



Policy on the protection of children and minors

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1. Introduction

MVidee is a non-governmental organization established in 2023, non-profit, with the aim to empower and educate, fostering an inclusive society that upholds children and women's rights, gender equality and the critical role of young people in society building. We are dedicated to enhancing educational opportunities and training for children and youth, promoting functional literacy within communities.

The MVidee Foundation firmly believes that individuals and organizations bear a proactive responsibility to protect and promote the well-being of children. We recognize both a moral and legal obligation to establish and enforce comprehensive policies and procedures that safeguard children with whom we may interact.

This Policy on the protection of minors and children outlines our unwavering commitment to protecting the children engaged with our organization. It provides a framework of principles, standards, and guidelines that are to be adhered to at both the individual and organizational levels. By implementing this policy, the MVidee Foundation ensures that all staff, volunteers, and third-party collaborators prioritize the safety and well-being of minors in every aspect of their work.

2. Definitions and legal standards

The Policy on the protection of minors promotes children's rights and protects them from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence. This policy has been developed to ensure appropriate and effective interventions. The MVidee Foundation is committed to being a safe and child-friendly organization, where children are respected, protected, and valued. This policy outlines the steps the MVidee Foundation will take to enhance its ability to manage and reduce the risk of abuse in its efforts to support minors and children.

In implementing this Policy, the MVidee Foundation strictly adheres to the relevant Dutch legislation concerning the protection of minors. The Youth Act (Jeugdwet, 2015) and the Law on Child Protection Measures form the core of our child protection framework, ensuring that all youth care services, including child protection and juvenile rehabilitation, are conducted in compliance with national standards.

We also respect the Law on the Mandatory Reporting Code Domestic Violence and Child Abuse (2013), which mandates the reporting of suspected cases of abuse and violence. Our organization is committed to ensuring that all staff and volunteers are trained and equipped to follow these protocols diligently. We recognize that children who witness domestic violence are indirectly subjected to emotional and psychological harm, and we are dedicated to providing the necessary support and interventions.

In addition, the Equal Treatment Act (1994) and the Law on the Participation of Disabled Persons (Wmo, 2015) guide our approach to non-discrimination and the protection of vulnerable individuals. We ensure that our services are accessible and that every minor and child is treated with dignity and respect.

Finally, the MVidee Foundation upholds international standards, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), which has been ratified by the Netherlands. This convention ensures that every child has the right to be protected from violence, exploitation, and neglect, guaranteeing their right to a standard of living conducive to their

overall development. We also draw from the following conventions to strengthen our commitment to protecting children:

The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which upholds fundamental rights and freedoms, including the right to security and protection from harm.

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), emphasizing the need for integrated approaches to prevent violence and protect vulnerable individuals.

The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children Against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention), which provides specific measures to combat sexual violence against children.

The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which addresses systemic vulnerabilities and promotes gender equality in safeguarding practices.

As a provider of social services, the MVIdee Foundation promotes and guarantees children's rights, working to ensure that all measures, benefits, and services provided are in the best interest of the child. We are committed to preventing and addressing all forms of violence against children, recognizing our moral and legal obligation to protect those in our care.

Safeguarding encompasses all actions aimed at:

- Protecting children from mistreatment and abuse.
- Preventing harm that could negatively impact their health or development.
- Promoting children's well-being to ensure they reach their full potential.

Protection

Child protection is a critical aspect of safeguarding, involving specific actions taken to protect children who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.

Minor

For the purposes of this policy, a minor is defined as any person under the age of 18, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This definition aligns with Dutch legislation, which similarly recognizes all individuals under 18 as minors, entitled to special protection and care.

Young People

Young people are defined as individuals between the ages of 18 and 24.

Direct Contact with Children

Direct contact with children refers to being physically present with minors during activities organized by the MVIdee Foundation, regardless of the frequency or duration of the interaction. This includes, but is not limited to, activities in schools, youth groups, camps, training sessions, non-formal education, workshops, and conferences. This definition encompasses all forms of engagement with minors in the context of the Foundation's activities.

Indirect Contact with Children

- **Access to Information:** Involves having access to information about children in the context of MVIdee Foundation activities, including but not limited to names, addresses, photos, and other personal details.



- **Support and Partnerships:** Includes providing support to or partnering with organizations that work directly with children, thereby indirectly engaging with minors through these collaborative efforts.

Child Abuse

According to the World Health Organization, child abuse or ill-treatment encompasses "all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual assault, acts of neglect, or commercial or other exploitation, occurring within a context of responsibility, trust, or power, which may harm the health, survival, development, or dignity of the child." This Policy categorizes abuse into several types, including:

- **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse refers to the intentional or unintentional infliction of harm or attempted harm to a child. This includes, but is not limited to, actions such as punching, slapping, biting, burning, strangulation, poisoning, and drowning.

- **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves engaging a child in sexual activities that they do not fully understand, are not developmentally ready for, or to which they cannot knowingly consent. This includes direct sexual contact (e.g., kissing, touching, penetration), encouraging children to view pornographic material or sexual acts, and sexual exploitation through prostitution, trafficking, or solicitation with harmful intent.

- **Economic Abuse**

Economic abuse involves the failure to meet a child's basic emotional needs over an extended period, resulting in harm to their emotional development. This includes consistently ignoring or rejecting the child, instilling fear and a sense of danger, isolating the child from social interactions, and subjecting them to degrading and humiliating treatment.

- **Neglect**

Neglect is the failure to provide for a child's essential needs over a prolonged period, despite having the means to do so, which adversely affects their health and physical development. This includes inadequate clothing, food, or shelter, insufficient supervision and protection, and lack of access to necessary medical care or treatment.

- **Exploitation**

Exploitation refers to the physical, mental, or emotional abuse or neglect of a child for financial or other purposes. This includes:

- **Commercial Sexual Exploitation:** Engaging a child in sexual activities for financial gain or other benefits.
- **Child Trafficking:** The illegal transportation or recruitment of children for purposes such as forced labor, sexual exploitation, or other forms of abuse.
- **Child Labour:** The employment of children in work that is harmful to their health, development, or education.

Child Injury

Child injury encompasses any harm to a child, whether intentional or unintentional, that may impact their health or development. While child abuse is a severe form of injury considered "significant" and recognized as such due to its impact, child injury can also include less severe or long-term harm that does not necessarily reach the threshold of abuse.

Safeguarding requires careful attention to all actions that may harm children, regardless of whether they meet the criteria for significant harm. Organizations must assess their activities and implement safeguards to prevent any potential harm to children, whether direct or indirect.

Given the complexity of defining child injury, it is important to recognize that injury does not always involve specific evidence of abuse. If any employee has concerns or suspicions that a child is being harmed or may be at risk, they are required to report the situation in accordance with applicable laws and organizational procedures.

The definitions and concepts presented in this section are derived from international and organizational standards, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, World Health Organization guidelines, and safeguarding best practices recognized globally and within Dutch legislation.

3. To Whom Does This Policy Apply?

The MVIdee Foundation is dedicated to promoting and protecting the well-being of children, irrespective of their race, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, or nationality. This policy is applied equally to all children and is enforced without discrimination.

The MVIdee Foundation mandates that all staff uphold high standards of conduct towards children, both in professional and personal contexts. The policy applies to:

- **All Staff Members**
- **All Board Members**
- **All Volunteers and Interns**
- **All Representatives of the Foundation**

Including consultants, subcontractors, donors, pro bono service providers, corporate sponsors, and journalists.

To create and maintain a safe environment, the MVIdee Foundation engages in an active and participatory process that includes all relevant parties. This involves:

- **Involvement of Children:** Children are actively included in the policy-making and auditing processes. We ensure they are informed about their rights and the safeguarding strategies in place, so they can play a proactive role in protecting themselves and their peers. The policy is communicated to children in an age-appropriate and accessible manner.
- **Active Participation:** We foster a culture of safety by ensuring that children, their families, and staff understand and adhere to the principles of safeguarding. Parents and caregivers are also involved in the auditing and communication of the policy, ensuring it is accessible and relevant.
- **Partner Collaboration:** Our partners are required to adhere to the child protection policy and actively support and collaborate in its implementation.

It is expected that all individuals listed above read the MVIdee Foundation Policy and sign a commitment statement regarding its principles and procedures. The Board of MVIdee Foundation, as the persons responsible for this policy will ensure that all relevant parties receive and understand the policy and are committed to its adherence. The policy will be disseminated through staff meetings, volunteer training sessions, public events, and other appropriate channels.

4. Code of Conduct

The MVIdee Foundation is committed to minimizing risks to children and their families by fostering awareness, adhering to best practices, and maintaining a safe environment. We ensure that everyone involved in our projects is informed about the safety and well-being of minors and takes all necessary measures to support and protect children at risk. The MVIdee Foundation operates under the following core principles:

1. **Child-Centered Approach:** All actions and decisions prioritize the best interests of the child.
2. **Accountability:** All involved with MVIdee's activities are accountable for upholding this policy
3. **Zero Tolerance for Misconduct:** MVIdee Foundation strictly enforces a zero-tolerance policy toward all forms of abuse or exploitation of minors and children.

Misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- **Inappropriate Behavior:** Engaging in behavior that undermines the dignity, safety, or well-being of a minor. Using derogatory language or discriminatory remarks in any form of communication.
- **Physical Misconduct:** Any form of physical punishment or aggressive handling of minors. Unwarranted physical contact beyond what is professionally appropriate.
- **Sexual Misconduct:** Sexual harassment, exploitation, or abuse of minors. Sharing or possessing inappropriate material, including images or media involving minors.
- **Negligence:** Failing to provide adequate supervision or care during activities. Ignoring or failing to report safeguarding concerns or incidents.
- **Digital Misconduct:** Sharing personal details or images of minors on social media or other platforms without consent. Engaging in unprofessional digital communication with minors, such as inappropriate messages or unwarranted contact outside organizational activities.

The effectiveness of our safeguarding efforts relies on the commitment and understanding of all involved—staff, children, their families, and partners—in making the Policy on Safeguarding Minors and Children a lived reality.

5. Reporting Procedures

All representatives of the MVIdee Foundation, regardless of their role or the circumstances, are required to promptly report any concerns regarding the safety or well-being of minors to the designated safeguarding officer and/or the Director.

Concerns should be documented using the provided reporting forms and submitted via email to the Director. All records will be kept in a secure location with restricted access to ensure confidentiality.

For serious incidents, such as child trafficking, physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect and exploitation, reports will also be made to the relevant local authorities, such as the Municipality of The Hague's Youth and Family Services.



6. Prevention Measures

The MVIdee Foundation is committed to safeguarding minors through proactive and comprehensive prevention measures. These practices aim to mitigate risks and ensure a safe and child-friendly environment. All staff and volunteers must sign and adhere to the MVIdee Foundation's Code of Conduct, which outlines behavioral expectations and consequences for violations.

- **Recruitment Practices**

Conduct background checks for all staff, volunteers, and partners engaging with minors. Require professional references and criminal record checks for roles involving direct or indirect contact with children.

Integrate safeguarding-specific questions into interview processes to assess candidates' attitudes and understanding of child protection principles.

The MVIdee Foundation ensures that all personnel, partners, and stakeholders are fully equipped to recognize, prevent, and respond to safeguarding concerns involving minors.

- **Mandatory Induction**

All personnel and volunteers are required to complete a comprehensive safeguarding training program during onboarding, emphasizing their roles and responsibilities in protecting minors.

- **Regular Refresher Training**

Provide annual workshops to reinforce best practices, legal obligations, and updates on safeguarding policies.

- **Community Awareness**

Conduct awareness sessions to educate beneficiaries, families, and communities about identifying risks, understanding abuse, and reporting mechanisms.

Distribute age-appropriate resources to ensure minors are aware of their rights and understand how to seek help if needed.

- **Programming and Communication**

Implement safeguarding risk assessments for all projects and activities involving minors. Ensure that all activities are supervised by trained personnel, with clear guidelines to protect children from harm. Prohibit the sharing of personal information or images of minors without prior, explicit consent. Train staff to maintain professional boundaries in all forms of communication, including digital interactions.

Social Networks

The staff of the MVIdee Foundation are prohibited from posting images or sharing personal information about beneficiaries, particularly minors, on social networks.

When interacting with minors and young people, staff members are expected to maintain professional conduct in line with the highest moral standards.

If the MVIdee Foundation becomes aware of any instances where staff have posted images or used derogatory language regarding children or the organization's values on social networks, the matter will be addressed with the involved staff members. Appropriate disciplinary measures may be taken as necessary.



Media Guide

The MVIdee Foundation will not use facial images of minors under the age of 12 that could lead to their identification, except for specific campaigns where prior written consent has been obtained from a legal guardian and safeguarding considerations have been addressed. The Foundation may use images to capture the environment in which it operates, the interactions between staff and beneficiaries, and the positive impact of its activities on children and young people. The purpose of these images is to illustrate the effectiveness and significance of the Foundation's work.

Photos may also be used to promote the charitable activities of the MVIdee Foundation through its website, social media, exhibitions, and other marketing materials, including annual reports and brochures.

- **Informed Consent**

Definition and Notification

Informed consent involves ensuring that both adults and children fully understand how their personal information and images may be used in the future. Whenever possible, individuals will be informed about the specific uses of their images (e.g., brochures, website, promotional materials) before providing their consent.

Consent Process

Consent should be provided using the MVIdee Foundation consent form, which must be signed by both the minor and their parent or guardian.

7. Response Protocol

The MVIdee Foundation is dedicated to taking swift, appropriate, and effective action when safeguarding concerns arise.

- **Immediate Actions**
 - Separate the minor from the alleged perpetrator to ensure their safety.
 - Notify a designated safeguarding officer (DSO) immediately and document the incident in detail.
- **Support for Minors**
 - Offer counseling and psychological support tailored to the minor's needs.
 - Partner with child protection agencies to ensure specialized care and legal assistance when necessary.
- **Internal Investigations**
 - Conduct confidential and impartial investigations to address reported incidents.
 - Take disciplinary and/or legal actions against any individual found to have violated safeguarding principles.

Referrals

Maintain a directory of trusted local agencies for medical, legal, and psychological support, ensuring minors receive timely and adequate assistance.

Whistleblower Policy

The MVIdee Foundation fosters an environment where safeguarding concerns can be reported without fear of retaliation.



Safe Reporting Environment

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to report concerns anonymously, knowing that their identities will be protected.

Protections for Whistleblowers

Ensure that all individuals reporting concerns in good faith are safeguarded from repercussions.

Promote a **zero-tolerance** policy for retaliation or discrimination against whistleblowers.

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Board of Directors of the MVIdee Foundation.

The policy was developed and adopted by the Board of Directors in January 2024 and It will be next reviewed when necessary but at latest in 2025.