

ZANE: Zimbabwe A National Emergency

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

Introduction

The beneficiaries of ZANE are all based in Zimbabwe. Therefore, the UK-based team rarely have any contact with children and vulnerable adults. The Zimbabwe-based team have regular contact with both groups but mainly vulnerable adults.

ZANE is committed to safeguarding and does not tolerate abuse of any kind including bullying, harassment, sexual exploitation or abuse.

Policy Statement

ZANE seeks to respect children and vulnerable adults as individuals and to ensure that their well-being is safeguarded in every way. It is our belief that it is always unacceptable for a child or vulnerable adult to experience abuse of any kind and ZANE recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults by a commitment to practice which protects them.

ZANE recognises that:

- the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount;
- all children and vulnerable adults regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- working in partnership with children, young people, vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

The purpose of the policy is:

- to provide protection for the children and vulnerable adults who come into contact with trustees, workers, volunteers or anyone else working on behalf of ZANE;
- to provide trustees or anyone else working on behalf of ZANE with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

This policy applies to all trustees, or anyone working on behalf of ZANE.

ZANE will endeavour to safeguard children and vulnerable adults by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them;
- adopting a Code of Conduct for trustees, or anyone working on behalf of ZANE
- ensuring that anyone likely to have contact with children or vulnerable adults is recruited safely in accordance with our Equal Opportunities policy.
- providing effective management for anyone working on behalf of ZANE through supervision, support and training.
- making DBS or equivalent background checks in line with local legislation.

We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice regularly.

Ultimate responsibility for ensuring that ZANE adheres to this safeguarding policy rests with the Founder, Tom Benyon. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, who oversees the practical implementation, is ZANE Trustee, Nicky Gayner. They can both be contacted via email at info@zane.uk.com or by telephone on 020 7060 6643.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The role is to:

- ensure that anyone likely to have contact with children or vulnerable adults has the appropriate checks in place.
- provide information and advice on child protection within the organisation;
- ensure that the organisation's Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policy and procedures are implemented.
- be aware of any changes to safeguarding policy in Zimbabwe.
- ensure that anyone likely to have contact with children or vulnerable adults has appropriate training as part of their induction and subsequently as necessary.
- deal with the aftermath of an incident in the organisation.

Code of Conduct

You must:

- treat all children and vulnerable adults with respect;
- provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow;
- respect a child's or a vulnerable adult's right to personal privacy and encourage them to feel comfortable and confident enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like;
- remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned;
- operate within ZANE's safeguarding policy and any specific guidance or procedures;
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse.

You must not:

- have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or vulnerable adults;
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts;
- show favouritism to any individual;
- rely on your good name or that of the charity to protect you;
- take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach.

You should give guidance and support to inexperienced helpers.

What to do if you are concerned a child or vulnerable adult is being or has been abused

If, during involvement with a child or vulnerable adult, you have any concerns based on observation, or have a direct disclosure made to you by a child or vulnerable adult, or by another person, it is essential that you adhere to the following guidelines.

In the case of disclosure:

- listen carefully to the child or vulnerable adult;
- allow the child or vulnerable adult time to speak and do not interrupt nor make suggestions to them;
- reassure the child or vulnerable adult that you are glad she or he has told you what happened and that it was right to tell;
- do not interrogate or question other than to clarify your understanding. If the matter is to be investigated further, it will be done by trained professionals;
- be honest, tell the child or young person that you cannot keep it a secret, you have to talk to someone else who can help;
- never trivialise, minimise or excuse abuse issues;
- never think it could not happen;
- remain calm, no matter how difficult it is to listen to the child or vulnerable adult. Think how hard it must be for them to say it. Some things are very difficult to talk about and you have been chosen because the person involved feels they can talk to you. If you show anger, disgust, disbelief then they may stop talking for fear of upsetting you further or feel that your negative feelings are being directed towards them;
- as soon as practical write down everything they have told you, and sign and date the document. Include times, dates, names, and any witnesses to the disclosure. The notes must record exactly what the child or vulnerable adult said or communicated, not what the worker thinks was communicated.
- Please respect the child's or vulnerable adult's rights and remember the only person you should be discussing it with is the Designated Person and/or the official authorities.
- It is essential that you seek advice immediately about what action should be taken.

Confronting the alleged perpetrator

- In no instance should you discuss, question or confront the alleged perpetrator. This is not your responsibility, and may jeopardise the investigation, and potential proceedings.

Responsibility for ensuring this policy is adhered to rests with the Founder.

Date policy adopted: March 2017

Last reviewed: April 2025

Due for annual review: March 2026

Signed: Sue O'Neill