



## Swedish School Society Dar es Salaam

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# Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Swedish School Society/The Nordic School

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## Scope

The purpose of this policy is to set and describe the procedures and measurements in place to protect, prevent, detect, and respond to any form of violence and harm against children and staff including workplace harassment. The policy describes the Swedish School Society, commonly known as The Nordic School. The Nordic School aims at providing a learning environment where children feel safe, secure, and acknowledged. The Nordic School furthermore wishes to provide a safe and positive working environment for all staff. Safeguarding is a wide subject and the policy should thus be used in conjunction with the Safety and Security Protocol as well as the Nordic School Curriculum and Learning Framework. The Nordic School will work with children, parents as well as relevant external partners to ensure the well-being and safety of all children. Childhood has intrinsic value and should be protected as well as cherished.

## Principles

The Nordic School has a zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of violence against children and staff. The Nordic School will make every effort to prevent, detect, and respond to such misconduct.

The Nordic School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is guided by the following principles:

- Creating a safe environment for children, staff, management, and wider Nordic School Community protecting against all forms of violence and sexual harassment
- Ensuring staff and management are trained and possess knowledge to respond to concerns and potential allegations
- Teaching children and young people about staying safe
- Supporting diversity and inclusive work practices
- Encouraging fair and equitable treatment of all people in the workplace

## National and International Laws

This policy demonstrates a comprehensive commitment to safeguarding the rights and well-being of children within the School's care. By aligning with international conventions such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and national legislation like the Tanzanian Law of the Child Act, the school sets a strong foundation for child protection. The emphasis on non-discrimination ensures that all children, regardless of their background or characteristics, are

treated equally and respectfully. This fosters an inclusive environment conducive to learning and personal development.

The Nordic School's commitment to protecting children from abuse and neglect through stringent measures underscores its responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing space for every child. This commitment is further reinforced by the mandatory reporting of any suspected cases of abuse or neglect, ensuring timely intervention and support for affected children.

## Key Terms

Child	Under Tanzanian Law, a child is a person under the age of 18. Children are any person enrolled at the Nordic School.
Staff member	Whenever the term staff member is used in this policy or associated procedures it refers to the three employee groups, teachers, supporting staff and administrative staff, as well as contractors, sub-contractors, advisors, volunteers, and visitors.
Management	Refers to the leadership team within the Nordic School.

## Key Roles and Responsibilities

All children deserve to be free from physical, sexual, and emotional harm, neglect, and exploitation. It is everyone's responsibility to avoid any form of abusive behavior. By doing this, we create a supportive environment where every child can thrive.

Swedish School Society/The Nordic School Board	The Nordic School board is responsible for overseeing the implementation and regular updating of the policy. The Board ensures that strong internal control systems are in place to effectively safeguard children and staff. Their duties include prioritizing child safety within the organization, maintaining a secure school environment, and ensuring compliance with Tanzanian legislative requirements.
Director	The Director ensures the full implementation of the Child Protection Policy at the Nordic School and serves as the School's representative in all child safety matters. This includes ensuring that staff, contractors, visitors, and volunteers understand and follow the policy. The Director also ensures that

	the Nordic School prioritizes child safety and well-being, demonstrating a strong commitment to protecting children from abuse and harm. Additionally, the Director enforces a zero-tolerance policy towards abuse and sexual harassment within the school community.
Teachers	Teachers are expected to create an environment that prioritizes students' emotional and physical well-being, making them feel safe and valued. Teachers must follow Child Protection rules, taking necessary steps to keep children safe from harm. As role models, they should promote respect, kindness, and protect children's dignity. Additionally, they must stay alert to signs of abuse and report any concerns immediately, always prioritizing the children's safety.
All staff	Staff members are expected to understand and adhere to the Child Protection policy. They should actively work to prevent, detect, and report abuse. Ensuring the well-being of every child.
Parents	Parents are expected to uphold the child protection policy and procedures put in place by the school. This means following guidelines, sharing the necessary information, and attending meetings if needed. They must report any abuse concerns to the Director or Chair of the Board. Parents should respect the privacy and confidentiality of all children and families at the school.
Psychologist	The school will, if necessary, seek advice or consultation from an appointed psychologist.

## Definitions

### Safeguarding

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) defines safeguarding as “the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm”. Safeguarding involves actions to promote children's welfare and protect them from harm. This includes preventing abuse, ensuring safe care, and enabling all children to achieve their best outcome.

## Child protection

UNICEF defines child protection as efforts to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation, and abuse against children, such as sexual exploitation, trafficking, child labor, and harmful practices. This includes creating a safe environment to reduce risks and taking appropriate action to support and protect children from harm.

## Definition of Abuse

The Nordic School sets out below common definitions of child abuse as specified under the laws of Tanzania, including key terms used in the policy.

Abuse	According to Tanzania's Law of the Child (2009), child abuse is any violation of a child's rights that causes physical, moral, or emotional harm, including beatings, insults, discrimination, neglect, and sexual abuse.
Emotional abuse	Emotional pain caused by such things as rejection, isolation, severe humiliation, excessive teasing, and verbal assault.
Physical abuse	Non accidental physical injury including but not limited to female genital mutilation (FGM), burns, human bites, bruises, lacerations, bone fractures, missing teeth and any internal or head injuries, any of which have been intentionally inflicted.
Sexual abuse	Exploitation of a child by an adult or a child for sexual gratification, including but not limited to obscene conversation, exposure to pornographic material, exhibitionism, genital fondling, incest, and rape.
Bullying	When an individual or a group of people, repeatedly and intentionally cause hurt or harm to another person or a group of people.  Physical bullying: Hitting, poking, pushing, spitting, tripping, damaging belongings.  Verbally bullying: Name-calling, insults, threatening, racist remarks.
Grooming and predatory manipulation	Insidious tactics used by individuals to exploit and manipulate others, often for harmful or abusive purposes.  When an adult becomes a special friend to a child to gain their trust and lower their inhibitions with the purpose of sexual abuse.

Neglect	Persistent abandonment: failure to provide adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, or medical care for a child; failure to protect a child from exposure to any danger which may affect his or her health or development.
Domestic violence	Allowing a child to witness violence within his/her immediate environment.
Cultural and religious differences	Within the universally accepted norms of human rights framework, culture, religion, or tradition can never be invoked to condone any form of violence against children or sexual harassment.
Force	A physical intervention in the right to self-determination is an active intervention toward the child who actively opposes or passively responds to a specific offer or invitation.

## Cultural Sensitivity

The Nordic School acknowledges the diverse cultural, religious, and familial backgrounds within the community and understands that these differences can influence perceptions of child protection. While respecting cultural norms, the School prioritizes the safety and best interests of the child. The School is committed to addressing child welfare concerns fairly and without discrimination, ensuring that everyone involved receives equitable treatment and support. This reinforces the School's dedication to the well-being of every child.

## Signs of Abuse and Neglect

Physical abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visible injuries.</li> <li>- implausible explanations.</li> <li>- neglected injuries.</li> <li>- unusual injury location.</li> <li>- Repetitive health issues.</li> <li>- Concealed limbs in warm weather.</li> <li>- Fearful behavior.</li> <li>- Wariness and distrust.</li> <li>- Withdrawal from physical contact.</li> </ul>
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Emotional abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Delayed development.</li> <li>- Elevated anxiety levels.</li> <li>- Speech disorders and delays.</li> <li>- Fear novelty.</li> <li>- Inappropriate emotional responses.</li> <li>- Obsessions or phobias.</li> <li>- Decline in concentration.</li> <li>- Attention-seeking behavior.</li> <li>- Persistent fatigue.</li> </ul>
Sexual abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Genital discomfort.</li> <li>- Urination difficulties.</li> <li>- Genital infections or bleeding.</li> <li>- Fearful responses.</li> <li>- Aggressive behavior.</li> <li>- Regressive behavior.</li> <li>- Physical discomfort.</li> <li>- Unusual behavioral shifts.</li> <li>- Medically unexplained ailments.</li> <li>- Fear or distrust of specific adults.</li> <li>- Revealing special attention or secrets.</li> </ul>
Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unattended medical needs.</li> <li>- Supervision deficiencies.</li> <li>- Consistent hunger.</li> <li>- Poor hygiene.</li> <li>- Inadequate nutrition.</li> <li>- Chronic fatigue.</li> <li>- Self-destructive behaviors.</li> <li>- Extreme loneliness.</li> <li>- Desperate need of affection.</li> <li>- Failure to thrive.</li> <li>- Frequent school lateness or non-attendance.</li> </ul>



Use of force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Any form of humiliation, mocking, or otherwise degrading treatment of children is not permitted.</li> <li>- Corporal punishment is not permitted.</li> <li>- Physical restraint is not permitted.</li> </ul> <p>The staff members are not allowed to use force on the children <i>unless</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To prevent a situation where a child is in danger to themselves.</li> <li>- To prevent a situation where a child is or is about to be in imminent danger of attack from another child.</li> <li>- To prevent an ongoing or imminent attack on themselves.</li> <li>- To prevent damage or destruction of material things.</li> </ul>
Consent	<p>A staff member should obtain permission from a child before picking them up, as this respects their autonomy and ensures safety. If a child has limited language skills, staff must be attentive to their reactions when being lifted.</p> <p>For diaper changes and personal hygiene, teachers are responsible for assisting as needed, including changing diapers or washing.</p>

## Cooperation with Psychologist

The Nordic School has partnered with a psychologist to handle abuse disclosures with the highest level of professionalism and sensitivity. This collaboration reflects the school's commitment to providing expert care and ensuring that such cases are managed and resolved appropriately.

The Nordic school is a part of The Multi-Disciplinary Team, a collaboration of international schools in Dar es Salaam discussing child protection. This initiative involves the exchange of knowledge and includes meetings with social workers and law enforcement officials. These collaborations are designed to provide the school with comprehensive guidance on best practices in child protection.

## Reports and Complaints

The Nordic School is committed to protecting children and addressing any suspected abuse. If a staff member suspects abuse, they must report it immediately to the Director or the Chair of the Board. Anyone-staff, board members, trustees, or parents- can report concerns about abuse suspicions. The School will investigate all complaints thoroughly and respond quickly and

responsibly, following Tanzanian law. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process, and the child's safety and well-being will always be the top priority.

## Avenues of Reporting

The Nordic School provides various avenues for reporting concerns regarding children or staff.

These reporting channels include:

**In-person reporting:** A staff member or parent may personally approach the Director or Chair of the Board to convey concerns regarding instances of abuse.

**Written reporting:** Staff members or parents can submit written reports via email address to the School.

**Anonymous reporting:** The School acknowledges and respects individuals' preference for anonymity when reporting concerns. To accommodate this, the School provides a physical Dropbox located by the noticeboard next to the office. Where individuals can confidentially submit any issues, they wish to address.

However, in cases of significant or urgent concerns, it is crucial for the School to receive the information promptly to implement appropriate measures swiftly. Therefore, while anonymous reporting is an option, individuals are encouraged to consider the severity of the concern and the potential need for direct communication to ensure timely and effective resolution.

## False Complaints

In our commitment to safeguarding children, it is imperative to recognize the weight of filing false complaints. Such actions result in significant repercussions, potentially impacting individuals and the community. These repercussions may encompass, but are not limited to:

**Formal warning:** Individuals may receive an official warning highlighting the seriousness of making unfounded allegations in matters concerning child protection.

**Disciplinary action:** Depending on the severity of the false report, disciplinary measures such as suspension or termination of employment or enrollment may be necessary, ensuring the safety and well-being of children.

## Confidentiality

Throughout the entire process of observation, discussion, and reporting, it is imperative to safeguard the interest of the student and their family by avoiding unnecessary disclosure of information regarding abuse. The identity of the individual making the report will remain confidential unless explicit permission is granted for disclosure. Emphasizing a culture of confidential reporting upholds individual privacy while ensuring thorough record-keeping of child safety concerns.

## Drop off and pick up

The Nordic School is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children in our care. To maintain a secure environment, access to the school premises is only allowed with a valid Nordic School ID card or by signing in at the gate. Only pre-approved individuals with proper identification may pick up a child. If a new pickup person is required, parents must notify the school in writing. If a child is being picked up by a parent other than their own for a playdate, the school must receive notification from the child's parent along with a signed permission slip.

Visitors must be accompanied by a member upon entry. Unscheduled visitors from non-authorized individuals are not permitted.

## General approach

- The teachers will use calm, reassuring language to comfort the child and encourage a smooth transition
- Parents are encouraged to follow a consistent drop-off routine to help ease the transition.
- If a child resist separation, staff will offer alternative strategies such as engaging them in an activity or offering a comfort item.

## Escalation and support

If a child is highly distressed and refuses to let go of their parent, teachers will:

- Give the child time to adjust and calm down
- Work with the parents to create a gentle separation plan (e.g., using a goodbye routine)
- If the child is experiencing extreme distress, parents may be asked to stay for a brief period

By prioritizing gentle transitions, emotional support, and open communication, we aim to create a positive and stress-free drop-off experience for children and families without the use of force.

## Photographs, Videos and Social Media

Ensuring the wellbeing of all children, the school has strict guidelines regarding photography, video recording, and sharing of images of the children.

Parental consent for photos and videos

- Written parental/guardian consent is required before any child's photo or video is taken, stored, or shared.

### Use of photos and videos

- Photos and videos of children will never be shared in social media or other public platforms without explicit written consent from a parent or guardian
- Photos will be used only for the specific purpose outlined in the consent form
- Children's full names or identifying information will never be included in public posts or external communications
- If a parent or guardian withdraws consent, the School will immediately stop using the material and remove the child's images from future materials
- Parents and staff are not allowed to share photographs or videos of children (other than their own) from events or other activities at the school
- No visitors are allowed to take photos or videos inside the school premises

## Review

The policy will be reviewed by the Management and School Board in December 2025.