

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

TechSparque Foundation offers school-based software programming training and mentorship to children and young people. We are committed to ensuring every child who participates in, is represented by, or is affected by our work is treated with dignity and protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation, harassment and avoidable harm.

2. SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

TechSparque will:

- Put the child's best interests, safety and dignity before reputation, funding or programme convenience.
- Protect children equally and without discrimination.
- Give children age-appropriate information about boundaries, safe participation and how to raise concerns.
- Listen to children and consider their views according to age and maturity.
- Keep safeguarding information confidential and share it only on a need-to-know basis.
- Act promptly. Staff do not need proof before reporting and must not investigate concerns themselves.

These principles reflect the best-interests and child-participation requirements of Kenya's Children Act, 2022.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Concerns involving the founder, senior leadership, Child Safeguarding Lead (CSL) or a Board member must be escalated independently and externally where required.

Programme leads must ensure appropriate supervision, a safeguarding risk assessment, emergency arrangements, attendance controls, agreed media/data rules and a clear reporting route for every child-facing activity.

Partner schools must identify a responsible teacher or safeguarding contact and support appropriate supervision, consent and response arrangements.

4. SAFE RECRUITMENT AND VETTING

No person may have unsupervised or regular child-facing access until appropriate vetting is complete.

Depending on the role, TechSparque will use:

- identity checks;
- safeguarding-focused interviews;
- declarations of relevant criminal, disciplinary or safeguarding concerns; and

A clean criminal-record check is not, by itself, proof of suitability.

5. SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

Adults working with children must:

- Treat children respectfully and never use corporal punishment, humiliation, threats, degrading language or discrimination.
- Work in observable, interruptible settings and avoid unnecessary one-to-one isolation.
- Keep physical contact, language and communication professional and age-appropriate.
- Use approved programme communication channels and never use secret or disappearing communication with children.
- Never engage in sexual, romantic, exploitative, grooming or sexualised behaviour with a child.
- Never request, create, possess or share intimate images of a child.
- Never privately transport, host or meet a child outside an approved arrangement except in a documented emergency.
- Never give secret gifts or favours that create dependency or favouritism.
- Never be impaired by alcohol or illegal drugs while responsible for children.
- Never ignore, discourage, conceal or retaliate against a safeguarding report.

6. SAFE PROGRAMMES, DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT AND MEDIA

TechSparque Foundation does not communicate directly with students through online channels; programme-related communication is conducted through teachers and authorised school representatives. Parent or guardian consent must be obtained before publishing or using photos, videos, testimonials, or other media content that identifies or features a child.

Children must be portrayed with dignity. TechSparque will not publish unnecessary identifying information, real-time locations, sensitive circumstances or unauthorised images.

7. REPORTING AND RESPONSE

Every safeguarding concern must be reported immediately or as soon as reasonably possible. Proof is not required.

When a child discloses harm, the receiving adult must:

- listen calmly and allow the child to speak;
- reassure the child that speaking up was the right thing to do;
- check whether the child is in immediate danger; and
- make a factual written record as soon as possible.

Staff must **never** promise secrecy, confront the alleged person, interview witnesses, investigate independently, force mediation or decide whether an allegation is true.