable person that they have done the right thing in telling someone.
- Explain that the information received will be passed on in the interest of the child or vulnerable person.
- Ensure that you make notes of your conversations with the child or vulnerable person and if possible, such notes should be in the exact words of the child or vulnerable person.
- Speak to the Safeguarding Focal Point.
- Seek advice from NSPCC / Children's Social Services / Police / other appropriate agencies

Do not:

- Show shock or disbelief.
- Agree to keep the disclosure a secret.
- Make a suggestion that you can stop the abuse.
- Ask suggestive queries or ask for further details or clarifications as this might contaminate the evidence.
- Investigate any allegation. This is the role of competent and professionally trained people.
- Contact the alleged person responsible for the abuse.

- Make any comment to the media.