



Forever Angels Baby Home **Policy on: Child Protection**

Who is this document for?

This document sets out 'Forever Angels Baby Home' Child Protection Policy and Procedures. It is for all staff and volunteers and is available also to all other interested persons.

Who does the policy apply to?

The Policy applies to all staff who work with the children at Forever Angels Baby Home and is part of their contractual obligations. It is also a condition of placement for all volunteers who work for the Forever Angels NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation) or in our name.

Why does Forever Angels Baby Home need a Child Protection Policy?

There are some groups of children and young people who are particularly vulnerable to abuse; and children living in residential care are among these groups.

For this reason, Forever Angels Baby Home wants to make explicit our commitment to promote the safety and security of the children and young people in our care.

Forever Angels Baby Home's Child Protection Policy:

Core Statements

Forever Angels Baby Home recognises the personal dignity and rights of children towards whom it has a special responsibility and a duty of care and respect. Forever Angels Baby Home, and all its staff and volunteers, undertake to do all in our power to create a safe environment for children and young people and to prevent any harm or abuse to them. Forever Angels Baby Home is committed to acting at all times in the best interests of the children, seeing these interests as paramount.

We will do this by:

- Setting in place, implementing and regularly monitoring and reviewing procedures to protect children and young people. These procedures cover Forever Angels Baby Home's recruitment practice, staff induction and training, and management responsibilities.

- Adopting a code of behaviour for all staff and volunteers.

- Ensuring that any allegations of abuse are promptly and properly dealt with, victims supported and perpetrators held to account.

- Aiming to be an example of best practice in the prevention of child abuse and in responding to it.

For the purposes of this policy, Forever Angels Baby Home regards children and young people as those who are under the age of 18. This policy applies to all children with whom Forever Angels Baby Home has contact regardless of gender, religion or ethnicity.

Forever Angels Baby Home intends that its child protection procedures will ensure a safe and protected environment for vulnerable children in regard to the NGO's work and activities.

Forever Angels Baby Home's context and work: Principles of child protection

Forever Angels Baby Home believes that all staff and volunteers need to be aware of our policy and commitments in relation to child protection even though some of our staff and many volunteers may never have any unaccompanied contact with children or young people through their work.

- The NGO also undertakes to try to ensure that all staff and volunteers whose work involves direct contact with children have completed a CRB disclosure form (if coming from overseas) or a local Police Report Form (if Tanzanian).

Definition of Child Abuse

Child abuse occurs when adults (or other children) hurt children or young people under the age of 18, either physically, emotionally, sexually or by neglect.

There are 4 main types of abuse:

- **Physical abuse** is actual or likely physical injury to a child, such as hitting, kicking, pinching or shaking, where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

- **Emotional abuse** is harm caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection, such as degrading punishments, threats, calling names, not giving care and affection and bullying, resulting in adverse affects on the behaviour and emotional development of a child or young person.

- **Neglect** occurs when basic needs such as food, a safe environment and medical care are not met, or when there is failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, resulting in serious impairment of a child's or young person's health or development.

- **Sexual abuse** occurs if a child or young person is pressurised or forced to take part in any kind of sexual activity, whether or not the child is aware of or consents to what is happening. Sexual abuse includes incest, rape and fondling. It also includes non-contact activities such as showing pornography or inappropriate photographs.

Forever Angels Baby Home's Child Protection Procedures

1 Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

- Candidates will be asked to describe their previous experience of working with children or young people, to provide a referee who can comment on their work with children or young people, and (if coming from abroad) to complete a CRB disclosure form.

- If the CRB disclosure form discloses any crime relating to child abuse or violence, Forever Angels will not permit that person to become a staff member or volunteer.

- Adverts and job descriptions for any Forever Angels Employment will include a reference to the NGO's commitment to child protection and our Child Protection Policy.

- Job offers made will be subject to satisfactory clearance from checking of statutory records and satisfactory verification of qualifications and the candidate's CV and subsequent interview.

2 Ensuring Awareness and Prevention

- Forever Angels commitment to child protection will be stated in appropriate corporate documents and on our website. The NGO will make its policy and procedures available to anyone who requests them.

- The Directors of the Baby Home will ensure that all staff are aware of the Child Protection Policy and have access to the document. The induction programme for all staff will include an explanation of the policy, and all staff will be expected to complete a more detailed briefing session on the policy.

- The NGO expects all staff and volunteers to follow the stated code of behaviour.

- All managers have the responsibility for ensuring that all staff and volunteers are aware of the Policy, and for reminding them of its provisions when the need arises. Managers will be expected to take part in Child Protection training.
- The training needs of staff in identified posts will be regularly assessed and relevant training provided.
- Any events planned should ensure that child protection issues are considered as part of the risk analysis and/or health and safety arrangements.

3 Dealing with Disclosures and Suspicion

Forever Angels Baby Home recognises that disclosures (i.e. when a specific allegation of abuse is made against a named individual) and suspicion (i.e. when concern is expressed concerning abuse that may have taken place or be in prospect) should always be investigated and acted upon swiftly, making the welfare of children the paramount consideration. Any information offered in confidence should be received on the basis that it will be shared with relevant people in authority: this may include a Manager and/or, if appropriate, Child Protection Personnel in statutory agencies.

If a child or young person tells you they are being, or have been abused, or have witnessed abuse:

- Listen to, accept and take seriously what the child or young person says and comfort them as necessary.
- Do not investigate, and do not inform, question or confront the alleged abuser.
- Reassure the victim that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Let them know you need to tell someone else. Do not promise total confidentiality.
- Record carefully what you have heard whilst it is still fresh in your mind. Include the date and time of your conversation and any incident disclosed.
- If any member of staff or volunteer suspects abuse, or if a child or young person makes a disclosure, or if a person external to Forever Angels Baby Home reports a suspicion or allegation relating to NGO staff, volunteers or activities, the following steps should be taken:
 - Avoid any delay.
 - Report this to the Manager/Staff member designated as the child protection co-ordinator for Forever Angels Baby Home.
 - The designated person will ensure an assessment is made and a report given to the appropriate Social Services Department or Police Station if

necessary. However, if urgent action is required to protect children this should be initiated immediately.

No staff member or volunteer will prejudice their own standing or position within Forever Angels Baby Home by responsibly reporting potential or suspected child abuse.

4 The NGO's Management Responsibilities and Plan of Action

If a member of staff is the subject of an allegation of child abuse, that staff member will be asked to take leave from their duties on full pay until an investigation has been completed. If a NGO volunteer is the subject of an allegation of child abuse, that volunteer will be asked to withdraw from their work until an investigation has been completed. In both cases, it should be made clear that suspension does not imply guilt but rather protects all parties whilst an investigation is undertaken.

If a disclosure of abuse takes place in which the alleged abuser is a member of staff or a volunteer, or the incident has taken place on NGO premises or in connection with NGO activities, Forever Angels Baby Home will inform the statutory authorities. If a suspicion is expressed, the NGO will undertake a risk assessment and then take appropriate action, which may involve contacting statutory authorities.

If an allegation of child abuse is made involving a member of NGO staff, this allegation, together with a record of the investigation undertaken and the outcome, will be recorded in their personal files.

Confidentiality regarding these records will be scrupulously maintained and information will only be released to the Manager of the staff member concerned or to those in positions of authority externally who have reason to need it for the protection of children.

If an incident of child abuse takes place in connection with Forever Angels Baby Home as an organisation or any NGO activities, the NGO undertakes to provide support for the alleged victims and the alleged abuser whilst an investigation is carried out. Forever Angels Baby Home will also seek to ensure that any continuing support needed after a situation has been resolved is made available.

If a member of NGO staff or anyone closely associated with the NGOs work in some recognisable capacity is found to have committed acts in relation to children which are criminal or which contravene in a serious way the principles and standards set out in this policy, Forever Angels Baby Home will take disciplinary action and/or any other action which may be appropriate to the circumstances. If volunteers are found to have committed such acts, the volunteer relationship will be ended.

5 Visitors

It is not possible to carry out police checks on all visitors who come to Forever Angels Baby Home, but in the interest of the children, no visitor will ever be left alone with any Forever Angels children. This is reinforced in our separate – 'Visitors Policy'.

6 Reviewing the Child Protection Policy

Forever Angels Baby Home will ensure that this policy is reviewed every 4 years and that an annual report on any incidents relating to child protection is written.

Code of Behaviour

There are some simple rules and procedures that will minimise the risk of an incident occurring or being alleged. Most of these are common sense and will already be followed, but it is important that staff and volunteers specifically check that they are being implemented in any event which involves babies, children or young people.

- Treat everyone with respect, recognising their right to personal privacy.
- Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these.
- Plan and organise events so that risks are minimised.
- Recognise that caution is required in all one-to-one situations.
- Provide access for children and young people to talk to others about any concerns they have.
- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they do not like.
- Remember that someone else may misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- Do not spend time alone in a closed room / room with no windows with children – plan activities so that more than one adult is present or, at least, other people are within sight and hearing.
- Avoid being drawn in to inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour, such as tantrums .
- Avoid showing favouritism to any individual.
- Never make suggestive remarks or gestures, even in fun.
- Do not rely on just your good name to protect you.
- Do not believe "It could never happen to me".

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