



CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

LightLives Charitable Trust

Version: 1.0

1. Our Values and Principles

At LightLives Charitable Trust, we exist to serve children and young adults. Everything we do must keep their needs and interests at the centre—especially their safety.

We believe that children are equal to adults. Although they may be more vulnerable, this does not make them lesser. Every interaction with a child must be grounded in trust and respect—values that form the foundation of our protection and safeguarding approach.

2. Introduction

We are deeply committed to protecting children's rights. The following key frameworks and laws guide our approach:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
 - Constitution of India (Articles related to children's rights)
 - Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012
 - Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015
 - Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009
 - Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006
 - Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 2016
 - Indian Penal Code (Sections related to offences against children)
 - Information Technology Act, 2000 (Sections related to online child abuse)
 - UN Secretary-General's Bulletin: Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
 - US Trafficking Victims Protection Act, 2000
 - USAID ADS 303 Mandatory Standard Provision, Trafficking in Persons (July 2015)
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3. Purpose of This Policy

The purpose of this policy is to create awareness of child protection and safeguarding and to guide all stakeholders of LightLives in preventing, identifying, and reporting child abuse.

We are committed to supporting children's rights in every area—survival, development, protection, and participation in decisions that affect them.



4. LightLives' Interface with Children

We are privileged to connect with children in many ways:

- Our Programs: Partnering with schools, colleges, and orphanages to deliver leadership training and values education.
 - Sharing Stories: With consent, celebrating children's achievements through posters, social media, and other communications.
 - Our Team's Families: Respecting and valuing the children of our staff members.
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5. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Our Board, staff, consultants, trainers, facilitators, interns, and volunteers.
 - Our partners, including schools, colleges, orphanages, and their respective teams.
 - Vendors, suppliers, contractors, donors, and third parties are working with us.
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6. Definitions

Child: Anyone under 18 years old (as per UNCRC and National Policy for Children 2012).

Child Protection: Creating safe environments where children can thrive, free from harm.

Child Abuse: Any physical, emotional, or sexual harm, neglect, or exploitation affecting a child's well-being.

Physical Abuse: Any act or neglect causing physical harm.

Emotional Abuse: Behaviour that damages a child's self-worth or development.

Child Sexual Abuse: Any sexual act involving a child who cannot consent.

Exploitation: Using children for labour, trafficking, or commercial gain.

Neglect: Failing to provide essential care—health, education, nutrition, or safety.

Child Protection Violation: Any behaviour that risks or harms a child or breaches safety protocols.

7. Our Code of Conduct

Who does this apply to:

- LightLives: Board of Trustees, all staff (full-time, part-time, contractual), consultants, trainers, facilitators, interns, and volunteers.
- Project partner organisations: All partner schools, orphanages, and institutions - including their staff (part-time and full-time), management, board, consultants, trainers, interns, and volunteers.



- Other associates: All vendors, suppliers, contractors, donors (institutional and individual), our partners, contractors, suppliers, and all third parties working with or for LightLives shall:

Boundaries and Commitments

7.1 Physical Boundaries

Commit To:

- Creating a kind and supportive environment where every child feels safe, heard, and valued.
- Avoiding being alone with a child; ensuring another trusted adult is present (except for professional counsellors, teachers, or mentors in appropriate contexts).
- Respecting local culture and interacting with children in ways that make them feel safe and comfortable.

Will Never:

- Touch a child inappropriately, including private parts of the body, or in any way that could make a child uncomfortable.
- Use any form of corporal punishment, physical harm, or assault.

7.2 Relationship Boundaries

Commit To:

- Ensuring children do not visit the homes of staff, trainers, facilitators, or interns unless for their immediate safety.
- Maintaining professional and respectful relationships that prioritise the child's well-being.
- Upholding every child's right to marry only after reaching the legal age.

Will Never:

- Allow program children to visit staff homes or stay overnight at staff residences (except in cases of severe threat to the child's safety and with proper authorisation).



- Develop or encourage any physical, sexual, exploitative, or abusive relationship with a child.
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7.3 Professional Boundaries

Commit To:

- Acting fairly, respectfully, and without bias toward all children.
- Remaining calm, patient, and understanding at all times in professional interactions.

Will Never:

- Employ children as domestic workers or engage them in any form of child labour.
 - Discriminate against or favour any child to the exclusion of others.
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7.4 Communication Boundaries

Commit To:

- Ensuring all interactions—verbal, written, or digital—make children feel respected and emotionally safe.

Will Never:

- Use language, suggestions, jokes, or advice that are inappropriate, offensive, or abusive.
 - Act in ways that shame, humiliate, belittle, or emotionally harm a child.
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7.5 Media Usage Boundaries

Commit To:

- Using images, videos, or documentation of children only with proper consent and in ways that uphold their dignity and safety.



Will Never:

- Take, use, or share images or videos of children in distress or, undignified conditions.
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8. Implementation

Building Awareness Together

- All new team members receive child protection training during onboarding.
- Partners and stakeholders are trained annually.
- Leadership keeps the Board informed.
- Vendors and contractors are oriented on their child protection responsibilities.

Keeping Communication Open

- Everyone knows how to raise concerns and access support.
 - Contact details for our Child Protection Committee are shared clearly and regularly.
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9. Our Support and Response System:

Child Protection Committee:

The Managing Trustee,

Talent & Delivery Head,

HR Representative.

This team guides and monitors child protection efforts.

Legal Requirement – POCSO Reporting:

Any instance of child sexual abuse must be reported to the police within 24 hours. This is both our policy and a legal obligation to ensure immediate protection.

10. When Concerns Arise

How to Report

- All concerns are treated with confidentiality and care.
- Everyone is encouraged to report incidents without fear.
- Reports are documented, reviewed, and acted upon promptly.
- Sexual abuse cases must be reported to the police within 24 hours.

Our Response



We will:

For Our Board, staff, consultants, trainers, facilitators, interns, and volunteers.

- Suspend the accused individual during the investigation.
- Seek legal advice and take disciplinary action if necessary.
- Terminate employment or partnerships when abuse is substantiated.
- Cooperate fully with legal authorities.

For Project partners and associates: All partner schools, orphanages, and institutions - including their staff, management, board, consultants, trainers, interns, volunteers, vendors, suppliers, contractors, donors, and all third parties working with or for LightLives. contractors/vendors:

- Contract termination
- Blacklisting from future work
- Reporting to authorities if needed

For Sexual Abuse Cases (POCSO)

- As per Section 19, POCSO Act (2012), any person aware of an offence must report it to the police within 24 hours.
- Failure to report is punishable by up to 6 months' imprisonment and/or a fine.

11. Policy Review

We regularly review this policy to ensure it continues to protect and empower children, reflecting new insights and best practices in protection and safeguarding.

Reach Out to Us

Child Protection Committee:

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| • Managing Trustee, Leo Fernandez | – leo.fernandez@lightlives.org |
| • Talent & Delivery Head, Yentl D'Silva | – yentl.dsilva@talentease.com |
| • HR, Vijayalakshmi Arun | – viji.arun@talentease.com |
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