



## **CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

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## Policy Statement

Kagaki School, in cognizance of its moral and legal duties to safeguard and protect the fundamental rights of the children under their care, formulates this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The School has a zero-tolerance policy against all forms of abuse meted out against children and learners. As such, the school stands guided by the Best Interest Principle of the child in all matters concerning the learners.

## Definitions

**Safeguarding:** is the responsibility that entities have to ensure that its employees do no harm to children in their care and protection whether by their acts of commission or omission. Further, it involves the safeguards in place to ensure that children are not exposed to the risk of harm, neglect and abuse.

**Child Protection:** is a central part of safeguarding that involves protecting individual children who have been identified as either suffering or at risk of suffering harm or abuse. Child protection involves the measures put in place as well as the response to these incidences of child abuse and neglect.

**Abuse:** refers to the violation of a child's rights by any other person or persons. Abuse can take the form of physical, psychological, or sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or other exploitation, that results in actual or potential harm to the health, survival, development or dignity of a child. It can be a single isolated act or omission, or repeated acts.

## The Legal Framework

### The Constitution of Kenya, 2010

Article 53 of the Constitution of Kenya details the rights of a child which include the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, all forms of violence, inhuman treatment and punishment, and hazardous or exploitative behaviour. The provision further embodies the Best Interest Principle as a matter of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.

### The Children's Act, 2001

The Children's Act of 2001 is the guiding statute with regards to children's matters.

### The Basic Education Act, 2013

Section 36 prohibits torture, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment against the child, be it physical or psychological.

## Guidelines on Handling Children

- I. Members of staff have to consider at all times the implications of their interaction with learners, in order to avoid being accused of misconduct. Physical Contact is not prohibited. However, physical contact between members of staff and learners shall be of a non-sexual and non-violent nature.
- II. Whenever a staff member and student need to converse, it shall be within the school premises, and within the vicinity of another staff member or passers-by.
- III. Members of staff shall not contact or converse privately with learners on social media sites, without their parent's or guardian's knowledge and consent.
- IV. Members of staff shall avoid making remarks about a learner's body which may be misconstrued to be sexual abuse or any derogatory remarks directed at a learner.

## Procedure for Dealing with Child Abuse

### Identification

Once a member of staff, or a child by themselves suspects incidences of child abuse or neglect, or they have reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer abuse, they must report to the designated persons.

### Reporting

Reporting shall be in written form for purposes of proper record keeping. If the child is reporting in person, then the designated person receiving the report shall cause it to be

in writing, taking care to note down the specific acts of commission or omission, as well as the specific dates or the period within which the abuse occurred.

### Follow up

Once the designated officer receives a report of suspected abuse, a series of detailed sequential steps occur.

A crisis management team shall be appointed by the designated safeguarding officer to follow up on the investigation leading to closure.

### Sanction

Any breach of this child protection and safeguarding policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter. This may result in immediate termination of employment, and reporting to the police, and relevant regulatory authority or other body.

### Responsibility

Kagaki School recognizes that it is the individual and collective responsibility of every member of staff to safeguard and promote the well-being and safety of the children.

### Background Checks

Kagaki School runs background checks on all its potential employees, as part of safeguarding the children entrusted to them.

### Designated Safeguarding Officers

Designated safeguarding officers are responsible for handling reports or concerns, regarding children at risk of abuse or neglect, ongoing abuse or neglect and those who have already undergone abuse and neglect. The officers will handle such reports and concerns appropriately and in accordance with this policy. The Deputy Director will act as the lead designated safeguarding officer and will appoint other designated officers from time to time, for the purposes of handling investigations and responses to safeguarding concerns.

### Review

This policy will be subject to review after every five years, or earlier when the need arises.