

Child protection

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities.

We believe that child protection requires everyone to take responsibility and that every child matters. We recognise that the care, protection and welfare of children is paramount and that all children have the right to be protected from all types of harm. We also recognise that we have a fundamental duty of care towards all children where our programmes and operations facilitate contact with children, or have an impact on children. This includes a duty to protect children from harm or risk of harm as a result of:

- misconduct by our staff or partners
- poor practice
- the poor design or delivery of our programmes and operations.

We aim to achieve this through compliance with UK child protection laws and the relevant laws in each of the countries where we operate and by adhering to Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989.

A child is defined in the British Council as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday (UNCRC 1989) irrespective of the age of majority in the country where a child is, or in their home country.

The British Council is committed to:

- valuing, respecting and listening to children
- ensuring all necessary checks are made when recruiting staff
- maintaining strong child protection systems and procedures for staff
- training its staff and providing a common understanding of child protection issues to inform planning and practice
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children and parents/carers
- sharing information about any concerns with the relevant agencies and involving parents and children appropriately
- providing effective management for staff through clear processes, supervision, and support.

We will provide adequate and appropriate resources to implement this policy and will ensure it is communicated and understood.

The British Council will review this global policy statement annually to reflect new legal and regulatory developments and ensure good practice.