



## THE VENKATRAMAN MEMORIAL TRUST

### Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The Venkatraman Memorial Trust (“the Trust”) provides and improves educational facilities in the village of Kovalam in Tamil Nadu, India. It also runs a child sponsorship scheme.

It is a UK based charity (number 1104363).

The purpose of this policy statement is to:

- protect the children and young people who receive the Trust’s services from harm.
- provide staff, trustees and volunteers, as well as the children and young people and their families with the principles that guide our approach to child protection.

The Trust is committed to ensuring that all children and young people with whom it works are protected from harm. The Trust believes that the welfare of the child is paramount and that all children, without exception, have the right to protection of abuse.

This policy applies to trustees in the UK and India, staff employed in India by the Trust and volunteers. There are no UK staff.

The policy will be reviewed at regular intervals.

The designated person responsible overall for child protection is Sylvia Holder, Founder Trustee. [Info@venkattrust.org.uk](mailto:Info@venkattrust.org.uk)

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people and a lead trustee for safeguarding
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practices through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff, trustees and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management of staff and volunteers through supervision. Support, training and quality assurance measures so that they all know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording, storing and using information professionally and securely in line with data protection legislation and guidance. Permission of parents or guardians is secured for the use of children’s or young people’s photographs in Trust materials.
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families by various means including one-to-one discussions

- making sure children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment
- ensuring we have effective complaint and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring a safe physical environment for all involved with the Trust by applying appropriate health and safety measures
- building a safeguarding culture where staff, volunteers, children, young people and their families treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

## CHILD ABUSE

If child abuse concerning any children or young person involved with the Trust is suspected, concerns would be raised in the first instance with the Kovalam Administrator Aarthi Chandrasekar, who would, if necessary, refer it to S Janakiraman, India Managing Trustee and ultimately to Founder Trustee Sylvia Holder.

Child abuse includes:

- Physical abuse, which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- Emotional Abuse, which is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.
- Sexual Abuse, which involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- Neglect, which is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.
- Bullying, which may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves.

Any reported incidents of child abuse will be detailed in the Trust's records in India and the UK charity informed.

Any concerns will be treated as confidential and shared only with the people identified above.

It is required that everyone involved with the Venkat Trust, either as a trustee, India based member of staff, or a volunteer follows this code of behaviour. Any breaching of the code will lead to disciplinary procedures.

Systems have been put in place to ensure that staff and volunteers working with children are aware of their responsibilities and also monitored and supervised. Children will be made aware of what they can do in the event of behaviour that is unacceptable or abusive.

## SPONSORED CHILDREN

The village's most needy children are matched with a sponsor who pays a monthly amount which is split between a sum given to the child for current costs, while the balance is held in savings for further education costs. Each child has his or her own bank account.

Children in need are identified by Kovalam Trustee M Ali and Administrator Aarthi Chandrasekar, both of whom have knowledge of Kovalam families.

UK Administrator Emma Holder liaises with the Trust Administrator and identifies potential sponsors.

All communication between sponsored children and their sponsors is through the Trust. No contact information is ever divulged.

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