

SAKA International CIC

Safeguarding Policy

Protecting Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

Organisation	SAKA International CIC
Website	www.sakainternational.org
Policy Type	Safeguarding Policy
Applies To	All staff, volunteers, trustees and contractors
DSL	[Insert Designated Safeguarding Lead Name]
Deputy DSL	[Insert Deputy DSL Name]
Date Adopted	April 2026
Review Date	April 2027
Version	1.0

1. Statement of Commitment

SAKA International CIC is a Community Interest Company based in the UK, dedicated to supporting women and families from asylum-seeking, refugee, and migrant backgrounds who face barriers to healthcare, education, and emotional wellbeing.

We are committed to creating a culture of safeguarding in which the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults is of paramount importance. Every individual who comes into contact with our work has the right to feel safe, respected, and free from harm.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees, contractors, and partner organisations working on behalf of SAKA International CIC, in the UK and internationally.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy exists to:

- Protect children, young people (under 18) and vulnerable adults who engage with SAKA International CIC's services, events, and activities

- Provide staff and volunteers with clear guidance on recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns
- Ensure SAKA International CIC meets its legal and ethical obligations under UK safeguarding legislation
- Promote a culture of openness where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

This policy covers all activities delivered by SAKA International CIC, including (but not limited to): the Baby & Me project, TearDrop project, Iqra project, fundraising events, outreach work, online activities, and any future programmes.

3. Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- The Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (where applicable)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Charity Commission guidance on safeguarding for charities and CICs

4. Definitions

4.1 Child / Young Person

A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18, regardless of nationality or immigration status.

4.2 Vulnerable Adult

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over who, due to disability, age, illness, or need for care or support, may be unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect. Given the nature of our work, many of the women and families SAKA International CIC supports may be considered vulnerable due to experiences of displacement, trauma, language barriers, or precarious immigration status.

4.3 Abuse

Abuse may take many forms, including:

- Physical abuse — causing physical harm or injury
- Emotional/psychological abuse — causing emotional distress, threats, humiliation, or controlling behaviour

- Sexual abuse — any non-consensual sexual act or behaviour, including with a child
- Neglect — failing to meet basic physical, emotional, or medical needs
- Financial/material abuse — theft, fraud, or exploitation of finances
- Domestic abuse — including coercive control within family or intimate relationships
- Modern slavery and trafficking — exploitation for labour, sexual services, or other purposes
- Honour-based abuse and forced marriage
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)

SAKA International CIC recognises that given the populations we serve, staff and volunteers must be especially alert to signs of trafficking, domestic abuse, FGM, and forced marriage.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for:

- Acting as the first point of contact for all safeguarding concerns within the organisation
- Receiving and recording all safeguarding disclosures and concerns
- Making referrals to statutory agencies (e.g. Local Authority Children's Services, Adult Social Care, or the police) where appropriate
- Keeping up to date with safeguarding legislation and guidance
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers receive appropriate safeguarding training
- Maintaining secure and confidential safeguarding records

DSL: [Insert Name and Contact Details]

5.2 Deputy DSL

The Deputy DSL will act in the absence of the DSL and has equivalent responsibilities.

Deputy DSL: [Insert Name and Contact Details]

5.3 All Staff and Volunteers

All staff, volunteers, and trustees have a responsibility to:

- Familiarise themselves with this policy and attend safeguarding training as required
- Report any safeguarding concern, disclosure, or allegation immediately to the DSL
- Never promise confidentiality to a child, young person, or vulnerable adult who makes a disclosure
- Not investigate concerns themselves — reporting is their role
- Be aware of cultural sensitivities while maintaining the primacy of the individual's safety

5.4 Trustees / Directors

The board of trustees/directors is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is adopted, implemented, and reviewed at least annually
- Designating a Trustee Lead for Safeguarding
- Ensuring safe recruitment practices are in place
- Reporting serious safeguarding incidents to the Charity Commission or Companies House where required

6. Safer Recruitment

SAKA International CIC is committed to safe recruitment practices. All individuals working with or on behalf of the organisation will be subject to:

- A thorough application and interview process that includes safeguarding-specific questions
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all roles involving regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults
- Receipt and verification of references before appointment
- Sight of original identity documents
- A probationary period with safeguarding training completed before unsupervised contact

Overseas workers and volunteers will be subject to equivalent checks in their country of origin where DBS checks are not applicable.

7. Recognising Signs of Abuse

Signs that a child, young person, or vulnerable adult may be experiencing abuse include:

- Unexplained injuries, bruising, or physical marks
- Significant changes in behaviour, mood, or personality
- Withdrawal, fear, or anxiety — particularly around certain individuals
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour for their age
- Signs of neglect: poor hygiene, inadequate clothing, hunger
- Reluctance to go home or be alone with a specific person
- Disclosures — directly stating that abuse is occurring
- Signs consistent with trafficking: appearing coached, moving frequently, not speaking freely

Given our work with migrant and refugee communities, staff should also be alert to risks of exploitation, trafficking, domestic violence, and FGM, and should complete relevant specialist training as required.

8. Reporting a Safeguarding Concern

If a member of staff, volunteer, or trustee has a safeguarding concern, they must:

- Act promptly — do not delay reporting
- Speak with the DSL or Deputy DSL as soon as possible, and always on the same day
- Complete a written safeguarding concern record using SAKA International CIC's designated form
- Use the individual's own words when recording what was said — do not interpret or paraphrase disclosures
- Not discuss the concern with anyone other than the DSL

8.1 If You Receive a Disclosure

If someone discloses abuse to you:

- Stay calm and listen carefully
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you
- Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Do not ask leading questions or press for more details than they offer
- Tell them what you will do next — that you will speak to the DSL
- Record what was said as soon as possible afterwards, in writing

8.2 Referrals to Statutory Agencies

The DSL will make a referral to the appropriate statutory agency where:

- A child or young person is believed to be at risk of or experiencing abuse or neglect
- A vulnerable adult is at risk of harm and lacks capacity or is being coerced
- There is an immediate risk — in which case, the police (999) should be contacted immediately

Key statutory contacts:

- Local Authority Children's Services — for concerns involving children under 18
- Adult Social Care — for concerns involving vulnerable adults
- Police — 999 for immediate danger; 101 for non-urgent concerns
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- Referrals can also be made via the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) in the relevant local area

9. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All safeguarding information is treated with the utmost confidentiality and shared on a need-to-know basis only. However, the safety of an individual always takes precedence over confidentiality.

Information may be shared without consent where:

- There is a serious, specific risk of harm to the individual or others

- A child is at risk of abuse or neglect
- A crime has been committed or there is risk of a crime being committed

All safeguarding records are stored securely, access-restricted, and retained in line with SAKA International CIC's data protection policy and UK GDPR obligations.

10. Online Safety

SAKA International CIC recognises that digital platforms present both opportunities and risks. Where services, events, or communications take place online, the following applies:

- Staff and volunteers must not connect with or communicate with service users via personal social media accounts
- Online sessions involving children must be supervised by a parent or carer where possible
- Safeguarding concerns arising from online interactions must be reported to the DSL in the same way as in-person concerns
- Images or videos of service users — particularly children — must not be taken or shared without explicit written consent

11. Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff, volunteer, or trustee, SAKA International CIC will:

- Take the allegation seriously and not investigate internally
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the allegation involves regulated activity with children
- Suspend the individual from contact with vulnerable groups pending investigation — this is a neutral act, not a presumption of guilt
- Support both the complainant and the subject of the allegation appropriately
- Co-operate fully with any statutory investigation

Concerns about the conduct of the DSL should be referred directly to the CEO/Chair of Trustees.

12. Training and Awareness

SAKA International CIC is committed to ensuring all staff and volunteers are equipped to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns. Training requirements are as follows:

- All new staff and volunteers must complete safeguarding induction training before unsupervised work begins
- All staff and volunteers must complete refresher safeguarding training at least every two years

- The DSL and Deputy DSL must complete enhanced safeguarding training at least every two years, in addition to keeping current with any updates to legislation and guidance
- Specialist training (e.g. on trafficking, FGM, domestic abuse) will be provided as appropriate given the communities SAKA International CIC serves

13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner in the event of:

- Changes to relevant legislation or statutory guidance
- A significant safeguarding incident within the organisation
- Significant changes to the organisation's activities, staffing, or service users

The next review date is: [Insert Review Date]

14. Key Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead	[Name] [Email] [Phone]
Deputy DSL	[Name] [Email] [Phone]
Trustee Safeguarding Lead	[Name] [Email] [Phone]
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000
Children's Services (Local)	[Insert Local Authority]
Adult Social Care (Local)	[Insert Local Authority]
Police (Emergency)	999
Police (Non-emergency)	101
Charity Commission (serious incidents)	0300 066 9197

15. Policy Sign-off

Policy approved by	[Name and Role]
Signature	
Date	10 April 2026

Next Review Due

April 2027