

Pedagogical principles and Guidelines for the Nordic School.

OVERVIEW

The Nordic School consists of children with Swedish, Norwegian or Danish as their mother tongue. The teachers in The Nordic School master one of these Nordic languages. They do not necessarily have to have a Nordic language as their mother tongue, but they must be able to communicate with children and parents in a satisfactory way. There are 3 departments in The Nordic School: Preschool, Afterschool and Youth Club.

Under the Preschool there are three groups of children: Kidogo (from 1.5 to 3 years), Kubwa (3-4 years old) and Playschool (4-6 years). The Afterschool children start at 5-6 years until 8-9 and the Youth Club caters for the little older afterschool children 9-14 years.

The Nordic School emphasizes play, communication, interaction and participation. We wish to create a secure and happy environment for development and learning. Based on the well-being of every child, we have the responsibility for the children to develop and be stimulated according to their maturity and age.

Free play is central for everyday life at the school, but the days are also structured around regular routines.

For the younger children, preparation for school in, either one of the Nordic countries or an English-speaking school is essential. Therefore an important pillar for The Nordic School is to recognize that children will be better equipped for abstract learning, reading, writing and mathematics, when they have a good and well developed mother tongue. Hence, the optimal learning experience is to learn how to read, write and count in one's own language. "The Play School", which the children can attend from the age of four, aims to improve this basic understanding and to set the foundation for further learning. The Afterschool activities, the Youth Club and language classes aim to maintain and develop language skills and Nordic identity for the older children.

FOUR PEDAGOGICAL AREAS OF THE NORDIC SCHOOL

There are four main pedagogical areas in the work of the Nordic School¹. These are: Norms and values, Development and learning, Participation and School and

¹ The four areas are inspired by the Norwegian Framework for Kindergarten and the Swedish Nursery Curriculum for Pre-Schools (Svenska Läroplanen för Förskolan – Lpfo 98). That Nordic Pedagogical Principles should be practiced in the school is stated in the Nordic School's Constitution of 15th of April, 2009.

home. These main areas are divided according to two factors; objectives and guidelines. The objectives set specific demands for the school's work and will thus also help to secure quality development in the School. The guidelines mark the teacher's areas of responsibility and how to work in order to obtain the set goals.

We provide below an explanation of each of the focus areas and relevant objectives and guidelines.

1. Norms and Values

The Nordic School must actively influence and stimulate the child to develop an understanding of democratic values and also follow the same principles.

OBJECTIVES

The Nordic School must strive for every child to develop:

- Ability to empathise: the child must learn to identify with other people's situation feelings and to help others.
- Respect, openness, responsibility, solidarity and equality.
- The ability to reflect on and take into consideration different ethical dilemmas and questions in everyday life.
- Their ability to solve conflicts themselves.
- An affinity to Nordic culture and traditions.

GUIDELINES

Everyone who works in The Nordic School must:

- Help the children to practise their ability to empathise.
- Assist the children in helping a newly arrived child to fit in by including him/her in games and interaction.
- Create possibilities for the children to learn to show respect and openness when meeting children from different cultures and regions.
- Integrate everyday life in Tanzania into the school environment.
- Actively assist the children in their conflicts but also give space and opportunity for them to work out solutions on their own.
- Get to know the different Nordic Traditions, such as holidays and celebrations and celebrate them accordingly.

2. Development and Learning

Each child's developmental stage and his/her individual needs must always be taken into consideration when planning activities.

OBJECTIVES

The Nordic School must strive for every child to:

- Learn how to socialize with other children through play but also reflect on and understand their own emotions and actions and how these affect other children.
- Understand what it means to be part of a group, learn to wait their turn and take the needs of other children into consideration.
- Learn Nordic norms and values. Something that in time will ease the transition to life in Scandinavia if or when the child moves to a Nordic country.
- Have the possibility to start in "Play school" by the age of four. The purpose is to prepare the children for school. They will be introduced to letters and numbers.
- Develop the different motor skills through physical activities.
- Develop healthy eating habits and good manners by providing healthy meals in a calm and relaxed atmosphere.

GUIDELINES

Everyone who works in The Nordic School must

- Prepare plans for theme-based learning with varied ways of expression; acting, singing, creative work, role play, art activities and others.
- Provide the facilities for varied and challenging physical activities, such as ball games, dancing and other organised ways of play. There should also be space and time for free play.
- Consider him or herself as carriers of Tanzanian and Nordic traditions and use this actively in their planning and interaction with the children.
- Divide the children into groups according to age: The Kidogo, the Kubwa, the Play School, the Afterschool and the Youth Club
- Make sure that every group has activities designed for the age groups.

3. The Child's Participation

OBJECTIVES

The Nordic School must strive for every child to:

- Be offered appropriate activities, reflecting the current interests of the children.
- Grow and develop in a safe and secure environment.
- Be able to express him/herself in his/her native language and experience to be understood and taken seriously.

GUIDELINES

Everyone who works in The Nordic School must:

- Be sensitive to the children's interests and wishes and incorporate them when planning and facilitating activities.
- Create everyday routines which give the children a feeling of security in knowing what each day will bring.
- Make use of the different resources in the teachers' group, such as different educational background and interests.

4. School and Home

The school and the parents have a joint responsibility for the child's well-being and must, in collaboration, enable the best possible environment for development and learning.

OBJECTIVES

- Co-operation with the parents, in order to develop The Nordic School and its strategies.

GUIDELINES

Everyone who works in the pre-school must:

- Co-operate with and continuously inform the parents of the child's development.
- Keep themselves informed about each child's personal situation while respecting the child's integrity.
- Help prepare and participate in parent-teacher conferences twice per year.
- Help prepare Parents meetings twice per year.
- Attend planning and teachers' meetings to secure the smooth running and development of the school.

Updated July, 2013