

Throw a Starfish

Safeguarding Statement



Throw a Starfish Charity is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk who come into contact with our work. This includes those supported through our programmes in the UK and internationally, particularly our work with autistic children and their families in Africa.

We recognise that autistic children and adults may face additional risks due to communication differences, stigma, social exclusion or barriers to accessing services. We are committed to ensuring that our safeguarding approach is inclusive, respectful and responsive to neurodiversity, and that individuals are supported in ways that uphold their dignity, rights and wellbeing.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm. We take all safeguarding concerns seriously and respond promptly and appropriately, working in partnership with local organisations, professionals and statutory authorities where necessary.

Throw a Starfish Charity is committed to safer recruitment, appropriate training and clear safeguarding procedures for all staff, volunteers and trustees. We work with trusted partners and seek to ensure that safeguarding standards are upheld across all settings in which we operate, including international and cross-cultural contexts.

Our safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain effective, culturally sensitive and aligned with current legislation and best practice. Everyone involved in our charity is expected to share this commitment and to act in the best interests of those we support at all times.

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International Safeguarding Addendum



This addendum explains how Throw a Starfish Charity applies its safeguarding commitments to all international activities and partnerships. It should be read alongside the charity's Safeguarding Policy and applies to all staff, trustees, volunteers and partners involved in overseas work.

Throw a Starfish Charity is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk who come into contact with our international work. This includes individuals supported through our programmes with particular regard to autistic children and adults, who may face additional vulnerabilities related to communication differences, stigma or exclusion.

In all international contexts, our safeguarding approach is guided by the following principles:

- the welfare of the child or adult at risk is paramount;
- everyone has the right to be safe, treated with dignity and respected;
- safeguarding practice must be inclusive and responsive to neurodiversity; and
- safeguarding responsibilities are shared and taken seriously by all.

We recognise that safeguarding legislation, systems and cultural practices vary between countries. While respecting local laws and customs, we will not compromise on our core safeguarding values. Where local standards are lower than those expected in the UK, we apply the higher standard to ensure the protection of those we support.

We work with trusted international partners and seek to ensure that safeguarding expectations are clearly communicated and understood. Partners are expected to share our commitment to safeguarding and to have appropriate measures in place, or to work with us to strengthen safeguarding practice where needed.

Safeguarding risks are considered as part of planning and delivery of all international activities. We promote safe professional boundaries, appropriate supervision and safe communication practices, and we take additional care to ensure activities are accessible and safe for autistic individuals and others with additional support needs.

All safeguarding concerns arising from international work must be reported in line with the charity's Safeguarding Policy. Concerns may be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, through agreed partner reporting routes, or with local authorities where appropriate. Where there is an immediate risk of harm, action will be taken to ensure safety as a priority.

This International Safeguarding Addendum is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective, proportionate and aligned with best practice and the charity's international work.