

Child Protection statement for the Beatrice Project 2018- updated September 8th 2020

The Beatrice Project Safeguarding officer: Roger Snowdon

It has been our intention since before the inception of Beatrice Project as a UK charity, to agree a written child protection policy with our partners Ntombi Nto (registered Trust in Zimbabwe) delivering the project in Gwanda, Zimbabwe.

At the time we first started visiting in 2016 to actually deliver training to the leaders and peer educators, we were aware that the project (formerly known in Zimbabwe as the Beatrice Project in Zimbabwe) had child protection and safeguarding high on the agenda. They had help from NSPCC Childline in Zimbabwe and we as a UK team met a Childline local worker who helped with our training trip in 2017. They have also involved trained police officers in talks to the girls and leaders from an early stage. They also had a stated intention to form Child protection committees which have existed during our involvement and we are told have helped to pursue at least one child abuser and bring him to justice.

We have in turn planned to meet with local leaders to establish and have a written record of

- 1- Selection procedures and application of safeguarding principles to potential recruits both as peer educators and adult leaders
- 2- Child protection training for new leaders and as a rolling programme annually throughout the project
- 3- Policy and written / otherwise communicated information given to beneficiaries of the project about reporting abuse or fear of potential abuse
- 4- Planned training for the beneficiaries to be built in annually. We are considering if this may need to be a compulsory attendance for the girls and part of their agreement to be in the project. New beneficiaries need to have some initial induction and be given “where to go” information pack immediately on joining
- 5- Code of conduct and antibullying policy
- 6- Named Child protection lead for the project is Joy Khumalo with named local contacts at each site. We have evidence that the girls know who they can go to about any safeguarding issues. At our 2018 weekend camp with over 100 girls they were able immediately to produce the names and phone numbers of the adults who they could contact. Many of the activities including drama explored issues of potential abuse, grooming and safeguarding both in 2017 and 2018 weekends away that we attended and helped to run. This started with interactive establishment of ground rules for the training and Q and A panels including Childline staff.

The NSPCC has guidelines for safeguarding and child protection policies and these have been used as a starting point and adapted as our current Safeguarding policy as a UK charity. <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/writing-a-safeguarding-policy-statement>

In particular we acknowledge that:

The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection for all types of harm or abuse. Some

children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

We believe that working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential to promoting young people's welfare.

We are committed to developing an e-policy including the use of images and stories. We will ensure safe recording and storage of information and images involving the beneficiaries.

We intend to ensure that training on safeguarding issues is given to all leaders, peer educators and other beneficiaries of the Beatrice Project in conjunction with the relevant Safeguarding officer in the projects we benefit.

We will have effective complaints and whistle blowing procedures.