TWO BOOKS ONE PEN
ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVE (TBOP)

People Engagement and Safeguarding Policy

For staff, volunteers, interns and all others engaged with TBOP

Redefining ideas for systems change in learning

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1. Introduction

Two Books One Pen Enhancement Initiative (TBOP) is a registered Nigerian non-profit organisation working on youth literacy, media and information literacy, and civic resilience. TBOP began as a community service initiative in Nasarawa State, and registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission in 2024.

Our work is built on four pillars: Access & Literacy, Media & Information Literacy, Civic Resilience, and Systems Engagement. We deliver this through programmes such as Mentorship Pairings, Karanta (book, press and debate clubs), Skills for All, Bridge Builders and She Leads, together with school outreaches, book drives, and partnerships with organisations and public institutions.

Much of this work happens in schools and with children and young people. The people who represent TBOP — paid or unpaid, full-time or for one afternoon — therefore carry real responsibility. This policy sets out what we expect of them and what they can expect from us.

2. Purpose

This policy exists to:

- keep children, young people and everyone we work with safe from harm, abuse and exploitation;
- set one clear, fair standard for how TBOP recruits, supports, manages and, where needed, ends its relationships with people;
- protect the dignity, privacy and wellbeing of staff, volunteers and interns;
- show partners, schools, donors and regulators that TBOP meets recognised national and international standards; and
- give everyone a simple, trusted way to raise concerns.

It draws on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Keeping Children Safe Standards, the Core Humanitarian Standard, the IASC Six Core Principles on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Nigeria's Child Rights Act 2003, the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act 2015, the Nigeria Data Protection Act 2023, and the Labour Act.

3. Scope

This policy applies to everyone who works with or on behalf of TBOP, wherever and however they engage, including:

- staff (full-time, part-time, fixed-term or contracted);
- volunteers (in-person, hybrid or remote; long-term or for a single event);
- interns and fellows;
- members of the Board of Trustees and the Advisory Board;
- consultants, facilitators, mentors, photographers and other service providers; and
- staff of partner organisations while they take part in TBOP-led activities.

It covers conduct during TBOP activities, on TBOP premises, in partner schools, at events, while travelling for TBOP, and online — including social media, WhatsApp groups and video calls. It also covers conduct outside work where it could put children at risk or seriously damage trust in TBOP.

Where this policy refers to "team members", it means everyone listed above. Individual contracts or engagement letters set out specific employment terms; where a contract and this policy differ, the higher standard of protection applies.

4. Definitions

Term	Meaning in this policy
Child	Anyone under 18 years of age, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Nigeria's Child Rights Act 2003, regardless of the age of majority locally.
Young person	Anyone aged 18–35 who takes part in TBOP programmes.
Participant	Any child, young person, parent, teacher or community member who takes part in or benefits from TBOP's work.
Staff	A person employed or contracted by TBOP and paid for their work.
Volunteer	A person who freely gives their time to TBOP without a salary. Volunteers may receive stipends or reimbursement of expenses.
Intern	A person placed with TBOP for a fixed period mainly to learn and gain experience, with or without a stipend.

Term	Meaning in this policy
Safeguarding	Everything TBOP does to prevent harm, abuse and exploitation by its people, programmes or operations, and to respond well when harm occurs.
Child protection	The part of safeguarding that focuses on protecting children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence.
Abuse	Physical, emotional, sexual or online harm, neglect, or exploitation of a person, whether by action or by failing to act.
Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)	Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power or trust for sexual purposes, or any actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature.
Harassment	Unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment, including sexual harassment and bullying.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	The person appointed by TBOP to receive and manage safeguarding concerns (see Section 18).
Personal data	Any information that identifies or could identify a person, including names, photos, voice recordings, phone numbers, school names and class details.

5. Guiding Principles

- **The best interests of the child come first.** When protecting a child conflicts with any other consideration—a deadline, a partnership, a reputation—the child's safety wins.
- **Zero tolerance.** TBOP does not tolerate abuse, exploitation or harassment of anyone, and acts on every concern.
- **Safeguarding is everyone's job.** Every team member is responsible for preventing harm and reporting concerns, not only the DSL.
- **Dignity, equality and inclusion.** We treat everyone fairly, regardless of sex, ethnicity, religion, disability, social status, state of origin or any other characteristic.
- **Participation and voice.** Children and young people have the right to be heard, to give or refuse consent, and to shape what affects them.
- **Do no harm.** We think ahead about how our activities, words, images and data could hurt people, and take steps to prevent it.
- **Survivor-centred response.** When harm happens, we put the safety, wishes and wellbeing of the person affected at the centre of our response.
- **Accountability and transparency.** We are honest about mistakes, keep proper records and answer to our participants, partners and donors.
- **Proportion and fairness.** We respond to concerns fairly, confidentially, and promptly, and we treat anyone accused with respect while establishing the facts.

6. Prohibited Conduct

Team members must never:

- physically, emotionally or sexually abuse, neglect or exploit any person;
- engage in any sexual activity, romantic relationship or sexualised communication with a child, whatever the local age of consent and whatever the child appears to want — mistaken belief about a child's age is not a defence;
- exchange money, employment, goods, grades, services or assistance for sex or sexual favours, or engage in transactional sex while representing TBOP;
- use harsh, degrading, sexually suggestive or humiliating language or behaviour, or use corporal punishment in any form;
- harass, bully, intimidate or discriminate against any participant or colleague, in person or online;

- be alone with a child in a closed or hidden space, take a child home or to a private place, or give a child a lift, without prior approval and the knowledge of a parent or school;
- contact a child privately — by phone, WhatsApp, social media, DM or email — outside approved TBOP channels;
- take, keep or share images of children in breach of Section 13, or create, view, possess or share child sexual abuse material;
- give gifts, money or special favours to individual children in a way that could create secrecy, dependence or obligation;
- work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or give alcohol, tobacco or drugs to a participant;
- carry a weapon at a TBOP activity;
- solicit or accept bribes, misuse TBOP funds, donations or materials, or use TBOP's name for personal gain;
- take part in political campaigning or religious proselytising while representing TBOP;
- hide, ignore or fail to report a safeguarding concern, or punish anyone who raises one in good faith.

> **Important**
> Breaching any of these rules is gross misconduct. It will lead to suspension, investigation and, where proven, termination of engagement, and may be reported to the police, NAPTIP or other authorities.

7. Child Protection Commitments

TBOP commits to:

- screen everyone who will have contact with children before they start (Section 8);
- make sure every team member reads, understands and signs this policy and completes safeguarding training before working with children;
- follow the "two-adult rule": at least two vetted adults are present for any activity with children, and no adult is alone and out of sight with a child;
- plan every outreach with the school or host, including a risk assessment, approved supervision ratios, a named on-site safeguarding focal person, and a clear plan for first aid and emergencies;
- keep supervision ratios of at least one vetted adult to 15 children for activities in a school (lower for younger children, outdoor activities or trips), alongside school staff;
- obtain written permission from the school and, where needed, parents or guardians, before activities, data collection, mentorship pairings or media work;
- use age-appropriate, inclusive content and give children a safe way to say no, ask questions or raise a worry, including a child-friendly explanation of how to tell someone if something feels wrong;
- design mentorship pairings so that all mentor–mentee contact is approved, visible to a parent, teacher or TBOP coordinator, and happens on TBOP-approved channels;
- give special attention to the safety of girls, children with disabilities and children in difficult circumstances, including in She Leads and other girls-focused activities;
- make child protection a condition in partnership agreements, MoUs and contracts, and expect partners to apply standards at least as strong as ours; and
- report suspected abuse to the relevant authorities where the law or the child's safety requires it.

8. Recruitment and Selection

TBOP recruits openly, fairly and safely. Every role — paid or unpaid — follows these steps, scaled to the role's level of contact with children:

Step	What happens
Role description	A clear description of duties, time commitment, location (in-person, hybrid or remote) and level of contact with children.

Step	What happens
Open advertisement	Roles are advertised on TBOP's official channels and say clearly that TBOP is committed to safeguarding and that checks apply.
Application	Applications are made through TBOP's official form or application email. Applicants declare any criminal convictions or past dismissals related to safeguarding.
Shortlisting & interview	Done by at least two people using agreed criteria. Every interview includes questions on safeguarding and working with children.
Identity & references	Valid government ID is checked. At least two references are taken, one from a recent employer or organisation. Gaps in history are discussed.
Background checks	Where available, anyone in regular contact with children must provide a police character certificate or equivalent check. Overseas candidates provide the equivalent from their country.
Offer & agreement	A written contract or engagement letter sets out role, duration, support, any stipend, and a probation or trial period.
Onboarding	Sign this policy and the Code of Conduct (Annex A), complete the safeguarding induction, and be introduced to TBOP's mission, programmes, team channels, and reporting routes.

No one may work with children until checks are complete and they have signed this policy. TBOP does not discriminate in recruitment and makes reasonable adjustments for candidates with disabilities. Recruitment records are kept securely and only as long as needed.

9. Safeguarding and Conduct Standards

All team members are expected to:

- treat every participant and colleague with respect, patience and fairness;
- behave in a way that sets a good example to children and young people, including dress, language and punctuality;
- follow school rules and the instructions of school authorities when on their premises;
- keep activities open and observable — in rooms with open doors or windows, in shared spaces, and within sight of other adults;
- use only TBOP-approved channels for contact with participants, and include a parent, teacher or second team member in any group chat with children;
- keep professional boundaries online and offline, including not sending or accepting friend or follow requests from children on personal accounts;
- declare any conflict of interest, including family or business ties with schools, partners or suppliers;
- respect cultural and religious diversity, and stay neutral on party politics and religion while representing TBOP;
- protect TBOP property, funds and donated materials, and account for them honestly; and
- report any concern, suspicion or breach of this policy promptly (Section 15).

Managers and programme leads must model these standards, check that their teams follow them, and make sure every activity has a named safeguarding focal person.

10. Learning and Development

TBOP invests in the people who invest their time in us. We will:

- provide an induction for every team member covering TBOP's mission, this policy, child protection, PSEA, data protection and how to report concerns;
- require safeguarding refresher training at least once a year, and before any new type of activity with children;
- agree clear learning goals with interns and volunteers at the start, with regular check-ins and a final review;

- offer practical learning in areas such as facilitation, media and information literacy, project management, communications and community engagement;
- provide supervision and a named point of contact for every volunteer and intern;
- issue a certificate of service or reference letter on request to volunteers and interns who complete their engagement in good standing; and
- welcome feedback from team members on how TBOP can improve.

11. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

TBOP has a duty of care to everyone who works with us and everyone who takes part in our activities. We will:

- carry out a simple risk assessment before every outreach, event or trip, covering venue, transport, crowd size, weather, first aid, security and allergies or health needs;
- make sure a first aid kit and a person able to use it are available at activities with children, and that emergency contacts are known;
- keep track of who is attending, and have a clear plan for arrival, dismissal and lost children;
- follow security advice for any travel, and never require anyone to travel or work somewhere they reasonably believe is unsafe;
- keep workloads reasonable, respect agreed working hours for hybrid and remote roles, and avoid unnecessary out-of-hours messages;
- treat stress and burnout seriously and encourage team members to speak up early, without stigma;
- provide support, and where possible referral to professional help, for anyone affected by distressing incidents or disclosures; and
- record and learn from every accident, incident or near miss.

Team members must follow safety instructions, look after their own wellbeing, tell their supervisor about any condition that could affect their safety or others' at work, and report hazards and incidents straight away.

12. Confidentiality and Data Protection

TBOP handles personal data in line with the Nigeria Data Protection Act 2023 and international good practice. In plain terms:

- we collect only the information we need, for a clear purpose, and tell people why we are collecting it;
- we get consent where required — from parents or guardians for children, and age-appropriate agreement from children themselves;
- we store personal data securely, on TBOP-managed accounts and drives with access limited to those who need it, and never on personal phones or devices longer than necessary;
- we do not share personal data outside TBOP without a lawful reason or consent, and partners receiving data must protect it to the same standard;
- we keep data only as long as needed and then delete or destroy it safely;
- people can ask to see, correct or delete their data by contacting TBOP; and
- any data breach — a lost phone with participant details, a misdirected message, a hacked account — must be reported to the HR & Admin Officer immediately.

Team members must keep confidential any personal, sensitive or internal information they learn through their work with TBOP, during and after their engagement. Share safeguarding concerns only with the people who need to know to keep someone safe—confidentiality never means keeping abuse secret.

13. Use of Images, Media and Digital Content

Stories and images help TBOP show its impact, but they must never put a child at risk or strip anyone of dignity. TBOP will:

- get written consent from a parent or guardian, and the child's own agreement, before taking or using any identifiable image, video or voice recording of a child, and respect any refusal or later withdrawal;

- agree media arrangements with the school in advance, and use only TBOP-approved photographers or team members;
- show children respectfully and fully dressed, never in a way that is degrading, sexualised or that portrays them as helpless victims;
- never publish a child's full name together with their image, school, class, home location or other details that could make them traceable; use first names or pseudonyms only;
- use extra care, or avoid identifiable images altogether, for children in vulnerable situations, survivors of harm, or children in conflict-affected areas;
- take and store images on TBOP-managed devices or drives; team members must delete any copies from personal devices after transfer;
- post only through official TBOP accounts and under the guidance of the communications lead; and
- honour requests to remove content wherever possible.

Team members must not post photos, videos or details of participants on personal social media, and must not speak to the media on TBOP's behalf without approval. When using personal social media, team members should be mindful that their conduct reflects on TBOP. TBOP's media and information literacy values apply to us too: we check facts, credit sources and do not share misleading content.

14. Stipends, Reimbursements and Resources

- Volunteering with TBOP is unpaid. Where funds allow, TBOP may offer volunteers and interns a modest stipend or transport and meal support. The amount, frequency and conditions are set out in writing before engagement begins.
- Reasonable, pre-approved, out-of-pocket expenses incurred for TBOP work (for example transport to an outreach, data for approved virtual work, or printing) are reimbursed when claimed with receipts or other acceptable evidence within 30 days.
- All payments are made through TBOP's official financial channels or approved fiscal arrangements — never from or into personal accounts on TBOP's behalf — and are recorded.
- Donations, books, stationery and other materials belong to TBOP and its participants. They must be logged, stored safely, used only for their intended purpose and accounted for after each activity.
- TBOP equipment, accounts and branding (including laptops, email, social media and logos) are for TBOP work only and must be returned or handed over at the end of engagement.
- Gifts or hospitality offered to team members because of their TBOP role must be declared if they are of more than token value. Gifts must never be accepted where they could influence decisions or create obligation.

15. Reporting Concerns

If you see, hear or suspect that someone is being harmed, or that this policy is being broken, you must report it. You do not need proof — that is the job of the people who will look into it.

> **If a child or adult tells you about harm**
>
> - Stay calm, listen and take them seriously.
> - Do not promise to keep it secret; explain that you will tell only the people who need to know to help keep them safe.
> - Ask only open questions needed to understand that they are safe (for example, "Can you tell me more?"). Do not investigate or confront anyone.
> - Write down what was said in their own words, with the date, time and who was present, as soon as possible.
> - Report it to the DSL the same day.

How to report

Situation	What to do
A child is in immediate danger	Make the child safe, call emergency services or the police (112), then inform the DSL straight away.
Any other safeguarding concern	Report to the DSL within 24 hours, in person, by phone or by email.
The concern involves the DSL	Report directly to the Executive Director or the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
The concern involves the Executive Director	Report directly to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
Other misconduct (fraud, harassment, data breach)	Report to your supervisor or the HR & Admin Officer, or to the DSL if you prefer.

What happens next

- The DSL records the concern, acts to keep the person safe, and decides on next steps — which may include referral to the police, NAPTIP, social welfare services, the school, or a partner organisation.
- Concerns are handled confidentially, promptly and in a survivor-centred way. The person affected is offered support and kept informed as far as is safe.
- Anyone accused will be told of the concern at an appropriate time, given a fair chance to respond, and may be suspended while facts are established.
- Concerns involving partners are shared with the partner's focal person, and with donors where required by agreements.
- TBOP will protect anyone who reports in good faith from retaliation. Retaliation is serious misconduct. Knowingly false reports made to cause harm will also be addressed.

Participants, parents, teachers and community members can also raise concerns or complaints using the contact details in Section 18. TBOP will share these details in a simple, child-friendly way at every outreach.

16. Suspension or Termination of Engagement

TBOP aims to resolve most issues through clear expectations, support and honest conversation. Where that is not enough, the following applies:

- **Informal action.** Minor concerns are raised promptly by the supervisor, with guidance and a chance to improve.
- **Formal warning.** Repeated or more serious concerns lead to a written warning that explains the issue, the expected change and the timeframe.
- **Suspension.** A team member may be suspended from duties — with any stipend continued where applicable — while an allegation of serious misconduct or a safeguarding concern is investigated. Suspension is a protective step, not a finding of guilt.
- **Termination.** Engagement may be ended for gross misconduct (including any breach of Section 6), proven safeguarding violations, serious breaches of confidentiality, fraud, or repeated failure to meet standards after warning. In cases of gross misconduct, termination may be immediate.
- **Right to be heard and to appeal.** The team member will be told the reasons in writing, given a chance to respond, and may appeal within 10 working days to a person or panel not involved in the original decision, which may include a Board member.
- **Ending by choice.** Staff give notice as set out in their contract. Volunteers and interns are asked to give at least one week's notice where possible, so that activities and children are not left unsupported.
- **Exit.** On leaving, everyone returns TBOP property, materials and data, hands over account access, and deletes any participant data and images held on personal devices. Exit conversations are offered to learn from each engagement.

Where a person is dismissed or leaves during an investigation into harm to a child, TBOP will, where lawful, share relevant information with authorities and with future employers who request a reference, so that the person cannot simply move on to work with children elsewhere.

17. Policy Review

- This policy is approved by the Board of Trustees and owned day-to-day by the HR & Admin Officer, working with the DSL.
- It is reviewed at least once every year, and sooner after a serious incident, a change in law, a new type of programme, or a request from a partner or donor.
- Reviews will draw on feedback from team members, schools, partners and — in age-appropriate ways — children and young people.
- Every team member is told of changes and asked to re-sign where changes are significant.
- The Board receives an annual report on safeguarding, including the number and type of concerns raised (without identifying details) and lessons learned.

18. Contact Information

Contact	Details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Angela Chiamaka Okorie
Founder	Stephanie O. Adams-Douglas
General enquiries	2books1peninitiative@gmail.com twobooksonepen.org