

At SSLC, we have deep concern for the wholeness and wellbeing of each special needs (SN) student. We strive to provide a safe and secure environment for all.

SSLC CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

STEP BY STEP LEARNING CENTRE



Changing lives one by one, step by step.



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1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 At SSLC, we have deep concern for the wholeness and wellbeing of each special needs (SN) student. We strive to provide a safe and secure environment for all.
- 1.2 We recognize the following Tanzanian Laws and International Guidelines on Protection Policies:
 - 1.2.1 Tanzania's Law of the Child Act, Adopted in November 2009.
 - 1.2.2 Education Act, 2002.
 - 1.2.3 United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child, 1994
- 1.3 We note that a child is any person aged from conception to 18 years.
- 1.4 A Vulnerable adult is anyone who, by virtue of compromised physical or mental status is unable to protect themselves. So at SSLC, we recognize the mental age of our students, NOT the chronological age only.
- 1.5 All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin or religious beliefs have the right to protection from abuse.
- 1.6 SSLC will provide appropriate security and protection for all students within the school environment and while on trips outside school.
- 1.7 All staff will show and demonstrate exemplary behavior in order to protect themselves from false allegations of child abuse.
- 1.8 All suspicions, allegations of abuse, or actual abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

2. POLICY GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

2.1 GOOD PRACTICES

- 2.1.1 Always work in an open environment making sure that you are never alone with children in the course of your work
- 2.1.2 Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with students.
- 2.1.3 Treat students equally, with respect and without discrimination.
- 2.1.4 Give constructive comments and seek to encourage the students.
- 2.1.5 Inform and train students to know their rights.

- 2.1.6 Secure parental consent for medical treatment, travel outside school, using personal cars for students and putting confidential, private, personal and sensitive information and photos on public media.
- 2.1.7 Report any charges, or convictions relating to a crime or offence against children, including those under traditional laws.

2.2 BAD/NEVER PRACTICES

- 2.2.1 Never invite unaccompanied children into private residences unless they are at immediate risk of harm.
- 2.2.2 Avoid spending excessive time alone with a student to avoid the risk of suspicion or false accusation.
- 2.2.3 Never have a love or sexual relationship with a student.
- 2.2.4 Never have an inappropriate love or sexual relationship with a co-worker as this is a bad example to students.
- 2.2.5 Never use physical punishment/physically hit a child.
- 2.2.6 Don't use children for labour which places them at risk of injury or affects their development.

2.3 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.3.1 Always give true and accurate information about your criminal past.
- 2.3.2 Give two confidential references who can be consulted on your previous work.
- 2.3.3 Give evidence of identity: passport, driving license or voting card with photo.
- 2.3.4 Don't behave in a way that leaves you vulnerable to suspicion or false allegations.
- 2.3.5 Promise and sign to follow SSLC Child Protection Policy.

DEFINITIONS

- 2.3.6 Physical abuse** – the use of physical force against a child (including hitting, shaking, punching, kicking, burning and poisoning) that causes harm to a child.
- 2.3.7 Sexual abuse** – use of children for sexual benefit by an adult or older child or teenager, including using children in child pornography.
- 2.3.8 Emotional abuse** – verbal or other acts towards a child which can damage a child’s self-esteem or confidence.
- 2.3.9 Neglect** - the failure to provide a child (where they are in a position to do so) with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for their development and wellbeing.
- 2.3.10 Child exploitation** - using children for profit, labour, sexual benefit, or for other personal or financial advantage. Includes producing, obtaining or distributing child exploitation material
- 2.3.11 Definition of a ‘child’** - any human being up to the age of 183 .

2.4 EXAMPLES AND SIGNS OF ABUSE

- 2.4.1 Emotional:** telling a student they are stupid, worthless, unloved, valueless or a burden. It also includes persistently shaming, degrading, humiliating and belittling a student.
- Signs:** withdrawn, crying uncontrollably/inconsolably, extremely passive or aggressive, excessive fear, low self esteem, running away, substance abuse.
- 2.4.2 Neglect:** persistent lack of physical/psychological needs: food, shelter, clothing, protection and love. It also includes leaving a child alone at home, exposure to danger and denying medical treatment.
- Signs:** untreated medical conditions, frequent accident injuries, dirty/poor physical appearance, no personal hygiene, constantly hungry and tired, lost or on the streets and no extended family or social contacts.

2.4.3 Physical Abuse: hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, scalding, burning, drowning, suffocating, making them kneel on stones or sharp objects, causing harm in anyway.

Signs: recurrent injuries, wounds, unwilling to discuss or explain injuries, fear to return home and violent towards others.

2.4.4 Sexual Abuse: enticing or forcing a student to have sexual activities: sex, sexual play or pornography

Signs: nightmares; phobias or panic attacks; regression to bedwetting, thumb sucking or baby behaviors; fear of the abuser; genital itching, pain or injury; display of adult sexual behavior and attempted suicide.

2.4.5 Negative Discrimination: excluding, stigmatizing, harassment or maltreatment because of their race, ethnic origin, socio-economic status, culture, age, disability, gender, sexuality or religious beliefs.

Signs: low self esteem, poor performance, withdrawn.

2.4.6 Bullying: using rough or dirty language to a student; forcing to obey, submit or serve and repeatedly picking on a student.

Signs: fear, bullying other students, dejected and withdrawn

2.5 ACTIONS TO TAKE AGAINST ABUSE

2.5.1 Any suspicion and allegation of, or actual abuse by a staff member will be reported immediately to the Directors, who should take the appropriate action.

2.5.2 Any suspicion and allegation of, or actual abuse by a Director will be reported immediately to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors (BOD).

2.5.3 Any suspicion and allegation of, or actual abuse from home or outside school will be reported to the Baloozi, Wenyekiti, Social Welfare Office, Pastor/Priest/Sheik and the Police.

2.5.4 All persons suspected of being in violation of the SSLC Child Protection Policy Agreement can be suspended if they are under investigation and dismissed if it is found that they have breached the CP Code of Conduct.

2.5.5 In the case of proven sexual abuse, the student will be taken to the Rape Crisis Centre at Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre (ALMC) for immediate medical treatment and thereafter legal action. This should be done within 72 hours, when evidence is still available. After 72 hours you have to pay ALMC.

3 POLICY TRAINING FOR STAFF

3.1 STAFF TRAINING

3.1.1 All staff will be provided with the SSLC Child Protection Policy including an initial training course on child protection.

3.1.2 The SSLC Child Protection policy is also on the SSLC Website to provide any applicants including volunteers with a clear understanding of SSLC's approach to children and protection.

4 RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

4.1 RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

4.1.1 All staff, including international volunteers will be required to provide police clearance and criminal record checks and screening of staff and volunteers will be conducted during recruitment.

4.1.2 SSLC will not employ a person if it is found out that they are a risk to children. If any concern arises during recruitment (such as a criminal record against children), then that person would not be employed.

5 REVIEW OF SSLC CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

5.1 POLICY REVIEW

5.1.1 A policy review will take place every 5 years.

5.2 RISK IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT

5.2.1 SSLC will take the following actions to identify and lessen risk: review programs yearly and assess better ways to minimize risk of child abuse

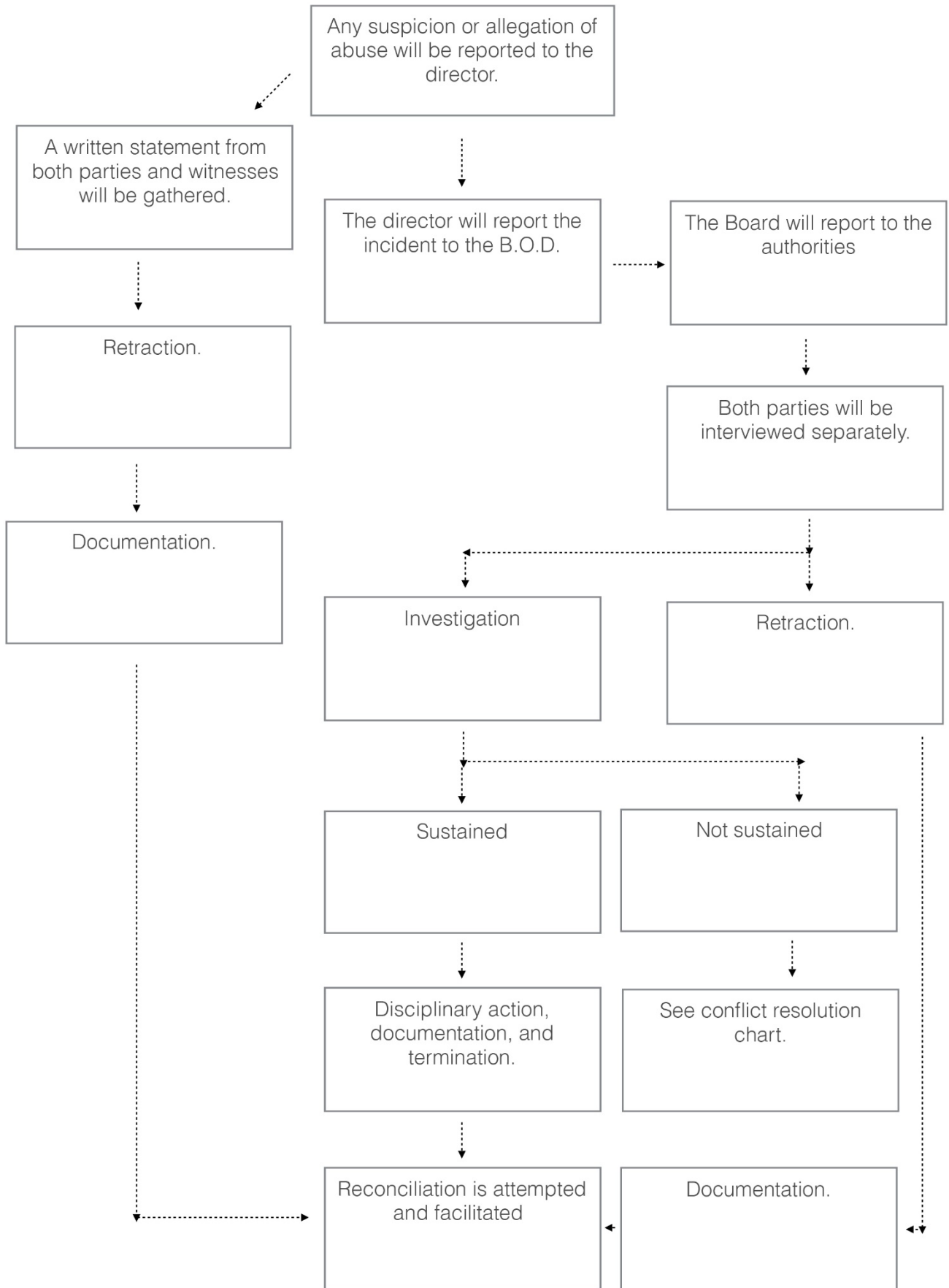
5.2.2 Review children’s development to assess whether there are any behavioral changes or causes for concern.

6 STAFF AGREEMENT

I have read the above SSLC policy. I accept to follow the guidelines. I will take responsibility for mistakes on my part.

DATE	STAFF	SIGNATURE

8. APPENDIX A: ABUSE ALLEGATION PROCEDURE



APPENDIX B: RESPONSE TO ABUSE IN THE COMMUNITY

