



LEBANESE SOCIETY FOR EDUCATIONAL &
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
الجمعية اللبنانية للإنماء التربوي والإجتماعي

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

I. INTRODUCTION

The Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development (LSESD) is a non-political and non-profit organization. Its purposes, as stated in its by-laws, are:

- Cooperating with authorized parties, in order to establish academic and vocational schools, universities, orphanages, infirmaries, training centers for handicaps, clinics, publishing houses, and media centers, after procuring lawful licenses, in compliance with the Lebanese observed laws.
- Working towards the moral, social and spiritual enlightenment, in the light of the Bible, cooperating with institutions and individuals, whose purposes and aims comply with those of the Society.
- Participating in relief projects, helping the poor and needy, irrespective their race, color, and religion.

LSESD is the parent organization for several institutions and ministries through which it seeks to

- equip leaders for effective and collaborative service
- develop tools and resources for capacity building of local, community-based organizations
- raise awareness and address issues of poverty, vulnerability, and the right to education for all, especially students with learning difficulties
- respond to humanitarian crises, partnering with local churches and community-based organizations to alleviate the suffering of affected families

These LSESD institutions and ministries include:

- Beirut Baptist School (BBS)
- Arab Baptist Theological Seminary (ABTS) including the School of Theology, and the Institute of Middle East Studies (IMES).
The Academy of Languages and Practical Skills (ALPS) is presently under the umbrella of ABTS.
- Baptist Children and Youth Ministry (BCYM)
- Dar Manhal Al Hayat publishing house (DMAH), Baptist Publications (BP), and The GateWay Bookshop
- Relief and Community Development
- SKILD Center for Smart Kids with Individual Learning Differences

Who is this Policy for?

This Child Protection Policy applies to all LSESD staff members, volunteers, visitors, partners under the auspices of LSESD ministries, and ABTS students, during their involvement in any LSESD projects concerning the children.

All the aforementioned are required to treat children with respect and dignity.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this Child Protection Policy, all references to:

- *'child', 'children', 'young person', 'young people', 'adolescent' and 'adolescents'* – whether singular or plural – are used interchangeably and are taken to refer to those **under the age of 18 years**, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- *'Workers', 'staff', 'volunteers'*, are used interchangeably and are taken to refer to anyone interacting with children on behalf of LSESD.
- *'LSESD entities'* – refers to LSESD Institutions and Ministries
- *'Project'* – refers to an activity within an entity
- *'Child Protection Policy', 'Policy'* – are used interchangeably to Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Need for and Scope of Policy

Child protection policies will help:

- ***Protect children:***
A child protection policy helps to create a safe and positive environment for children and, although no standards or processes can offer complete protection for children, following these standards and implementing a policy minimises the risk to children from abuse and exploitation.
- ***Protect workers:***
A child protection policy clarifies what a project requires in relation to the protection of children. It sets out standards of behaviour for project staff and volunteers when they are around children and what to do if they notice, or are told about, inappropriate behaviour in others.
- ***Protect the organisation:***
A child protection policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates the organization 's commitment to safeguard children from harm. Child protection policies will help move the project towards best practice in this area and deter those who would wish to abuse children from joining the project.

Acknowledgements

This policy has been developed with guidelines from **Viva** and seeks to be in line with the standards outlined by the **Keeping Children Safe Coalition**.

It has been put together with reference to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and applicable Lebanese law.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

A. LSESD's Conviction

1. As Christians, it is believed that:
 - The profound concern for children at risk flows from God Himself,
 - Children are created in the image of God and therefore have intrinsic worth.
 - Every child is born equal in God's sight with unique talents.
2. All children have the right to protection from abuse irrespective of race, social background, gender, skin colour, disability, religion or beliefs.
3. All children and young people have equal rights to protection from abuse, and exploitation and inequalities should be challenged.
4. All children and young people should be encouraged to fulfil their potential.
5. Child protection is both an individual and a corporate responsibility.
6. The welfare of children and young people is paramount. Everyone must take precautions and responsibility to help create a safe place for children and support their care and protection. This begins with everyone being well informed and aware of child protection issues.
7. Organisations owe a duty of care to the children with whom they work and a responsibility to meet minimum standards of protection for the children in their care.
8. Openness must be encouraged about concerns relating to child protection matters because child abuse thrives on secrecy.

B. LSESD's Commitment

LSESD is committed to the protection of *every* child so that they can become all that God intends.

1. LSESD commits itself to listen to, believe in and act for children. It will *work with* children to find ways to protect them from harm.
2. LSESD accepts the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child as a basis for its understanding of the rights of children globally. LSESD commits to work towards what is best for all children, irrespective of their race, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say, and whatever type of family they come from.
3. LSESD commits to obtain agreement of this policy from its staff, and volunteers and will review this policy at least every five years or earlier if necessary.

III. DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Child Abuse in General

Child abuse is a general term used to describe where a child may experience harm, either by deliberate harmful acts, but more usually as a result of failure on the part of a parent / carer or organisation / community to ensure a reasonable standard of care and protection for that child, and

where that care and protection is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust.

The following sub-categories of child maltreatment and their definitions were devised following an extensive review of different countries' definitions of child maltreatment and a 1999 World Health Organization consultation on child abuse prevention:

A. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse of a child is the actual or potential physical harm from an interaction or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power, or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, kicking, slapping, shaking, poisoning, pinching, whipping, throwing, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

B. Sexual Abuse

Sexual Abuse is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities that he or she does not fully understand and has little choice in consenting to. This may include, but is not limited to, rape, oral sex, penetration, or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching. It may also include involving children in looking at, or producing sexual images, watching sexual activities and encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. The recent use of technology such as the internet by adults to entice children to meet or participate in virtual sex is also an abuse.

C. Neglect and Negligent Treatment

Neglect or negligent treatment is the inattention or omission on the part of the caregiver to provide for the development of the child in: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions, in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caretakers and which causes, or has a high probability of causing, harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. This includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm as much as is feasible.

D. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse includes the failure to provide a developmentally appropriate, supportive environment, including the availability of a primary attachment figure, so that the child can reach their full potential in the context of the society in which the child lives. There may also be acts toward the child that cause or have a high probability of causing harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. These acts must be reasonably within the control of the parent or person in a relationship of responsibility, trust

or power.

Emotionally abusive acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, scapegoating, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing, or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

E. Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation is the abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes; this includes profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the exploitation of another.

Child prostitution and trafficking of children for sexual abuse and exploitation is one example of this.

F. Commercial or Other Exploitation of a Child

This refers to the use of the child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. This includes, but is not limited to, child labour. These activities are to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development.

Children being recruited in to the armed forces would also come under this category.

Not all work done by children should be classified as child labour that is to be targeted for elimination. Children's or adolescents' participation in work that does not negatively affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling is generally regarded as being something positive. This includes activities such as helping their parents around the home, assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays. These kinds of activities contribute to children's development and to the welfare of their families; they provide them with skills and experience, and help to prepare them to be productive members of society during their adult life.

The term "child labour" is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.

It refers to work that:

- is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and
- interferes with their schooling by:
 - depriving them of the opportunity to attend school;
 - obliging them to leave school prematurely; or
 - requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

In its most extreme forms, child labour involves children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses and/or left to fend for themselves on the streets of large cities – often at a very early age.

G. Internet Abuse and Abusive Images of Children

Abusive images of children (commonly known as child pornography) is defined as any

representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for sexual purposes. Technology has also meant that children are now subject to additional abuse through the Internet. There is a trade in the transmittal of abusive images of children. Digital and phone cameras have made it possible for some children's images to be distributed across the Internet without their knowledge. Children may also be at risk of coming into contact with people who want to harm them through their use of the Internet.

H. Witchcraft / Ritualistic Abuse

Some communities believe strongly that adults and children may be in possession of evil spirits, which can bring bad luck on a family. These beliefs can lead to practices that may be harmful to children e.g. fasting, beating, immersion in water, etc. These practices can lead to extreme cruelty and even death of children. Disabled children are sometimes seen as a sign of possession by evil spirits. Other communities or individuals may use and abuse children through ritualistic practices and ceremonies.

I. Spiritual Abuse

Spiritual abuse occurs when a spiritual leader or someone in a position of spiritual power or authority (whether organisation, institution, church or family) misuses their power or authority, and the trust placed in them, with the intention of controlling, coercing, manipulating or dominating a child. Spiritual abuse is always about the misuse of power within a framework of spiritual belief or practice, in order to meet the needs of the abuser (or enhance his or her position) at the expense of the needs of the child. Spiritual abuse results in spiritual harm to a child and can be linked to other abuse such as physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

J. Abuse of Trust

A relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity. An abuse of trust could be committed by, for example, a teacher, humanitarian or development worker, sports coach, scout leader, faith leader, etc... It is important that those in a position of trust have a clear understanding of the responsibilities this carries and clear guidance to ensure they do not abuse their position or put themselves in a position where allegations of abuse, whether justified or unfounded, could be made. The relationship may be distorted by fear or favour. It is vital for all those in such positions of trust to understand the power this gives them over those they care for and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence. This is particularly important in the context of humanitarian aid, when those in positions of power also control aid and resources.

K. Bullying

Bullying is now recognized as increasingly harmful to children and young people. This could take the form of physical intimidation, verbal intimidation – including racist and sexist remarks – or emotional intimidation – for example isolating or excluding someone. It is difficult to define but always involves a less powerful person experiencing deliberate

hostility.

IV. RECOGNISING FORMS OF CHILD ABUSE

LSESD staff members must be alert to the possibilities of child abuse and are recommended to follow these pointers if they are uncertain.

The following listed points might be signs of physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse:

1. Signs of Physical Abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur to the body in places that are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc...
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures, cuts, scratches, etc...which do not have an accidental explanation
- Substance abuse

2. Signs of Neglect

- Under nourishment
- Failure to grow
- Constant hunger
- Stealing or gorging food
- Untreated illnesses
- Inadequate care

3. Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engage in age-inappropriate sexual play.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders

4. Signs of Emotional Abuse

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging
- Depression / aggression

- Extreme anxiety
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and / or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away
- Stealing
- Lying

V. PROVISION FOR CHILDREN IN LEBANON'S LEGAL SYSTEM

This policy upholds the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In 1991, Lebanon became a party to the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, and in 2004 to the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. On February 11, 2002, Lebanon signed (but has not yet ratified) the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

Applicable Children and Family Laws include:

- Law Number 422 of 2002, article 26 gives the judicial authority the power to interfere *sua sponte* whenever a child's interest is at risk. Under article 25 of the same law, the following situations may trigger a judicial action for imposing protective or corrective measures whenever:
 - A child is in an environment exposing him to exploitation, or adversely affecting the child's health, safety, morality, or upbringing;
 - Was exposed to sexual or violent corporal attack beyond the customary non-harmful disciplinary measures; or
 - Was found in a state of mendicity or vagrancy.

In any of these situations the judge has the discretion of taking whatever measures deemed necessary for the protection of the child, including rehabilitative measures when appropriate.

VI. CODE OF CONDUCT

A. Scope of Application

This Code of Conduct applies to anyone working directly with or coming into contact with children through their work with LSESD or any of its entities. They should read and understand the code of

conduct mentioned in the Appendix 3, and sign on it in confirmation. Partners who are sending teams under the auspices of LSESD should sign the Appendices 3 & 4 prior to sending the team.

LSESD expects anyone interacting with the children on its behalf to abide by this policy.

The appended guidelines include regulations covering the types of discipline which can be used with those children. LSESD commends the use of praise and reward for good behaviour as a method of discipline and the use of verbal discipline and withdrawing of privileges where that does not prove effective. No adult representing LSESD should be alone with a child either in the project or outside it. Adults are always responsible for their behaviour and cannot blame the child even if the adult believes the child is 'provoking' or 'seductive'. Any individual knowing or suspecting that these protocols or their regulations are being broken and children are being abused is obliged to report that behaviour as mentioned in the section entitled "Responding to Allegations and Incidents".

If the protocols below and / or the regulations of the project are broken, the persons involved will be disciplined and may lose their job or their voluntary work. All applicants for employment and voluntary work will be made fully aware of these requirements before they accept any paid or voluntary position working with children.

Staff will not be disciplined or dismissed for reporting suspicious behaviour even if those suspicions are not found to be justified so long as those reports are truthful and the reporting is done in good faith. Staff bringing abusive behaviour to the notice of the relevant people will be regarded as acting in a responsible and positive way.

Any breach of this policy will lead LSESD to hold the perpetrator fully responsible, in addition to suing him/her before the appropriate legal authorities.

B. All those involved should:

1. Treat children with dignity at all times, using age-appropriate language that is encouraging and respectful
2. Respect each child's boundaries and privacy, including taking photos; physical contact should be initiated by the child
3. Reward good behaviour and use positive discipline such as warnings, time-outs and involving parents
4. Always have at least two adults present when working with children
5. Be visible to other adults when talking with children
6. Ensure that on overnight trips, girls and boys should sleep in separate accommodation
7. Be accountable to one another so that any potentially abusive behaviour can be challenged

C. All those involved should not:

1. Spend time alone with children or invite children to the place where you are staying, especially where they will be alone with you
2. When using social media, you should not name children or share any personal details that may enable anyone to locate a child (e.g. Email addresses, schools, locations...).

D. All those involved must never:

1. Act in ways that may abuse a child or place a child at risk of abuse
2. Hit or otherwise physically abuse children, or use physical punishment including hitting, pinching, slapping and beating
3. Use words intended to shame, humiliate or threaten children
4. Touch children inappropriately – a general guideline is not to touch children in areas such as mouth, chest, genitals, and buttocks.
5. Develop physical or sexual relationships with children
6. Expose children to sexually explicit or pornographic materials
7. Excuse, or participate in behaviour with children which is illegal, unsafe or harmful
8. Favour particular children while excluding others
9. Do things for children of a personal nature that the children can do for themselves.

E. LSESD staff supervising visits to LSESD entities and LSESD partners are obliged to:

1. Ensure that visitors are briefed on code of conduct and child protection issues.
2. Ensure all LSESD short-term volunteers and donors visiting programme sites have signed a statement to say that they have read the code of conduct, will respect it and understand that action will be taken in cases of inappropriate behaviour.
3. Be aware of situations that may present risks with regards to child protection and manage them accordingly, minimizing risks as far as possible.
4. Ensure that visitors to LSESD project areas will not be left unsupervised.
5. Ensure that visitors are not left alone with children without another adult being in sight.
6. Ensure that visitors do not initiate inappropriate physical contact with children.
7. Monitor the amount of photographs taken of children ensuring that photographers always respect the dignity of the child.
8. Create and maintain an open culture in which any issues or concerns can be discussed.
9. Challenge any potentially abusive behaviour and report it.
10. Develop a culture where children can talk about their contacts with members of staff and others openly.

VII. RECRUITMENT AND HIRING

LSESD is committed to carefully screening any people who may interact with the children in its responsibility before people are allowed to do so, be they volunteers, visitors, boards' members, consultants, host parents, church helpers, etc...

If arrangements are made for the above categories of people to work with the children, they should be made aware of the Child Protection Policy, and they should sign on the **Appendices 3 and 4** before they get involved in any interaction with the children.

Applicants for a job at any of LSESD entities should provide at least 2 character references, using the 'character reference' form which will be checked out by the organisation.

All applicants must be interviewed. During interview any suspicious gaps in employment will be questioned and questions relating to the protection of children will be asked.

All applicants will declare any history, criminal or civil, of child abuse. If possible Police checks will be sought to confirm this.

Before hiring, selected applicants should be made aware of the Child Protection Policy and they should sign on **Appendix 1**. Commitment to the child protection policy must be a condition of employment.

All forms will be kept by the designated Child Protection Officer.

The designated Child Protection Officers are, until further notice, the heads of the respective LSED entities or their designees.

Permission to interact with children is dependent upon judging these declarations. Any false declarations will be a disciplinary matter and may result in the persons losing their position. If found by the entity to be a risk to children, or if that risk is confirmed from another source the applicant need to understand they will not be allowed to work with children again in that organisation or any allied organisation.

VIII. RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS AND INCIDENTS

Responding to allegations of abuse

The safety of the child is the paramount consideration at all times.

LSED is committed to being a place where people and children can forward genuine concerns or suspicions without fear of reprisal. Neither will people be offended if an allegation is made against them, but will fully co-operate with investigations. LSED actively encourages its staff as a group and in one to one discussions to be open in discussing the potential for abuse in their work.

LSED is committed to treating the victim and the alleged perpetrator with dignity and respect while an investigation is taking place. However, it is recognised that adults generally have a lot more power than children and may bribe or frighten them to drop any allegations if they have unsupervised access to them following an allegation. All investigations will be confidential and information gathered will be on a 'need to know' basis. Children will be believed and protected from the alleged abuser until a full investigation has taken place.

It is not the responsibility of LSED's staff to decide whether a child has been abused, but it is their responsibility to refer all concerns of potential child abuse to the Child Protection Officer for the respective entity.

If the Child Protection Officer is implicated, then the matter must be referred to the Executive Director of LSED (as long as he/she is not implicated in the abuse) who will report it to the Chairperson of the Central Board.

The Executive Director takes the overall responsibility for dealing with allegations of child abuse.

The Executive Director is designated to deal with the media in the event of an allegation being made and reported. No other staff member is allowed to deal with the media.

If the Executive Director is implicated, then the matter must be referred to the Chairperson of the Central Board.

LSESD ensures that all staff know what to do if an allegation of child abuse is made be that within the organisation or within the child's home or community. This procedure has reference to the response of the local law in cases of suspected abuse and includes working with the social services and police where possible.

Staff members are obliged to report in the following circumstances:

- If abuse is observed or suspected
- When an allegation of abuse is made
- When a child discloses abuse

LSESD's reporting procedure explains who will be given what information and when. A written record of **allegations and all the facts** relating to it that are made, must be kept as a confidential record for a time specified in the reporting procedures. If **an expatriate staff member or volunteer** is involved the relevant Embassy should be informed.

People and children can report a suspicion or concern by doing the following:

Always applicable

1. Any disclosure of abuse must be reported within 24 hours to the Child Protection Officer, who will in turn contact the Police and Social Services or a Child Protection NGO.
2. The child must receive immediate and adequate medical and emotional care within 24 hours of the incident in case of need.
3. All disclosures and allegations are to be recorded using the 'Reporting Child abuse Form' (**Appendix 2**)
4. Those who report an allegation are required to keep the information confidential and only deal with the Child Protection Officer or delegated investigators and not the alleged perpetrator.

The Child Protection Officer will collect and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and provide this information to the police or child protection NGO.

When the suspicion is about organisation staff or representatives

Child Protection Officer should be informed immediately of any **concern** and report it to Executive Director who, if need be, will in turn report it to the Chairperson of the Central Board. Together they will agree on an appropriate course of action.

When the suspicion is about child abuse outside the organisation

1. Refer the case to the appropriate child protection agency or social services within 24 hours, who will then take over the process.
2. Check to see that the situation has been followed up.

In the situation of serious abuse or rape of the child, the following should take place:

1. The child must receive adequate medical and emotional care within 24 hours of the incident.
2. Suspicions of child abuse should be discussed with the doctor.
3. A plan to ensure the child's safety and to provide support will be agreed upon by a professional childcare team such as a Child NGO.
4. A Child NGO will be notified, and an investigation by the organization, in conjunction with police, where applicable, will take place.

What to do if a child discloses abuse:

If a child informs LSESD staff member that s/he is concerned about someone's behaviour to them or makes a direct allegation, the staff member informed should:

- React calmly.
- Show acceptance of what the child says.
- Reassure the child that he/she did the right thing in telling the staff member.
- Look at the child directly.
- Tell the child that there is a need to let someone else know – never promise confidentiality – be honest.
- Take what the child says seriously, even if it involves someone the staff member feels sure would not harm the child.
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell anyone.
- Not judge the child.
- Not lay blame – even if the child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Listen to what he/she is told, even if it is difficult to believe.
- Never push for information – avoid leading questions. If the child decides not to tell the staff member after all, then the latter should accept that and let the child know that the staff member is always ready to listen.
- Ask just enough to clarify his/her understanding of what is being said, so that he/she can pass the information on.
- Ensure that the child is safe.
- If the child needs urgent medical attention, the staff member should make sure that the doctors, or medical staff, know that it is a child protection issue.
- Make a written record of the conversation as soon as possible.
- Not contact parents or other carers until advice and guidance has been sought from the Child Protection Officer in LSESD respective entity.

- Faxing of information about a child protection allegation or incident is prohibited unless time and person to receive at such a time has been previously arranged or is absolutely necessary and with prior permission from the Child Protection Officer. All faxes must be marked with Private and Confidential.
- Email must not be used regarding any allegation or incident, but an email confirming that a written statement is on its way is advisable in those areas where postal services are slow. No messages to people outside LSESD – such as social welfare officers, the press or the police – should be given without guidance from the Child Protection Officer and LSESD’s Executive Director. Failure to adhere to this will result in disciplinary action against the staff member.

IX. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES FOR MISCONDUCT

Staff and volunteers in LSESD must avoid situations that may present risks of child abuse or allegations of child abuse, both during and outside work hours. If any concern or suspicion of child abuse arises in connection with a staff member’s behaviour – irrespective of whether working for LSESD or not at the time the concern or suspicion arises, The Head of the Entity and the Executive Director will begin the process of investigating the concern. This may result in suspension/ disciplinary measures.

The disciplinary measures for a staff member or volunteer in LSESD suspected of child abuse are as follows:

- Suspension from the job until a complete investigation takes place.

The disciplinary measures for a staff member or volunteer in LSESD guilty of abusing a child are as follows:

- Taking full responsibility of his/her action
- Job dismissal
- Being reported and sued at the appropriate legal authority

Any investigations will be undertaken by local appropriate authorities with the co-operation of the Child Protection Officer. In the event of a staff member being discharged for suspected or actual child abuse, LSESD may disclose such information if requested by a prospective employer. Such disclosure will be made accurately and without prejudice, and in accordance with applicable law in Lebanon.

X. EDUCATING AND TRAINING ABOUT THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

LSESD is committed to ensuring that all personnel and children themselves understand the importance of child protection, so that all personnel know how to implement policies and procedures and work to the same high standards and children know best how to protect themselves and make use of the policies and procedures in place.

LSESD will ensure that any new staff/volunteer starting at LSESD will have an induction to the child protection policy in this project, will be made aware of acceptable code of conduct when working with children and will sign the child protection commitment form.

LSESD will ensure that visitors or donors visiting it will be made aware of the child protection policy, communication and behaviour protocols.

LSESD believes children should understand their right to protection and should listen to their opinions. Therefore, in its child-focused ministries, LSESD commits to train children, in an appropriate manner, to recognise abusive behaviour, protect themselves and to forward concerns they have to responsible adults. LSESD will purposefully ask children of the risks and fears they are experiencing, and ask for their ideas of how they can be protected from them.

LSESD will provide training to its staff, including management, volunteers, donors and those who interact with children about child protection by carrying out child protection training updates every year.

XI. COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES (AND VISUAL IMAGES)

LSESD has communication guidelines (Appendix 4) to clarify what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate use of written, visual and verbal information relating to children and to ensure that everybody understands the importance of protecting and respecting children's dignity and privacy. These guidelines protect children from being identified by those who may wish to harm them. They also enable LSESD to control confidential information regarding children, to control the dissemination of data, information and visual Images, and to prevent the presentation of degrading images of children through the organisation's publications and websites.

Communication guidelines also allow children to know what rights they have regarding the use of information that relates to them, to introduce them to the concept of 'informed consent' regarding such information and when to speak out if they feel uncomfortable.

No data, image or information is to be disseminated if it is either abusive, or could be construed as abusive, of a child or children, or which could potentially be used to abuse a child or children.

If a staff member handling any request for information, data or a visual image, has any reason to doubt the integrity of the third party and/or their request for resources, such resources will not be released. The Child Protection Officer (CPO) must be notified and a record kept. If any member of staff believes a request for sensitive information about children is sought under a false pretext of 'research', the Staff Member responding to the enquiry must act diligently and consult with the CPO.

Websites

Screening of information to be posted on the LSESD websites should be done PRIOR to posting. Everything on LSESD websites is to comply with LSESD Child Protection Policy. It is assumed that all

information on LSESD websites is available in the public domain unless secured by a password.

The LSESD websites may use images of children, but only in accordance with the Visual Images part of this policy.

Data and Information

Staff members should not disseminate any information that gives the location of a child or children unless there is written parent approval. Staff should not use real names and no use of surnames is allowed

Such information should also not be used on the LSESD websites or in any other form of communication with a third party. A dated record must be kept of all information released to third parties by LSESD staff members.

Communication with Third Parties

Photos to third parties should be in line with this guideline if they are destined to be used publicly, such as images sent to third parties for use in their own publications.

Private, non-public, reports to donors are exempt from these clauses if the report has in the header of each of its pages "Confidential – Not for public use". Also, the photos containing children, should be watermarked "Confidential- Not for public use".

Visual Images

References to 'visual images' include photographs, slides, posters, DVDs, YouTube clips, wherever and however they are stored. Such storage includes the photo library, the resources area, websites, social media and various varieties of hard copy and soft copy. It is recognised that this list is not comprehensive.

In using visual images, both photographic stills and video, the overriding principle is to maintain respect and dignity in LSESD portrayal of children and child-carers, while accurately raising public awareness of the reality of children's needs and situations.

1. Image Capture

No Staff Member is entitled to create, produce, download, gather, store, use or disseminate any visual image that:

- a) does not respect the dignity and self-worth of the subject.
- b) is exploitative or manipulative as far as the subject is concerned (e.g. by asking the subject to cry for the camera).
- c) misleads the viewer of the visual image as to the actual situation of the subject of the image.
- d) distorts reality and / or does not accurately reflect or portray reality, either deliberately or implicitly.

If using a name might have a negative impact on the life of the subject or their carer(s), a generic title should be used in storing the image.

Wherever possible, Staff Members should explain to the subject the likely use of the image(s). If the subject says that they do not want to be photographed, the Staff Member should decline from proceeding.

2. Image Use

(a) Must be Truthful

Wherever possible, Staff Members should endeavour to use a balance of visual images to reflect the reality of a situation (e.g. positive and negative, hope and suffering).

Staff Members must not use an image of one thing and describe it as, or imply it is, an image of another (e.g. the image of one project is not to be used to illustrate the work of another).

Staff Members must not use an image of a project unconnected with the work of the organisation and describe it as, or hold it out to be, or imply it is, an image of a project connected to the organisation.

Staff Members must not use an image in a way that misrepresents the true situation. Thus an image illustrating a general situation should not be held out as illustrating a specific situation, and an image representing an exceptional situation should not be held out as generally true.

(b) Must be Faithful

When using a visual image, and wherever possible, Staff Members should name the photographed subject, unless the name is not known or it will have a negative impact on the child or their carer(s), in which case a generic title should be used for the image. In this situation, the name and visual identity must be disguised. This is particularly important for children who have been the victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.

For those children who may have been victims of sexual exploitation and abuse or rescued from violent circumstances, personal information and details of children, which may identify them and increase any potential risk of harm to them should not be used. This includes giving the location of the project where the child is based, giving the child's full name or details of his/her family. Use of first names only and non-identifying information, such as the district rather than village name, for example, should be used instead.

Staff Members should aim to be confident that, to the best of their knowledge, the subject would regard the image and its use as truthful if he or she saw it.

Informed consent to use information obtained in interviews and/or images of children who have been interviewed should be obtained from children (if they are of an age, understanding and possess the maturity to do so) and from their parents and/or guardians.

(c) Must be Honourable

No Staff member may use a visual image which:

- a) is dishonourable to children
- b) uses sexualised images of children
- c) sensationally presents children
- d) could be harmful to the subject(s)
- e) is distasteful or indecent
- f) is erotic, pornographic or obscene
- g) contains gratuitous images of extreme suffering, nakedness or death

(d) Must honour the creator of the image

No Staff Member may use, reproduce or disseminate any visual image, that has not been taken by a member of the organisation and/or that does not belong to the organisation where:

- the original source / photographer / videographer cannot be found and named.
- copyright permission cannot be obtained or where it is requested but refused.

All visual images, not taken by a member of the organisation and not owned by the organisation but published in the organisation's publications should bear the name of the creator of the image (e.g. photographs should bear the name of the photographer).

Staff Members who store visual images they have taken in public places in are assumed to have given permission to the organisation for those images to be used in the organisations publications, unless they specifically state otherwise.

The organisation will assume a right to use images in the organisation's publications, unless the creator or owner of the image restricts their use.

If a third party wishes to make use of any images, they will have to contact the photographer or owner of the image first to ask for permission. It will not be for the organisation to determine whether the third party can or should be granted permission.

The photographer or owner of the image has the right to sell any of his or her images to groups other than the organisation. However with images captured on materials paid for by the organisation, the photographer or owner of the image must contact the organisation first to ask for permission.

(e) Must maintain high technical standards

Staff Members may use digital manipulation of images for creative or iconic effect, but not in a way that deliberately and misleadingly distorts the reality of the situation depicted. The only exception to this is where manipulation is necessary to protect the identity of an individual who is the subject of the image.

Staff Members must not crop an image in a way that misleadingly distorts the reality of the situation.

In video editing, Staff Members must not misleadingly distort the meaning of an interviewee's statements.

Visual Images disseminated to Third Parties must be in line with the LSESD Visual Images Policy. No information should be given with a visual image that could identify a child or children or his/her/their location. Only generic references should be used. In all communications LSESD will use pseudo names for children.

Where possible, individual pictures of children should not be used or disseminated, rather use group photos. When taking visual images of children in LSESD, the latter will ensure that as far as possible an explanation is given about the use of the image.

XII. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Central Board is committed to back the Executive Director in implementing this child protection policy and procedures.

Appendix 1

Personal Commitment to Child Protection Form

TO BE COMPLETED BY EACH STAFF MEMBER AT LSESD

I [name] have read and understood LSESD’s Child Protection Policy and Procedures and I promise to abide by them.

I have never been accused or convicted of child abuse in the past or present, and I commit myself to protect all children, both boys and girls, from physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

I commit myself to report discreetly any suspicious activity or inappropriate behaviour noted towards children as according to the procedure set out in this policy. I will not report to anybody else or talk to the media.

I understand that if a complaint is brought against me regarding the abuse of children while engaged in LSESD activities, the allegation will be thoroughly investigated in cooperation with the appropriate authorities.

Date:

Place:

Signature:

Appendix 2

Reporting Child Abuse Form

YOUR DETAILS	
Your name:	
Your address:	
Your contact details:	
Your occupation:	
Your relationship to the child or young person:	
Details of any other organisation(s) involved:	
THE CHILD / YOUNG PERSON'S DETAILS	
Child's name:	
Child's address:	
Child's date of birth:	
Whom does the child live with? Please give name(s) and nature of relationship to the child:	
Is the child male or female?	
Does the child have a disability or a learning difficulty? If so, please give details:	
DETAILS OF THE CONCERN (S) / ALLEGATION (S) OF CHILD ABUSE	
Nature of concern(s) / allegation(s):	
Details of how you came to have a concern / allegation:	

Day, date, time and location of any incident(s)	
Observations made by you (<i>NB: Please distinguish what is fact, opinion or hearsay</i>):	
What did the child say?	
What did you say to the child?	
Details of any other children involved:	
External agencies contacted – date, time, name of person dealt with and advice received:	
Action taken by you:	
Date this form was completed:	
Your signature:	
For Child Protection Officer Use Only	
Date received:	
Signature:	

Appendix 3

Code of Conduct for any Volunteer Representing LSESD

or Visitor Visiting LSESD's Ministries or Partners under the Auspices of LSESD

All volunteers, visitors and partners representing LSESD and its ministries are required to treat children according to the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child and should treat all children with professionalism, dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions.

LSESD Child Protection Principles

- Child protection is both an individual and a corporate responsibility.
- All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation and inequalities should be challenged.
- All children and young people should be encouraged to fulfil their potential.
- The welfare of children and young people is paramount.
- Everyone must take precautions and responsibility to help create a safe place for children and support their care and protection. This begins with everyone being well informed and aware of child protection issues.
- Openness must be encouraged about concerns relating to child protection matters because child abuse thrives on secrecy.
- Organisations owe a duty of care to the children with whom they work and a responsibility to meet minimum standards of protection for the children in their care.

I commit to avoid acting or behaving in ways that could:

- Put a child at risk of abuse;
- Be construed as poor practice;
- Be potentially abusive

I commit to:

1. Treat children with dignity at all times, using language that is encouraging and respectful
2. Avoid inappropriate dress and be culturally sensitive to the environment they are in.
3. Avoid questionable behaviour, which could be misconstrued.
4. Be visible to other adults when talking with children.
5. Respect each child's boundaries and privacy, including taking photos; physical contact should be initiated by the child

I understand that it is not appropriate to:

- Spend time alone with children
- Invite children to the place where I am staying, especially where they will be alone with me.
- Give children or young people my e mail address, mobile phone number, Facebook or contact details.

I understand that I must never:

- Act in ways that may abuse a child or place a child at risk of abuse
- Hit or otherwise physically abuse children, or use physical punishment including hitting, pinching, slapping and beating
- Use words intended to shame, humiliate or threaten children

- Touch children inappropriately – a general guideline is not to touch children in areas such as mouth, chest, genitals and buttocks.
- Develop physical or sexual relationships with children
- Expose children to sexually explicit or pornographic materials
- Excuse, or participate in behaviour with children which is illegal, unsafe or harmful
- Favour particular children while excluding others
- Do things for children of a personal nature that the children can do for themselves such as using the toilet, taking a bath, etc....

I have read this code of conduct, agree with it and promise to abide by it.

Name _____ Signature _____

Location/Project _____ Date _____

Appendix 4

Data, Communications and Visual Images Policy

No data, image or information is to be disseminated if it is either abusive, or could be construed as abusive, of a child or children, or which could potentially be used to abuse a child or children.

If a staff member handling any request for information, data or a visual image, has any reason to doubt the integrity of the third party and/or their request for resources, such resources will not be released. The Child Protection Officer (CPO) must be notified and a record kept. If any member of staff believes a request for sensitive information about children is sought under a false pretext of 'research', the Staff Member responding to the enquiry must act diligently and consult with the CPO.

Websites

Screening of information to be posted on the LSESD websites should be done PRIOR to posting. Everything on LSESD websites is to comply with LSESD Child Protection Policy. It is assumed that all information on our websites is available in the public domain unless secured by a password.

The LSESD websites may use images of children, but only in accordance with the Visual Images part of this policy.

Data and Information

Staff members should not disseminate any information that gives the location of a child or children unless there is written parent approval. Staff should not use real names and no use of surnames is allowed.

Such information should also not be used on the LSESD websites or in any other form of communication with a third party. A dated record must be kept of all information released to third parties by LSESD staff members.

Communication with Third Parties

Photos to third parties should be in line with this guideline if they are destined to be used publicly, such as images sent to third parties for use in their own publications.

Private, non-public, reports to donors are exempt from these clauses if the report has in the header of each of its pages "Confidential – Not for public use". Also, the photos containing children, should be watermarked "Confidential- Not for public use".

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the camera).

c) misleads the viewer of the visual image as to the actual situation of the subject of the image.

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- g) contains gratuitous images of extreme suffering, nakedness or death

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the original source / photographer / videographer cannot be found and named.

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Where possible, individual pictures of children should not be used or disseminated, rather use group photos. When

taking visual images of children in LSESD will ensure that as far as possible an explanation is given about the use of the image.

I have read this Visual Images Policy, agree with it and promise to abide by it.

Signed..... Location Date.....