

Applying the Barnahus Safeguarding Guidance in Practice Webinar

11 September 2025, 13.30 CET



Agenda for today's webinar

- Key Safeguarding Concepts for Barnahus
- Translating the Guidance into a Framework
- Practical Application Steps
- Monitoring and Review
- Questions & Answers



Objectives

- Understand key safeguarding concepts in the Barnahus context
- Learn how to translate the Guidance into a practical safeguarding framework
- Explore tools for risk assessment and mitigation
- Share information on monitoring and review



Key Safeguarding Concepts for Barnahus



A. General principles

- All children have equal rights to protection from harm.
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the protection of children.
- Organisations have a duty of care to children with whom they work
- If organisations work with partners, they have a responsibility to help partners meet the minimum requirements on protection.

All actions on child safeguarding are taken in the best interests of the child, which are paramount.



Protection and Safeguarding

- **Child Protection** refers to the protection of all children from violence, exploitation and abuse (Art. 19 of CRC). In the international context it describes the work being undertaken to strengthen laws, policies and systems, which are designed to protect children in a given country in his or her own family and community.
- **Child Safeguarding** is a set of policies, procedures and practice that an organisation employs to ensure that it itself is a child safe organisation. It is the responsibility that organisations have to ensure their staff, operations and programmes “do no harm” to children and that any concerns the organisation has about children’s safety within the communities in which they work are reported to the appropriate authorities.



The Barnahus Quality Standards

The Barnahus Quality Standards require that any organisation establishing a Barnahus must have a robust safeguarding framework in place.

This framework must be designed to protect children from further harm, both within the Barnahus itself and through the system it operates in.

Together, these standards make it clear that Child Safeguarding is not a separate concern, but a foundation on which the Barnahus model must be built upon.



The Barnahus Quality Standards crucial to Safeguarding

Standard 1.1: Best interests of the child, which must guide all decisions and actions.

Standard 1.2: Children's rights to be heard and to receive information, ensuring respectful, inclusive participation.

Standard 1.4: Child Safeguarding including compliance with the International Child Safeguarding Standards (ICS).

Standard 4: Child-friendly environment, which ensures both physical and emotional safety.

Standard 9: Capacity building, which ensures all professionals are properly trained in safeguarding and trauma-informed approaches.

Standard 10: Prevention, which includes building external capacity and sharing safeguarding knowledge with partners and other stakeholders in the system.



Translating the Guidance into a Framework:

The International Child Safeguarding Standards (ICS)



Who is the Barnahus Safeguarding Guidance for?

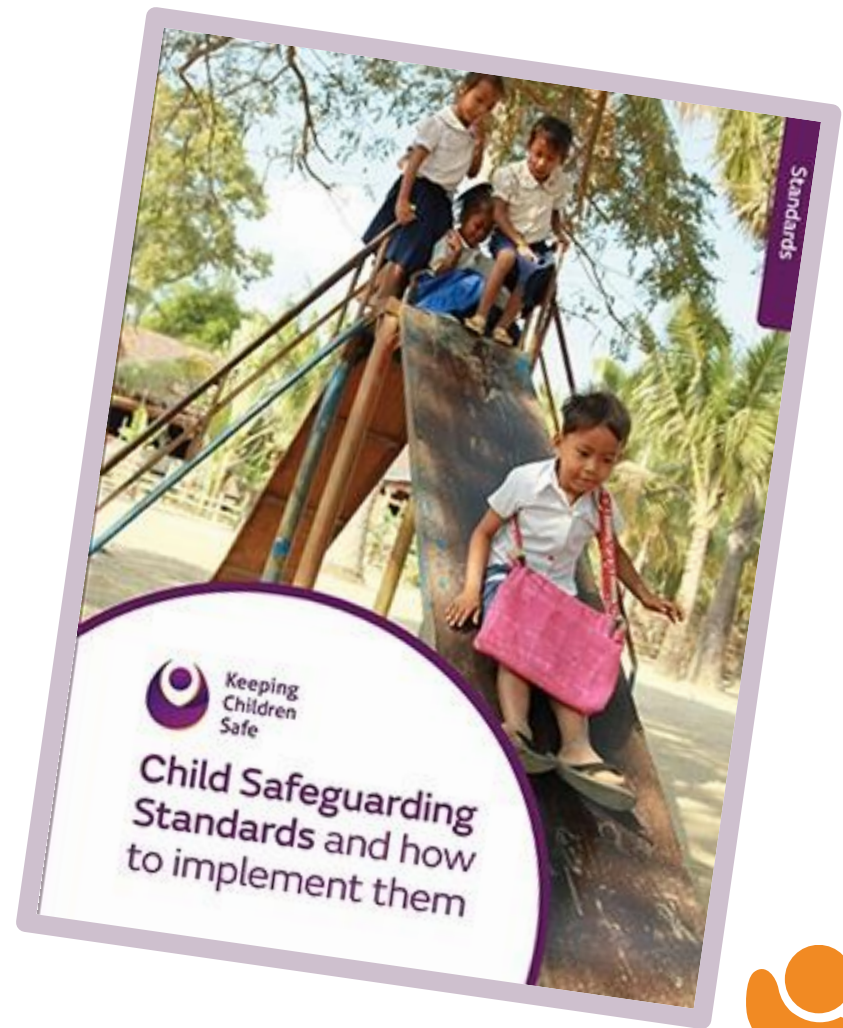
This guide is intended for Barnahus and organisations that are setting up Barnahus, with the aim of helping them develop and strengthen their Child Safeguarding frameworks.

It provides practical guidance for establishing minimum safeguarding measures, clear policies, and standing operational procedures that are aligned with both the Barnahus Quality Standards and international Child Safeguarding requirements.



Why have Standards?

- To promote good practice
- To protect children
- To provide targets for agencies



Advantages of implementing Standards



- Children are protected.
- Organisation staff and associates are protected.
- The organisation and its reputation is protected.



The International Child Safeguarding Standards

Standard 1
Policy

Standard 2
People

Standard 3
Procedures

Standard 4
Accountability

1. Policy

Your Barnahus has a policy that describes how it is committed to preventing and responding appropriately to harm to children.



1. Policy: What is the Standard?

All Barnahus need to develop a clear Child Safeguarding policy that prevents harm to children and outlines what measures are in place to respond when safeguarding concerns arise.



1. Policy: Why should Barnahus meet this standard?

Developing a Child Safeguarding policy makes it clear to everyone that children must be safeguarded and not put at risk of harm because of the Barnahus' contact with, or impact on, children.



1. Policy: How to meet the Standard?

Designing the policy

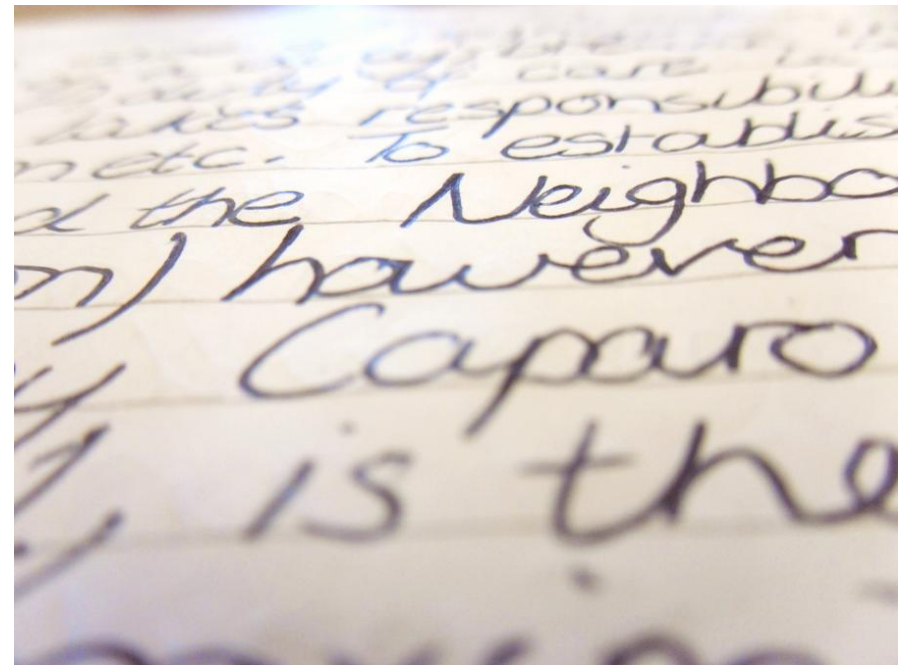
A good Child Safeguarding policy is developed through consultation with staff and associates and, where appropriate, children, local leadership, and communities. If you want your safeguarding policy to be effective, you need to make sure it is central to the Barnahus, and that different parts of the Barnahus have been consulted on its development and implementation.



1. Policy: How to meet the Standard?

Writing the policy

The policy should be written in a manner that is globally and locally appropriate. The policy should contain, or refer specifically to, a code of conduct for staff and associates. It may need to be translated to ensure all staff and associates understand it and presented in a manner that is readily understood by all relevant communities, including children.



1. Policy: How to meet the Standard?



Signing off on the policy

- The senior management team and the Barnahus' board, steering group or equivalent) and a potential leading agency, need to sign off on the policy.



1. Policy: How to meet the Standard?



Publicising the policy

- The policy should be made available to all staff and associates, partners, children, and communities.



1. Policy: Ways of providing evidence



- A copy of the policy signed by the management board.
- Policy translated into local languages.
- Examples of ways the policy has been promoted to partners, children, and communities.



2. People

Your Barnahus places clear responsibilities and expectations on its staff and associates and supports them to understand and act in line with these.





Standard 2: **People** What is the standard?

Everyone connected to the Barnahus should know how to keep children safe and have appropriate learning opportunities to develop and maintain the necessary attitudes, skills, and knowledge to keep children safe.





Standard 2 People

- Key staff are designated (including director level) as 'focal points' with clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Recruitment processes have strong child safeguarding measures in place
- There are written guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour of adults towards children, and of children towards other children
- There are guidelines for engaging partners, communities and children on child safeguarding



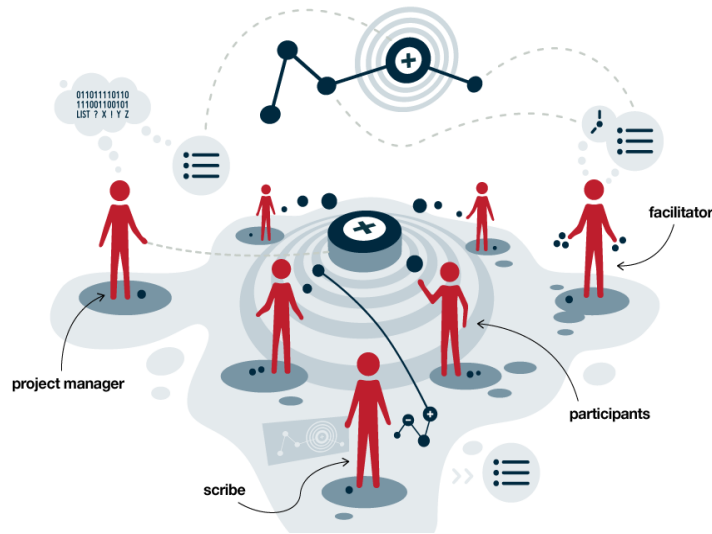
Standard 2: **People** Why should Barnahus meet this standard?

Barnahus need to ensure that all those associated with the organisation understand what is meant by harm to children, what their obligations are to prevent harm, and what to do if harm arises.

2. People: How to meet the Standard?

Designating roles and responsibilities

All Barnahus should have a named, designated person who is responsible for making sure that the Child Safeguarding measures are integrated throughout the Barnahus and acts as a focal point.



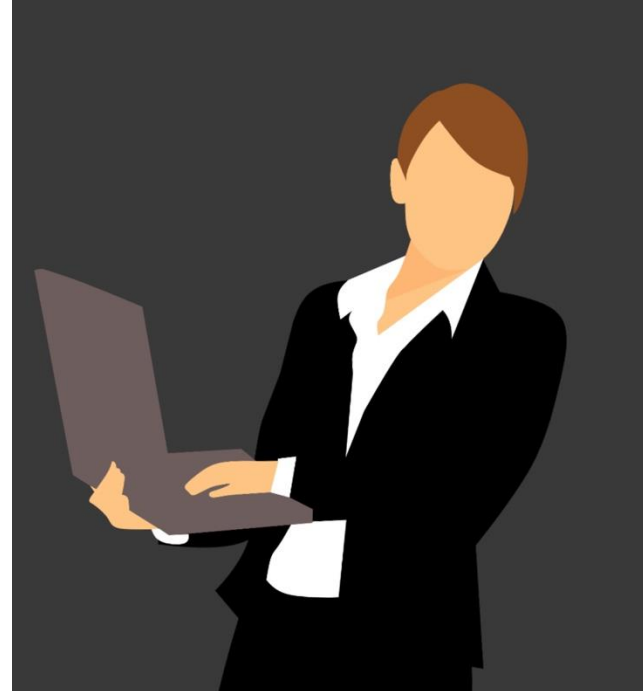
This role should reflect the nature and structure of the Barnahus, and the person should be senior enough, and have enough support and resources, to carry out the role.



2. People: How to meet the Standard?

Recruitment and engagement of staff and associates

The Barnahus should outline its commitment to Child Safeguarding at the earliest opportunity in recruitment adverts, interviews and as part of contracts of employment.



2. People: How to meet the Standard?



Guidelines for staff conduct

- A code of conduct is a clear and concise guide of what is and is not acceptable behaviour or practice when employed or engaged by the Barnahus.



2. People: How to meet the Standard?

Training and education

- It is essential that all those employed or engaged by the Barnahus have access to regular training on child safeguarding that is appropriate for their role and responsibilities, beginning at the induction/orientation stage.



2. People: How to meet the Standard?



Access to advice and support

Staff with designated responsibilities for Child Safeguarding need to have access to advice and support where concerns or incidents arise. These staff will also need to be able to identify sources of support for children and their families.



2. People: How to meet the Standard?

Agreements with partners

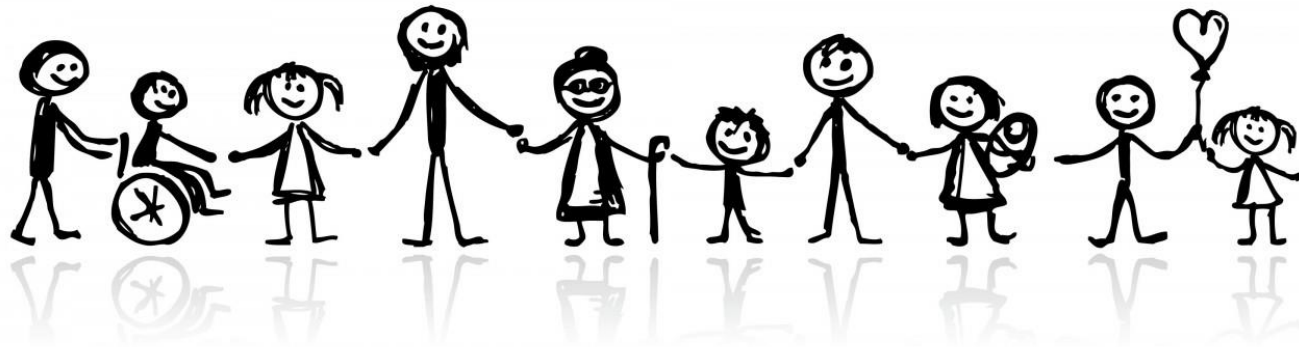
A Barnahus typically has a range of partners, including collaborating national and local authorities, agencies and services, (e.g. social and child protection services, law enforcement, health services, victim support services), government, NGOs, donors, schools, contractors, and suppliers. All need to agree to a commitment to keep children safe that is appropriate to that partnership, including clear language about the following.



2. People: How to meet the Standard?

Partnerships with children and families

- Your Barnahus can develop partnerships with children, families and communities that are appropriate to support your work on safeguarding.
- Devise a complaints procedure with children, families and communities.



2. People: Ways of providing evidence



- A copy of training plans, course attendance records and course evaluations
- Copies of information for children about sources of support
- Lists of contacts for specialist advice and information
- Partnership agreements, funding application and reporting forms
- Codes of conduct.



3. Procedure

Your Barnahus creates a child-safe environment through implementing Child Safeguarding procedures that are applied across the organisation.





Standard 3 Procedures What is the standard?

- Safeguarding policy commitments are integrated into existing Barnahus organisational processes and systems and, where necessary, new procedures introduced
- The procedures detail the steps that need to be carried out to fulfil the policy



Standard 3 **Procedures** Why should Barnahus meet this standard?

- Child safeguarding measures need to be integrated throughout the Barnahus' systems, processes, and operations to ensure the organisation implement measures to keep children safe.
- This Standard helps Barnahus take the necessary steps to integrate safeguarding requirements and ensure the actions are globally relevant and locally appropriate.

3. Procedures: How to meet the Standard?



Risk assessment and risk mitigation

- Risk and how to avoid risk are now a major part of the working strategy.



3. Procedures: How to meet the Standard?

**Think global, act local –
measures in local contexts**

- The measures have to work for the local context but also adhere to global and regional standards. Definitions and laws may differ according to national and cultural understandings.



3. Procedures: Ways of providing evidence



- Risk registers which have recorded risk assessments and mitigating strategies
- Information from local mappings
- Reporting flow charts for offices and partners.



4. Accountability

Your Barnahus monitors and reviews its safeguarding measures.





Standard 4 **Accountability** What is the standard?

The Barnahus has in place measures and mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing safeguarding measures and to ensure both upward and downward accountability in relation to Child Safeguarding



Standard 4 **Accountability** Why should Barnahus meet this standard?

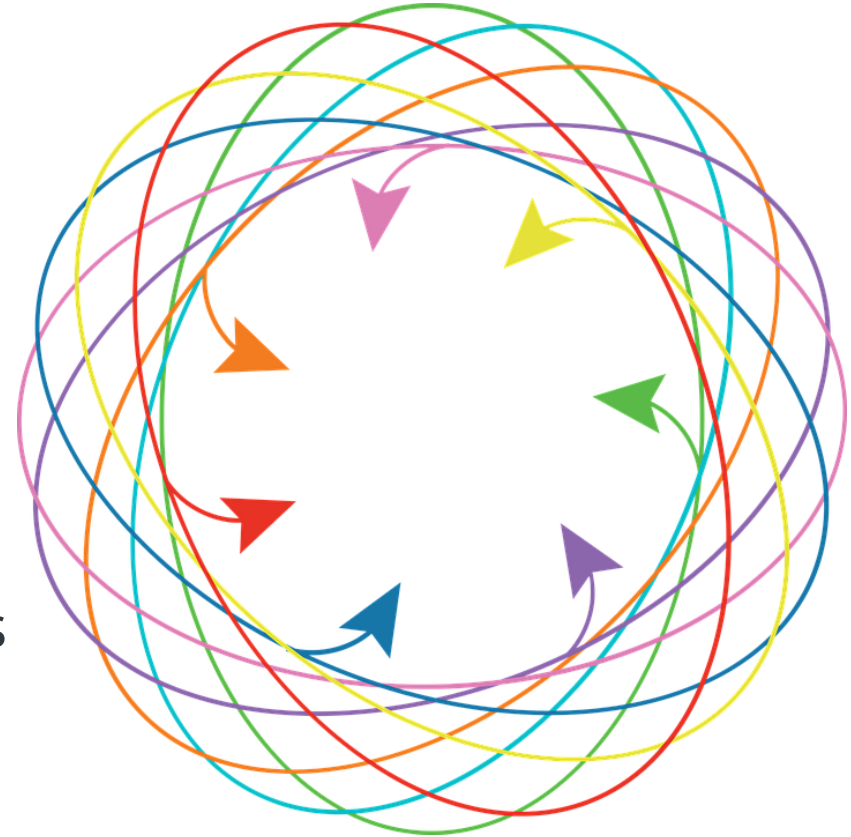
As with other organisational functions, it is important to:

- Measure child safeguarding performance
- Active monitoring, before things go wrong,
- Reactive monitoring, after near misses or when things go wrong



Standard 4 **Accountability** How to meet this standard?

- Implementation of child safeguarding policies and procedures is regularly monitored
- Progress, performance and lessons learnt are reported to key stakeholders (management forums and external or independent bodies where relevant) and included in organisations' annual reports





Standard 4 **Accountability** How to meet this standard?

- Learning from practical case experience informs policy review and changes to child safeguarding measures
- Policies and practices are reviewed at regular intervals and formally evaluated by an external evaluator/auditor every 3 years



4. Accountability: Ways of providing evidence



- Risk registers
- Self-audit tools
- Internal audit reports
- External audit reports.





Practical Application Steps



Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is an exercise that examines all aspects of services from a safeguarding perspective, to establish whether there are any practices or features of the service that have the potential to put children at risk. Risk assessments need to be regular and must reflect all operations and activities, etc.



Risk Assessment

- For Barnahus, it is important that the risk assessment considers the impact and potential risks related to the specific role and mandate of Barnahus, including both multidisciplinary and interagency collaboration, and the respective interventions it carries out.
- One way of determining what the risk assessment should include, is to use the Barnahus Quality standards as a risk assessment framework, looking at specific risks and challenges in the context of each Barnahus Quality Standard.



Risk Assessment Tool: Steps

Risk assessment involves seven stages:

1. Establishing the context, scope and setting of your Barnahus.
2. Establishing your potential impact on and contact with children in relation to child safeguarding.
3. Identifying and analysing the potential risks of that impact or contact.
4. Evaluating the risks in terms of likelihood they could occur and the seriousness of the impact on children.
5. Implementing strategies to minimize and prevent risk.
6. Reviewing and revising risks and preventative measures.
7. Communicating and consulting.



Roles and Responsibilities: Exercise

We have four categories:

- MANAGER
- ROLE SPECIFIC (e.g. this might be a HR officer or programme officer)
- CHILD SAFEGUARDING FOCAL POINT
- EVERYBODY

Go through the roles and responsibilities table and assign roles and responsibilities for safeguarding for each of the categories.

Each responsibility goes to just one category. Put the relevant category in each of the cells in the table.



Safe Recruitment

- For Barnahus, this may present a challenge since the staff who come to work in Barnahus, often are recruited and employed by different agencies with different recruitment procedures.
- It is therefore important that there are mutually approved criteria for safe recruitment for all collaborating partners that practice in Barnahus.
- It is good practice to reflect this in interagency agreements or other common policies.



Safe Recruitment

Criteria include but is not limited to:

- Job descriptions that clearly state safeguarding responsibilities
- Background checks
- Written and signed off references from previous employers
- Safeguarding focused interview process
- Signed declaration that the code of conduct has been read and understood
- Probation period
- Induction and follow-up refresher training on Child Safeguarding



Reporting and Responding

- Multiple, safe, confidential reporting channels
- Step-by-step flowcharts (adult & child-friendly)
- “Need to know” information sharing
- Survivor-centred, child’s best interests first



Monitoring and Review



Monitoring and Review

To ensure that the International Child Safeguarding Standards are implemented in line with the Barnahus Quality Standards, there should be a constant monitoring.

Monitoring activities include but are not limited to:

- Review of major Child Safeguarding incidents.
- Review of case records, referrals and overall reporting and responding.
- Review the time before first signs and action, as well as the outcome of early interventions.
- Review of code of conduct development and staff adherence.
- Visits to track progress of safeguarding implementation.

Key Takeaways:

- Safeguarding = prevention + response
- The ICS Standards give a clear structure
- Risk assessment is ongoing, collaborative, and inclusive of children
- Monitoring & review keep safeguarding effective



Questions?





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