



Safeguarding Policy

(Nov 2023)

The Dalitso Trust exists to teach and equip rural Malawians so that they are empowered to lift themselves and each other out of poverty.

This document's purpose is to provide comprehensive information regarding The Dalitso Trust's Safeguarding policy and procedures. Although The Dalitso Trust in the UK does not work directly with children and vulnerable adults, it is committed to proactively safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the communities being supported, staff and trustees and to taking reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of those who come into contact with The Dalitso Trust.

This policy relates to, in particular, The Dalitso Trust's commitments to safeguarding and protecting the communities it is serving, staff and trustees. Over recent years there has been increasing recognition of the way in which vulnerable people can be at risk of harm from organisations and institutions that are supposed to help them, either as a result of abuse and exploitation by individuals in positions of trust, or via programme activities in general.

As a consequence, there has been a significant increase in the efforts made by agencies to ensure that no harm comes to people and communities they are serving, from contact with their staff and associates or as a result of any of the organisation's activities.

Given these values and in light of widely recognised risks, The Dalitso Trust has developed this policy to promote protection for all those people it comes into contact with, as well as staff and volunteers within The Dalitso Trust itself, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, adhering to the Equality Act of 2010.

Should it come into contact with vulnerable groups (including children) in the UK, The Dalitso Trust takes responsibility to ensure it is doing all it can to protect such groups from all forms of harm, including abuse, neglect and exploitation and to ensure appropriate action is taken if such harm occurs.

Procedure

The Dalitso Trust's policy and procedures are embedded in the work and practice of The Dalitso Trust. We are committed to a safeguarding culture that enables and encourages concerns to be raised and responded to, openly and consistently; to ensure that everyone feels welcomed, respected and safe from abuse; that values listening to and respecting children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable. **It is everybody's responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns following the procedure set out in this document.**

All those (from the UK) whose work brings them into contact with children and/or vulnerable groups are safely recruited and are subject to a criminal records disclosure.

Under no circumstances should a team member carry out their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse will do the following:

In the event of a disclosure or concern the following process is in place.

- Listen carefully if someone is telling you about abuse – physical, sexual, emotional or neglect
- Not ask questions – it could prevent them from saying more or you might put things in their mind that were not already there
- Show acceptance of what you are told – even if it seems unlikely or too awful to be true. Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling you and you are taking the information seriously
- Not promise to keep the matter secret but explain that you may have to share what they say with others on a 'need to know' basis only. It will be the named people in your safeguarding policy.
- Explain what you intend to do and don't delay in taking action

- Ensure the immediate safety of the individual
- Make notes stating what the person said, what you said in response, and an explanation of how the conversation took place. Include the date, time and your signature
- Consider medical intervention if required.
- Keep the notes, even if typed up, as they could be used as material evidence in court

Complete the incident form found in appendix 1

If the concern is about what has been observed, for example bruises, marks, suspicions of neglect or sexually explicit/abusive behaviour, then it is important to write a full account of what was seen. Include:

- Size, shape, colour, position on the body of any bruises or marks, consider taking a picture unless location of that picture is inappropriate
- Person's appearance e.g. ragged or dirty clothing, smell, emaciated body, pain or difficulty in moving
- Description of sexually explicit or abusive behaviour
- The date and time of your report and your signature.

Email the incident form to safespaces@dalitsotrust.org immediately and appropriate action will be taken.

In the first instance the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be notified and discuss the concern with the deputy DSL. The Safeguarding Lead will provide support and advice to ensure that all processes are followed and that all necessary documentation is completed. The DSL also maintains a central register of safeguarding cases. These designated people have been nominated by the Trustees to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, helping to ensure that the proper processes are followed and adhered to.

thirtyone:eight have a 24 hour telephone safeguarding advice line. This is a valuable resource which is available to support all of our staff in safeguarding decision making. The phone number is 0303 003 11 11.

Support for the member of the team who has reported the incident will be given by the DSL and, where appropriate, support will be sought from safeguarding agencies such as thirtyone:eight

Once informed and if appropriate after seeking advice from thirtyone:eight the Designated Safeguarding Lead will report concerns to Children's Advice and Support Service (MASH/CASS) whilst providing ongoing support for the volunteer, ensuring the correct procedures are followed. The process for contacting MASH/CASS is to ring 01 303 1888. You will be given three options:

- For discussion/advice
- To make a safeguarding notification
- To speak to Social Services if client already has social worker
- In the absence of a line manager/safeguarding lead/deputy, or if the suspicion in any way involves the safeguarding lead/deputy then the report should always be made directly to CASS/MASH, and if the safeguarding lead/deputy is under suspicion the Chair of Trustees, Katherine Densham, should be notified on 07731576363

All notifications regarding children's safeguarding concerns should be made to MASH (adults)/CASS (under 18)0121 303 1888.

A copy of all safeguarding referrals must be kept by the safeguarding lead for review and follow up, along with any relevant supporting documentation. These will be kept securely and separately from general records.

If the suspicions implicate a team member in the UK the DSL must be notified immediately.

If the suspicions implicate the trustees, then a report should be made to the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0845 120 4550 or alternatively contact MASH directly.

- The West Midlands Police Child Abuse Protection Unit telephone number is 024 7653 9044.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made using our incident form, and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse should normally be reported to the Safeguarding Lead, the absence of these should not delay referral to CASS/MASH.

All concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately (this may require a referral to children's services and/or in emergencies, the Police). Staff have a duty to report concerns in line with The

Dalitso Trust procedures. Failure to comply with these responsibilities will be seen as a serious matter which may lead to disciplinary action.

If an allegation has occurred in Malawi we will:

- Cooperate with the local authorities in their procedures to ensure the child, young person or adult is safeguarded.
- Ensure, in partnership with the safeguarding officer and other agencies that, during any ongoing investigation, informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse or made a complaint.
- Ensure that the future safety of children, young people or adults who are at risk is a priority.
- Be satisfied that arrangements made for them and the alleged perpetrator could reasonably be expected to prevent further acts of abuse.
- Ensure appropriate pastoral care is offered to any staff member or volunteer of our organisation against whom an allegation is made.
- Where a concern has been raised about a team member in Malawi the Safeguarding Officer, Ethel Michael, must be informed.
- If a concern has been raised about the Manager the DSL in the UK must be informed using the above email address safespaces@dalitsotrust.org

In all recruitment and selection we will:

- Commit ourselves to support, resource, train and regularly review those who undertake work on behalf of The Dalitso Trust.
- Provide supervision, support and training after appointment.

Imminent risk

In the UK: If we encounter a situation where the child, young person or adult is in imminent danger, we will act immediately to secure his/her safety. We will seek the assistance of the police and then make a referral to social services in accordance with the Child, Young Person and Adult Protection Procedure above. If a child or adult needs emergency medical attention, we will seek this immediately and directly from the emergency services. We will keep parents, if appropriate, fully informed.

In Malawi: If we encounter a situation where the child, young person or adult is in imminent danger, we will act immediately to secure his/her safety. We will seek assistance from the relevant authority. If a child needs emergency medical attention, we will seek this immediately. We will keep parents, if appropriate, fully informed.

Safeguarding children and adults training

We will make every effort to ensure that employees and volunteers obtain safeguarding training appropriate to the level of their responsibility.

Safer recruitment in the UK

- all employees and volunteers will complete and sign a confidential declaration
- a criminal disclosure check will be required in relation to all eligible roles
- references and identification will be required and checked in relation to eligible roles

Safer Practice with Children

We will ensure our work in Malawi and the UK with children, is carried out in a 'safe' environment:

- each group will have a minimum of two adults
- adults will not work alone with children
- we will seek to ensure meeting places are safe, secure and suitable for purpose
- we will be clear about boundaries with regard to touch; this should always be related to the child's needs and normally initiated by the child.

Visiting adults who may be vulnerable, in their homes in Malawi

A representative of The Dalitso Trust will always carry their mobile phone on a home visit and ensure that someone knows where they are and when they are expected to return. Where our representative needs to refer the person to another agency, we will talk this through with the vulnerable adult, seeking his/her permission before passing on personal information.

Visiting ministry users in their home

Home visits by The Dalitso Trust will always be carried out by two representatives carrying their mobile phones and they will ensure that someone knows where they are and when they are expected to return.

Peer on Peer Abuse also known as Child on Child Abuse

This form of abuse is when there is any kind of physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse or coercive control exercised between children/young people both on and offline. It is essential that all staff understand the importance of

challenging inappropriate behaviours between children/young people. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys”, or not recognising that emotional bullying can sometimes be more damaging than physical harm and should be taken equally seriously, can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios, a culture that normalises abuse leading to children/young people accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. Stopping harm and ensuring immediate safety is an education setting’s first priority.

Peer-on-peer child abuse can include:

- bullying (including online bullying and bullying because of someone’s race, religion, sexuality, disability or trans status)
- abuse by a girlfriend, boyfriend or partner
- physical abuse
- sexual violence, such as rape and sexual assault
- sexual harassment
- sharing naked or semi-naked photos or videos without permission
- upskirting
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals to harass, abuse and humiliate
- emotional abuse
- financial abuse
- coercive control

Spotting the signs

Things to look out for if you suspect a child is a victim of peer-on-peer child abuse:

- absence from school or lack of interest in school activities
- physical injuries which can't be explained
- mental or emotional health issues
- becoming withdrawn or showing a lack of self esteem
- lack of sleep
- alcohol or substance misuse
- sudden changes in behaviour
- inappropriate behaviour
- showing harmful behaviour towards others or self (self-harm, violent outbursts)

If you suspect that peer-on-peer child abuse is happening then follow the above reporting procedures found on pages 2 & 3.

The Dalitso Trust Safeguarding Concern Form

This form is designed to report any safeguarding incidents or concerns. It should be completed by the worker who has been disclosed to, who witnessed the incident, was most directly involved or who provided first aid if relevant. Once completed it must be submitted to **safespaces@dalitsotrust.org**

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Name & role of person completing this form:	Date form is completed:
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Details of child, young person or adult at risk:

Name:
Contact number:
Date of birth:

Parents/carers details:

Name:	Address:
Contact number:	Email address:
Have parents/carers been notified of the incident?: Yes / No	If yes, please provide details:

Details of reportee:

Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else?	Reporting my own concerns	•
	Responding to someone else's concerns	•
If responding to someone else's concerns, please provide their details below:		
Name:		
Relationship to child, young person or adult at risk:		

Email address:

Contact number:

Concern Details:

Description of the concern: (continue on separate sheet if necessary):

Listen carefully

Not ask leading questions

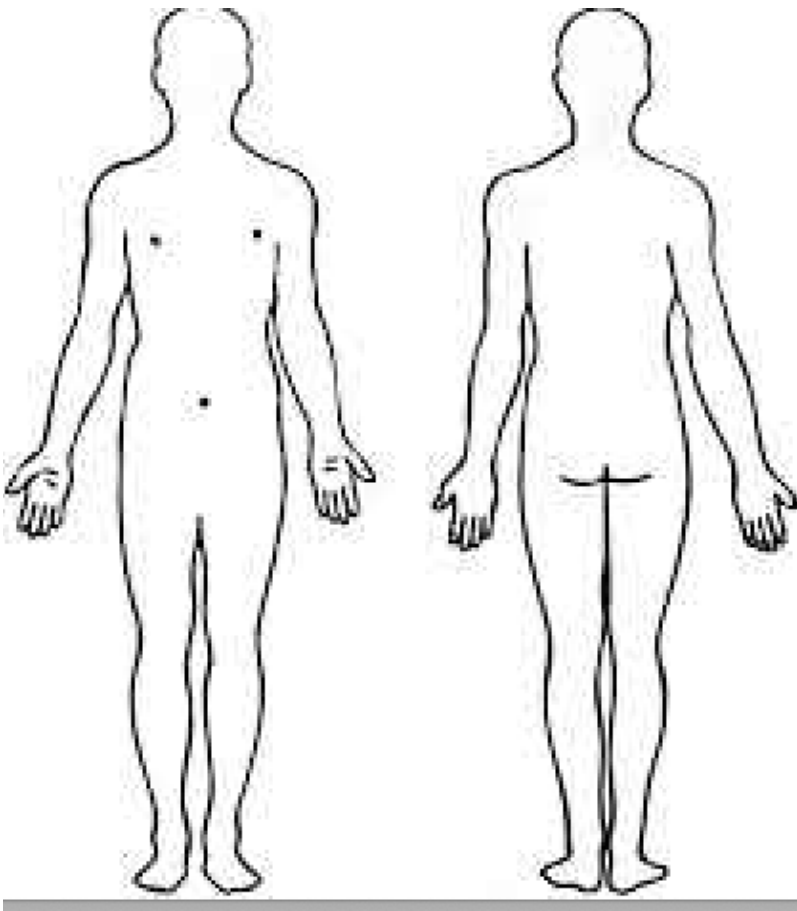
Show acceptance of what you are told

Do not promise to keep the matter secret but will have to share with others on a 'need to know' basis

Explain what you intend to do

Please use the additional body template, if appropriate, to indicate any harm being reported

Child, young person or adult at risk account of the incident or concern: *(use their own words and continue on separate sheet)*



Please indicate using a cross where, on the body, the harm is being reported

Signed By Author:	Name:	Date:
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Reporting to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) section: *(to be completed by DSL)*

Date & time DSL notified of incident/concern:

Date & time this form passed on to DSL (if different from above):

DSL comments: *(actions taken / impact on rest of programme / external agency involvement / initial lessons learned / follow-up actions required):*

External agency referral: (tick box where relevant)

• Social services notified	• MASH/CASSnotified	• Other referral made
Date & time of referral:	Date & time of referral:	Agency:
Name of contact person:	Name of contact person:	Date & time of referral:
Contact number / email:	Contact number / email:	Name of contact person:
Agreed action or advice given:	Agreed action or advice given:	Contact number / email:
Additional information		Agreed action or advice given:

Signed By DSL:	Name:	Date:
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For Office Use Only:

Follow-up action required:		
Action:	Due date:	Whom responsible: