Girl Effect Safeguarding Policy

Executive Summary
At Girl Effect, we take the safety and protection of children and young people very seriously.

We have a safeguarding policy made of ten golden standards, which ensures that Girl Effect is an organisation that is safe for all children and young people.

The policy applies to all of Girl Effect’s employees; anyone carrying out paid or unpaid work for Girl Effect including board members, interns, consultants and suppliers; and anyone visiting Girl Effect, including people like journalists or investors.

Here you’ll find the basic information you will need to understand fulfil your responsibilities to keeping children safe. If you would like a copy of Girl Effect’s full safeguarding policy, please visit our website www.girleffect.org
Safe Recruitment

Girl Effect has recruitment processes in place that minimise the risk of employing people who may be unsuitable to work with children and young people.

- We obtain reference checks for all Girl Effect people and carry out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for UK nationals and UK residents.
- All consultants must provide two references. DBS checks are required for UK-based consultants whose direct work with children and young people or access to their personal data.
- Where reliable checks are available, we also obtain police checks for staff and consultants in the countries where we have operations on the ground.

Safe Partnerships

All Girl Effect partners have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place to prevent harm to children and young people.

- Girl Effect will not form partnerships with any individual or organisation whose investments or operations have the potential to expose children and young people to abuse or exploitation.
- We conduct due diligence checks on partners who are responsible for implementing Girl Effect programmes. We have also developed a detailed Safeguarding Agreement which outlines the measures partners must have in place to meet Girl Effect Safeguarding Standards.
- Where partnerships include the management of data on children and young people, we agree measures to ensure the privacy, security and safety of this data and document these within the Safeguarding Agreement.
Our Code of Conduct

All staff, consultants, partners, visitors and others must comply with our Code of Conduct when they interact with children and young people.

- All Girl Effect people read and agree to comply with our Code of Conduct before joining the organisation
- All written agreements with partners, visitors, consultants and suppliers include a requirement to comply with our Code of Conduct
- Each country offices develops child-friendly versions of our Code of Conduct, which reflect the views of children and young people and how they want Girl Effect people to behave towards them.

General Professional Conduct
- Be polite, considerate and an example of good conduct
- Never use language or behaviour that discriminates on any grounds
- Never engage in any activity that could bring the organisation into disrepute
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report any concerns immediately

Preparation for Visits
- Attempt to understand the local cultural and religious norms
- Ensure your clothing is appropriate to the local culture and religion
- Discuss contact with children and young people with local staff in advance to identify and minimise any potential risks

Interaction with Children
- Ensure children know who you are and why you are visiting.
- Always ask permission before taking photographs or videos
- Treat children and young people with respect
- Never show favouritism or spend excessive time with one child
- Avoid offering money or gifts to individual children or their family. Where gifts are given, they should only be given to groups of children and should be of minimal value
- Avoid being alone with children or young people. Never take a child in your car, to your hotel or to any other private space
- Never share personal details about yourself

Physical Contact with Children
- Always wait for the child to initiate any type of physical contact
- Never hit or physically punish a child or young person
- Never give assistance in aspects of personal care or engage in behaviour which might be considered inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Never sleep in the same room or develop physical/sexual relationships with children or other beneficiaries

Use of Social Media
- Never accept contact requests or engage with children and young people you have met through Girl Effect via personal social media
- Always check with Girl Effect before posting images on personal social media accounts or in other public forums.
Building Know How

Girl Effect ensures that all staff, consultants, visitors and others representing the organisation understand their safeguarding responsibilities and have the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfil their obligations.

Responding to child protection concerns

We respond quickly to any child protection concerns, in a way that safeguards the best interests of all children and young people.

- All staff receive a safeguarding induction upon joining the organisation and more detailed training according to the specific needs and responsibilities of each role.
- All consultants receive a briefing on safeguarding and our contracts include a clause requiring compliance with Girl Effect's Safeguarding Policy.
- Visitors to Girl Effect initiatives receive a briefing on safeguarding and must sign a Visitor’s Agreement to comply with safeguarding measures.
- Each Girl Effect country office, brand, product and initiative has a tailored process for responding to child protection concerns and all employees, partners, consultants and visitors are given guidance on how to use these.
- When concerns arise, all our employees, partners, consultants and visitors immediately contact the Girl Effect Safeguarding Advisor and are offered expert advice on the best way to tackle the issue at hand.
- We document all concerns and update a central register, so that we can monitor how effective our responses are and take action when we need to improve.
Safe marketing and communications

Girl Effect’s marketing and communications activities, materials and campaigns always preserve the privacy and dignity of children and young people and ensure that they are not exposed to risk.

Digital privacy, security and safety

Girl Effect ensures that our digital applications, platforms and services are safe, secure and don’t capture or use data in inappropriate or unethical ways.

- Girl Effect limits the amount of information that is shared about children and young people so that their exact location and identity can’t be pinpointed.
- We review all content featuring children and young people to ensure they are not put at risk. Girl Effect never uses any images that could be considered sexually provocative or where children are not fully clothed.
- We provide children, young people and their care givers with clear information about how their photographs, video, audio or case studies will be used and document their consent.

- All websites and platforms where children and young people share information, photos or stories are moderated by Girl Effect employees or one of our partners.
- All digital platforms include Child friendly Terms and Conditions (T&Cs) and require children and young people to actively consent for their data to be captured or used.
- Data is only stored or transmitted through channels that meet the highest industry security standards. We strictly restrict access to data to individuals that need that data to do their jobs.
Children’s Participation
Where children are invited to participate in our work, Girl Effect carries out risk assessments and makes sure that all appropriate safety measures are in place.

Adapt to the local context
Girl Effect’s country offices adapt our global safeguarding policy to reflect their legal, cultural and social contexts.

- We carry out risk assessments before any activity, campaign or other initiative and implement risk mitigation strategies
- We ensure that the adults who work with children have the necessary skills and training to prevent and respond to safeguarding concerns
- We get consent for participation from children, young people and their caregivers. All children receive training which includes advice on how to keep themselves safe and where to go if they need help.

- In countries where we have operations on the ground, we map out the local child protection context and update it every year. This ensures we’re aware of local laws and services relating to child protection.
- We have local reporting procedures that reflect the legal and cultural context in which we are operating. We also develop child-friendly versions for children and young people who directly engage with our brands and products.
- The local Safeguarding Advisors monitor the implementation of our safeguarding measures and ensure that safeguarding is considered in every aspect of our work.
Accountability

*Girl Effect’s people share responsibility for safeguarding and we monitor safety measures regularly to ensure we identify and address risks to children and young people as quickly and efficiently as possible.*

- Girl Effect has a dedicated Safeguarding Advisor in every country where we have a presence on the ground
- We have a Global Safeguarding Task Force to promote learning and best practice around safeguarding
- We review our policy annually and it’s then approved by our Board of Trustees to ensure it is fit for purpose.