

## Child Protection Policy

### 1. Introduction

The Association Key & Key Communications ETS is of an apolitical, non-unionist, non-religious character with non-for-profit oriented goal. It aims to promote knowledge, development, training and practice in the field of semiotics, communication and informatics in order to enhance personal and professional development of its members and of the society in general. Therefore, it shall promote contacts between people and organizations and shall cooperate with companies and their associations. To achieve this goal, it shall promote and organize training activities, courses and conferences and handle the development of research and studies. It shall promote publishing activities (periodic and impromptu), cultural events (concerts, theatrical and cinematographic performances, etc.). It shall develop activities pertaining to documentation and dissemination of information with the use of public financing (local, regional, national, foreign and international institutions).

The association shall facilitate, in most appropriate form, agreements and co-operations with other associations elsewhere in the world which pursue similar or complementary goals or permit the achievement of the established goals.

Hence the association shall offer adequate cultural, academic, professional, technical and organizational consultation support to any organization, private or public which would be interested in similar activities.

Since its activities may involve children and young people, ensuring their safety and well-being is our fundamental responsibility. This Child Protection Policy has been developed in line with the Keeping Children Safe Child Safeguarding Standards to ensure that all activities conducted by the association take place in a safe, inclusive, and protective environment, preventing risks of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

### 2. Policy Statement

Key & Key Communications ETS is committed to safeguarding all children respecting their ethnic-socio-cultural identity as well as their gender identity participating in all its activities.

We firmly believe that every child has the fundamental right to protection from any form of abuse, exploitation, and neglect. We are dedicated to preventing harm to children and responding effectively to any concerns or allegations of abuse.

### 3. General principles

Key & Key Communications ETS Child protection policy is based on the following set of principles:

- All children have the right to grow, learn, and express themselves freely in a safe, creative, and respectful environment.
- All children have equal rights to protection from harm.

- The association upholds a zero-tolerance policy against any form of discrimination, abuse, neglect, or mistreatment of children.
- Each member of Key & Key Communications ETS has a responsibility to support the protection of children and must maintain ethical and professional conduct.
- All organizations involved with Key & Key Communications ETS activities have a duty of care to children with whom they work, are in contact with, or who are affected by their work and operations.
- All actions regarding child safeguarding are taken in the best interests of the child, which are paramount. In defining the best interests of a particular child, a child's own voice should be considered and given ethical weight, in light of their communication capacities that are continuously evolving and often surpass adults' expectations.

#### 4. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- **Child**

Any person under the age of 18 years.

- **Abuse**

Any form of physical, emotional, sexual, or psychological harm inflicted upon a child, as explained below.

**a) Physical abuse**

Actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, adult or child. It may involve hitting, shaking, poisoning, drowning and burning. 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**

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.

**c) Child sexual exploitation**

A form of sexual abuse that involves children being engaged in any sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, food, accommodation, affection, status, or anything else that they or their family needs. It usually involves a child being manipulated or coerced, which may involve befriending children, gaining their trust, and subjecting them to drugs and alcohol. The abusive relationship between victim and perpetrator involves an imbalance of power where the victim's options are limited. It is a form of abuse that can be misunderstood by children and adults as consensual. Child sexual exploitation manifests in different ways. It can involve an older perpetrator exercising financial, emotional or physical control over a young person. It can involve peers manipulating or forcing victims into sexual activity, sometimes within gangs and in gang-affected neighbourhoods. It may also involve opportunistic or organised networks of perpetrators who profit financially from trafficking young victims between different locations to engage in sexual activity with multiple men.

#### **d) Neglect and negligent treatment**

Allowing for context, resources and circumstances, neglect and negligent treatment refers to a persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's healthy physical, spiritual, moral, and mental development. It includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm and provide for nutrition, shelter and safe living/working conditions. It may also involve maternal neglect during pregnancy as a result of drug or alcohol misuse and the neglect and ill treatment of a disabled child.

#### **e) Emotional abuse**

Persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child's emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber bullying), and threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

#### **f) Commercial exploitation**

Exploiting a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes, but is not limited to, child labour.

## **5. Responsibilities**

### **5.1 Members of Key & Key Communications ETS**

All members have a responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of children participating in the project. This includes:

- familiarizing themselves with this Child Protection Policy and the relevant child safeguarding standards;
- reporting immediately any concerns or suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the designated Child Protection Focal Point;
- cooperating fully with any child protection investigations or inquiries;
- ensuring that their behaviour and actions do not harm or put children at risk.

### **5.2 Designated Child Safety Officer**

A designated Child Safety Officer is appointed for the implementation of this policy, ensuring compliance with child safeguarding procedures. Their responsibilities include:

- receiving and responding to reports of child abuse or neglect;
- ensuring that all members of Association are aware of and trained in child safeguarding procedures;
- maintaining records of child protection concerns, investigations, and actions taken;
- liaising with external child protection agencies, as necessary.

The following designated Child Safety Officers are appointed for Key & Key Communications ETS: Antoinette Elisabeth MAVINGOU and Angelo FERRARO.

## 6. Prevention Measures

To prevent child abuse and neglect within the project, the following measures will be implemented:

### a) Training and Awareness

All members of Association will receive training on child safeguarding, including recognizing signs of abuse, responding to disclosures, and reporting procedures.

### b) Code of Conduct

A code of conduct will be established, outlining expected behaviour and interactions with children. This will include guidelines on appropriate physical contact, communication, and use of technology.

### c) Supervision and Monitoring

Regular supervision and monitoring of activities involving children will be conducted by one of the designated child safety officers (see section 5.2) to ensure compliance with child safeguarding standards.

### d) Reporting Mechanisms

Clear and accessible reporting mechanisms will be established for children, members of Association, and other stakeholders to report concerns or allegations of abuse or neglect to one of the designated child safety officers (see section 5.2).

### e) Safeguarded and Supervised Interactions

Engagement with children will occur solely in locations that are publicly accessible, ensuring the attendance of at least one additional adult, who is also a signatory to and governed by this policy, at all times during such interactions.

### f) Recruitment and Screening

To safeguard children, all Association members, volunteers, and designated child safety officers (see Section 5.2) who interact with children must:

- be affiliated with a recognized organization that conducts comprehensive background checks.
- Alternatively, present a certificate verifying that they have successfully completed equivalent screening procedures—including criminal record verification, reference checks;

**or**

Complete a self-declaration affirming that, within the last 5 years:

- They have not been convicted of any criminal offences, nor have they been subjected to preventive measures, civil judgments, or administrative actions specifically related to children, which are documented in their criminal records, in accordance with applicable laws.
- They have no knowledge of any pending legal actions against them.

## **7. Responding to Concerns**

If a concern or allegation of child abuse or neglect is raised, the following procedures will be followed:

### **a) Immediate Response**

Any concerns or allegations will be taken seriously and responded to promptly by any Key & Key Communications ETS member present. The safety and well-being of the child will be the primary concern.

### **b) Reporting**

The concern or allegation will be reported to one of the designated child safety office (see section 5.2), who will initiate an investigation.

### **c) Investigation**

An investigation will be conducted in a timely and sensitive manner by the designated child safety office, following established child protection protocols. This may involve gathering information, interviewing relevant parties, and involving external child protection agencies, as necessary.

### **d) Support and Referral**

If abuse or neglect is substantiated, appropriate support and referral services will be provided to the child and their family. This may include medical care, counselling, legal support, and other necessary interventions.

### **e) Confidentiality**

All information related to child protection concerns and investigations will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, shared only with those directly involved in the case and in accordance with legal requirements.

## **8. Review and Monitoring**

This Child Protection Policy will be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant laws and regulations. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will be put in place to assess the implementation of the policy and identify areas for improvement.

## **9. Conclusion**

Key & Key Communications ETS is committed to upholding the highest standards of child safeguarding and protection. This Child Protection Policy provides a framework for preventing and responding to child abuse and neglect. By adhering to this policy, we aim to create a safe and secure environment where children can thrive and reach their full potential.

# Child Protection Incident Report

Incident Location:		Incident Date:	
--------------------	--	----------------	--

Referred to:
--------------

Description of the Incident:
------------------------------

Involved Individuals:
-----------------------

Actions Taken:
----------------

Resolution Status as of			
	Resolved		Monitoring
	Under Investigation		Closed-Unresolved
	Pending Action		

**Preventive Actions:**

**Additional Comments:**