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International Safeguarding Pack

BBC Safeguarding

BBC SAFEGUARDING TEAM

The BBC has a dedicated team of [safeguarding subject-matter experts](#) (SME's) who manage serious concerns and risks across the organization, in relation to children and vulnerable adults. The BBC Safeguarding Team can be contacted via [email](#) during UK office hours (Mon-Fri, 09:00-17:00) – visit our [website](#) for more information.

INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDING POINT OF CONTACT

Each Bureau/Office has an International Safeguarding Point of Contact, which is generally the bureau or office manager. Their role is to advise and support staff on matters relating to working with children and includes:

- Advising on basic queries regarding working with children, including the BBC International Safeguarding Policy
- Signposting teams to resources and guidance on working with children
- Maintaining a list of local specialist child, welfare, health and law enforcement contacts
- Ensuring that all safeguarding and child protection referrals are directed to the Safeguarding Team



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The BBC Safeguarding Policy can be found [here](#). This policy applies to all staff, freelancers and third-parties (including chaperones) engaged for the purposes of BBC output.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The [BBC Safeguarding Code of Conduct](#) outlines ten 'golden rules' for working with children and vulnerable adults. All adults engaged by the BBC are expected to follow these rules and may be subject to disciplinary action or termination of contract if not observed.



COMPLIANCE

The BBC strives to always work in ways which are culturally sensitive and respect the diverse nature of the people we work with. We recognise there are many different ways of taking care of children and making sure they are protected. It is acknowledged that protecting children and being culturally sensitive can be a difficult balancing act, especially given the situation in many of the countries where we work.

In relation to working with children, we endorse the general principles declared in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 that all the rights guaranteed by it must be available to all children without discrimination or exception:

- The right to a childhood, including protection from all forms of violence
- The right to be educated
- The right to be healthy
- The right to be treated fairly
- The right to privacy
- The right to be heard, including considering a child's views



International Frameworks

The BBC will discharge its legal and moral obligations by operating within identified boundaries, as outlined in the following:

- [The Ofcom Broadcasting Code](#)
- [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

BBC Internal Guidance

- [Safeguarding Code of Conduct](#)
- [BBC International Safeguarding Guidance](#)
- [BBC Adults with Care and Support Needs Guidance](#)
- [BBC Editorial Guidelines: Section 5 \(Harm and Offence\)](#)
- [BBC Editorial Guidelines: Section 9 \(Children and Young People as Contributors\)](#)

Children's Welfare

When interviewing children, BBC teams must approach the process with an understanding of the child's emotional, mental, and physical welfare. We've included some useful things to consider below.

Appropriate Environment

- **Safe and Neutral Space:** Provide an environment where the child feels comfortable and safe. Avoid locations where they may feel intimidated, judged, or reminded of traumatic events.
- **Trusted Adult Presence:** Ensure a supportive adult (parent, guardian, or welfare worker) who is trusted by the child is present.
- **Discreet Settings:** Avoid public or noisy places that might distract the child or compromise their privacy.



Framing Questions

- **Open-Ended Questions:** Use simple, non-leading questions (e.g., "Can you tell me what happened?")
- **Avoid Pressuring for Details:** Do not push for information if the child seems hesitant or uncomfortable. Reassure them that it is okay to say as much or as little as they wish.
- **Check Understanding:** Use language appropriate for their age, ensuring they understand what you're asking. Avoid jargon, complex phrasing, or abstract concepts.
- **Respect Silences:** Allow pauses or silences in the interview, and don't rush the child. Silence can often provide time for reflection and reduce pressure.

Be Trauma-Informed

- **Understanding Trauma's Impact:** Recognise that children who have experienced trauma may react unpredictably—they may withdraw, become tearful, or provide fragmented accounts. Be patient and non-judgmental.
- **Avoid Re-Traumatisation:** Avoid revisiting distressing or graphic details unnecessarily. Repeatedly discussing trauma can harm a child's mental health.
- **Supportive Language:** Use affirming, non-judgmental language, avoiding phrases that blame the child.
- **Non-Verbal Cues:** Pay attention to body language. If the child appears distressed, pause the interview and check how they are feeling.

Children's Welfare

When interviewing children, journalists must approach the process with an understanding of the child's emotional, mental, and physical welfare.



Empowerment

- **Explain Their Rights:** Make it clear to the child that they can stop the interview at any time, skip questions, or take a break whenever they need to.
- **Encourage Ownership:** Empower the child to feel in control by asking simple questions like, “Are you okay to continue?” or “Would you like to stop now?”
- **Offer Comfort Breaks:** Provide opportunities for breaks. Ensure the child has water, and time to use the toilet if required.
- **End Positively:** Wrap up the interview by asking if the child wants to add anything, thanking them for their participation, and reassuring them about the purpose of their contribution.

Protect Boundaries

- **Maintain Professionalism:** While it's important to build trust, avoid becoming overly emotional or offering promises of help that you cannot fulfil. Remember the remit of the BBC and your role.
- **Avoid Personal Intrusion:** Respect the child and family's boundaries and personal space. Ensure they do not feel obligated to share information beyond their comfort zone.
- **Debrief After the Interview:** After concluding the conversation, check in with the child to see how they are feeling.

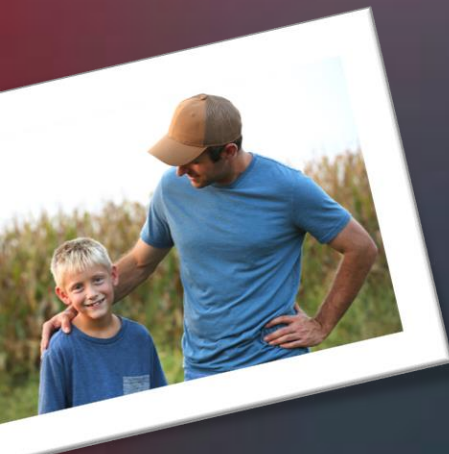
Working with NGOs

- **Trusted Relationships:** NGOs often have established relationships with local communities, which can help you gain access to individuals in a safe and ethical manner.
- **Safe Environments:** NGOs can help to arrange for interviews to take place in safe, child-friendly locations.
- **Support:** NGOs can provide follow-up support and care and can address safeguarding concerns.



Supervision

Children should be supervised at all times by an appropriate adult. BBC staff, freelancers or fixers are unable to supervise children.



Working with Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians can supervise their own children as long as one of the following conditions are met:

- filming is short-term (e.g. news output, documentary)
- the child is very young
- the child has particular medical or developmental needs

Parents can only be used when they aren't a contributor themselves. If they are, then you will need an additional adult to supervise.

Other suitable adults

We recognise there might be situations where parents can't supervise. There are other people who would be suitable to supervise in that scenario.

The list below is not exhaustive:

- Local charity workers
- Professional chaperones
- Teachers
- Youth organisation staff
- Other family members if agreed by parents



REMEMBER: Parental presence and parental consent does not negate our duty of care.

All individuals who act in a supervisory capacity should be properly briefed on the activity, their role, and the child's role.

They should:

- Be made aware of who the SPOC is and how to report any concerns
- Advocate for the child's rights
- Always have the child in their eyeline

International Safeguarding Requirements

Our international safeguarding requirements outlines the 10 key areas that must be adhered to when working with children internationally. The below guidelines provide a framework to ensure we uphold the highest standards of care and protection for all u18s that we work with to ensure their safety and well-being.

#	Requirement	Details	Links
1	Safeguarding Point of Contact (SPOC)	<p>A central point of contact should be identified within the team who will act as a safeguarding representative. This person should be clearly identified in all risk assessments.</p> <p>All staff/crew/fixers should be aware of who the SPOC is and how to contact them. The SPOC is responsible for ensuring that staff/crew/fixers are aware of safeguarding measures and are following procedures.</p>	
2	Safeguarding Policy	<p>The BBC International Safeguarding Policy should be followed at all times and should be available to all staff, freelancers, fixers, and contributors.</p>	Policy
3	Code of Conduct	<p>All adults working with children and young people, in whatever capacity, must adhere to the safeguarding Code of Conduct.</p> <p>The Code of Conduct outlines the required behaviours when working with children. It is meant to support respectful relationships between BBC staff, freelancers, third parties and children.</p>	Code of Conduct
4	Safer Recruitment	<p>Criminal records checks may be required to ensure that you are suitable to work with children.</p> <p>Where an individual's role involves a consistent and frequent level of contact with children, a criminal record check must be made locally. All background checks must be completed before working with children.</p>	Safer Recruitment

International Safeguarding Requirements

#	Requirement	Details	Links
5	Training	<p>All staff are required to complete the mandatory 'Safety, Security and Safeguarding' online training module.</p> <p>In addition, the Safeguarding Advanced International (online Teams course) is mandatory for anyone identified as an ISPOC or has been identified by their manager as likely to come into contact with children in their role.</p>	Training
6	Risk Assessment	<p>Safeguarding risk assessments should be completed whenever you work with children or vulnerable adults.</p> <p>You should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the hazards - what could go wrong and who will be involved?• Decide who might be harmed and how.• Decide on precautions and controls.• Evaluate the risks, detail training, and backgrounds checks.• Record your findings: communicate them to all involved and ensure that they are implemented.• Review the risk assessment and update if there are changes in the activity or people involved. <p>In addition to the above, particular attention should be paid to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age of child/ren or vulnerable adult• Individual needs of children/vulnerable adult i.e. learning needs, medical needs• Setting / Environment• Time of day/night and associated risks• Exposure to specific adult / inappropriate content• Local laws/legislation which may be relevant to the project• A list of local child protection services/NGOs that may be able to support you (if relevant)	

International Safeguarding Requirements

#	Requirement	Details	Links
7	Supervision	<p>Children must be supervised at all times by an appropriate adult. BBC staff/freelancers/fixers are unable to supervise children.</p> <p>This could include a parent/legal guardian or another family member (if agreed by parent/legal guardian), or a professional known to the child (e.g., teacher, charity worker, youth worker, etc).</p>	Supervision
8	Facilities & welfare	<p>When planning a project with children/vulnerable adults, we expect you to consider the facilities, the appropriateness of these facilities, and the individual's welfare and needs.</p> <p>You should ensure that the location suitable for children/vulnerable adults so that they feel comfortable and safe. This could be somewhere familiar to them e.g. home, school, youth club, religious building, etc</p>	
9	Reporting & Recording	<p>Staff/freelancers/fixers should know how to report a concern about a child or inappropriate adult behaviour. This may include harm that is about to occur or has already occurred.</p> <p>All safeguarding concerns should be escalated to the BBC Safeguarding Team for triage and action where required. Concerns can be reported via email (safeguarding@bbc.co.uk) or online on our Naxex:EthicsPoint platform.</p> <p>The Designated Safeguarding Lead for the BBC is Kim Collins (Head of Safeguarding).</p>	BBC Safeguarding Team inbox Report Online (Navex)
10	Aftercare	<p>Thought should be given to the support that is provided for contributors and their parents/family once their contribution is complete and post-TX.</p> <p>This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing access to counselling/psych services • Guidance on social media settings and potential risks • Liaising with the child's school to ensure they are aware of involvement so they can provide support whilst in education • Providing links to any charities/support organisations who may be able to help if needed • Considering if the BBC needs to provide any support 	Editorial Policy Social Media

CONTENT CONTROL



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OWNER	BBC Safeguarding Team		
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