



Gede Forest School

Child Safeguarding & Protection Policy

Grow With Us

1. Policy Statement

Gede Forest School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. We aim to provide a safe and nurturing environment where every child feels respected, listened to, and protected.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, visitors, and anyone working on behalf of the school who has direct access to children or their data.

2. Aims and Principles

This policy and our approach aim to:

- Protect children from maltreatment, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Prevent impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensure children grow up in safe, caring environments.
- Take proactive steps to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

3. Legal Framework

Gede Forest School is committed to upholding all laws, regulations, international standards, and best practices that safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This Policy shall be guided by and implemented in accordance with the following legal instruments:

a) The Constitution of Kenya, 2010

The Constitution is the supreme law of Kenya and provides the foundation for all child protection measures.

Article 53 guarantees every child the right to a name, nationality, free and compulsory basic education, healthcare, protection from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, and all forms of violence and exploitation.

It further requires that the best interests of the child be a primary consideration in every matter concerning children.

b) The Children Act, 2022 (Kenya)

Provides the main framework for the protection and welfare of children in Kenya. It upholds the best interests of the child as a guiding principle and protects all children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and discrimination. It also guarantees children's rights to education, health, and safety within learning environments.

c) The Sexual Offences Act, 2006

Prohibits and penalizes all forms of sexual abuse, harassment, and exploitation of children. It defines offences such as defilement and indecent acts and imposes a mandatory duty to report any suspected sexual offences involving minors.

d) The Data Protection Act, 2019

Protects the privacy and personal information of individuals, including children. It requires that a child's personal data be collected and processed lawfully, with the consent of a parent or guardian, and safeguarded from unauthorized access or misuse.

e) The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989)

Affirms children's rights to survival, development, protection, and participation. It requires that all decisions and actions concerning children prioritize their best interests and ensure protection from all forms of violence, neglect, and exploitation.

f) The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990)

Reinforces regional commitments to children's rights and welfare. It emphasizes every child's right to education in a safe and supportive environment and protection from abuse, harmful practices, and exploitation.

4. Definition of Key Terms

For the purpose of this Policy:

- **Child** – means any person under the age of eighteen (18) years who is enrolled as a pupil at Gede Forest School.
- **Child Abuse** – includes all forms of physical or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, and commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to a child's health, survival, development, or dignity, within a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power.
- **Child Abuse Images** – refer to any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities, or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for sexual purposes.
- **Child Protection** – refers to the actions taken to address specific concerns that a particular child is at risk of significant harm due to contact with staff, volunteers, visitors, or anyone working on behalf of the school.
- **Child Safeguarding** – refers to the overall set of school policies, procedures, and practices designed to ensure that no child under the school's care is harmed. It aims to ensure that all individuals associated with Gede Forest School are aware of, and respond appropriately to, any risks of violence, exploitation, abuse, or neglect towards children.
- **Staff** – refers to all individuals employed by Gede Forest School, whether on a permanent, temporary, full-time, or part-time basis, including teaching and non-teaching personnel.



- **Volunteer** – refers to any individual who offers their time, skills, or services to the school without receiving financial compensation, and who may have direct or indirect contact with children.
- **Visitor** – refers to any person who enters the school premises temporarily and is not employed or formally engaged by the school, including parents, contractors, and external service providers.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** – refers to the member of staff appointed by Gede Forest School to take primary responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters. The DSL ensures that concerns are appropriately reported, records are maintained securely, and all safeguarding procedures are followed in line with this policy and legal requirements.
- **Social Media** – refers to forms of electronic communication and content used to share information publicly, including comments, messages, images, videos, and other materials distributed via social networks.

5. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) & Deputy DSL

For the purpose of this Policy, Gede Forest School has appointed **Kirsty Shaw – 0725295632** as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and **Salome Murunde (Sally) – 0726080262** (school phone) as the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL). They have overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the school and act as the main points of contact for all safeguarding concerns.

Responsibilities of the DSL and Deputy DSL include:

- Serving as the first point of contact for staff, volunteers, visitors, or anyone working on behalf of the school, parents, and pupils on all safeguarding matters.
- Receiving, recording, and responding appropriately to reports or suspicions of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Liaising with relevant authorities such as the **Children's Officers, Police**, and other child protection agencies when necessary.
- Maintaining secure and confidential records of all safeguarding concerns and actions taken.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers receive regular safeguarding training and are familiar with the policy and reporting procedures.
- Advising the school leadership on safeguarding risks and compliance with legal and policy requirements.
- Ensuring that safeguarding is embedded in all aspects of school operations, including recruitment, pupil welfare, and external partnerships.
- Acting as a point of contact for pupils who may feel unsafe or need support.

In the absence of **Kirsty Shaw, Salome Murunde (Sally)** will perform the duties of the DSL to ensure continuity of safeguarding oversight.

6. Recognizing Abuse

The staff, volunteers, and anyone working on behalf of the school shall be trained to identify possible signs of abuse, including:

- **Physical Abuse:** Bruising, unexplained injuries, fearfulness
- **Emotional Abuse:** Withdrawn behaviour, low self-esteem, developmental delays
- **Sexual Abuse:** Inappropriate knowledge, behaviour, or disclosures
- **Neglect:** Inadequate clothing, persistent hunger, poor hygiene

7. Incident Identification, Reporting, Follow-Up, and Sanctioning

The following steps shall be taken by Gede Forest School to ensure that any incidents of abuse, neglect, or safeguarding concerns are properly identified, reported, addressed, and, where appropriate, sanctioned:

- Once a member of staff, volunteer, visitor, anyone working on behalf of the school and a parent 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 DSL immediately – verbally and in writing – within 24 hours.
- Reporting shall be in written form for purposes of proper record keeping. If the child is reporting in person, then the DSL 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.
- The DSL shall then investigate the matter further, ensuring the concerns are addressed appropriately.
- Any breach of this Safeguarding Policy shall be treated as a disciplinary matter, which could lead to termination and where necessary, the DSL shall report the matter to the child protection services (via the national hotline **116** or reaching out to the Department of Children Services (DCS) Sub-County Children's Officer) or the Kenyan Police.
- All cases are to be handled with confidentiality to protect all concerned and information will be handled on a need-to-know basis only.

8. Safer Recruitment

For the purpose of this policy, Gede Forest School shall take reasonable precautionary steps to ensure all staff, volunteers, visitors, and anyone working on behalf of the school do not pose a risk to children. The school will ensure:

- All staff and volunteers are vetted through police checks and checks with chiefs from the area where the person is from, as well as two references.
- Safeguarding training is mandatory for all new hires and renewed regularly.
- Clear job descriptions are in place.
- Staff adhere to the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct, and cases where this does not happen will lead to dismissal.

9. Staff Code of Conduct

All staff, volunteers, and anyone working on behalf of Gede Forest School are expected to uphold the highest standards of professional behaviour. The Code of Conduct below sets out the principles, responsibilities, and boundaries that must be followed to ensure the safety, well-being, and dignity of every child.

- Always treat children with respect and dignity.
- Avoid being alone with a child in secluded areas.
- Maintain professional boundaries and appropriate physical contact.
- Report any inappropriate behaviour or suspicions immediately.
- Remember you are a role model and should listen, show respect and understanding for children and others.
- Bear in mind that some actions, no matter how well-intentioned, may easily be misinterpreted.
- Use appropriate language, gestures, and posture/body language.
- Respect an individual's right to privacy unless you feel they are at risk of harm.
- Do not show favouritism or get drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour.
- Do not allow or engage in suggestive remarks, gestures or touching which could be misunderstood.

- Do not do anything to undermine the reputation of Gede Forest School for providing children with a safe environment.
- Do not jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts.
- Do not develop any form of relationship with children which could in any way be deemed inappropriate or exploitative.
- Do not act in ways that may be abusive or place children at risk of abuse.
- Do not use language, make suggestions, or offer advice that is offensive or abusive.
- Refrain from engaging in physical contact or direct touching unless necessary for the well-being of the individual.
- Avoid one-on-one interactions with children whenever possible to maintain a safe and open environment.
- Do not allow children with whom you are supervising to stay overnight at your home without a parent/guardian/carer or share rooms if in outside accommodation.
- Do not condone or participate in the behaviour of children that is illegal, abusive, or unsafe.
- Always use positive behaviour management strategies and never intentionally act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, or degrade children.
- Do not undertake any other action that could compromise the rights, safety, or welfare of children.
- Do not give gifts that could be seen as a bribe or reward for inappropriate behaviour.
- Do not use corporal punishment to manage children's behaviour.
- Maintain professional boundaries with parents, caregivers and guardians as well as children.
- Participate in regular safeguarding training and keep up to date with policies and procedures.

10. Online and Digital Safety

Gede Forest School recognises that digital devices and the internet can pose risks to children's safety and wellbeing. The school has set out the measures below to ensure that pupils can use technology and online resources in a safe, responsible, and supervised manner.

- School devices and technology are to be used only under the supervision of a staff member.
- Images or videos of children may be taken only with prior parental/guardian consent and must be used in accordance with the school's safeguarding and other policies.
- Internet access is restricted, monitored, and age-appropriate for all pupils to ensure a safe online environment.
- Any online safeguarding concerns, including exposure to inappropriate content, or suspicious contact, must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

11. Outdoor and Forest Safety

The following measures have been set in place to safeguard children while learning and exploring outdoors:

- Daily safety checks are carried out in the school area to identify potential hazards.
- Children are supervised at all times.
- Safety rules are taught to all staff and children and reviewed regularly.
- Staff carry a first aid kit and the school phone in outdoor learning zones.
- All staff have up-to-date first aid training to provide immediate care when required.

12. Parental Engagement



Gede Forest School is committed to fostering open, transparent, and respectful communication with parents to support the safety and well-being of every child. The school shall therefore ensure:

- Parents shall receive a copy of this policy and revised versions as the policy is updated.
- To encourage open communication and prioritise transparency.
- Any safeguarding concerns are discussed in a sensitive, appropriate and confidential manner.

13. Record Keeping

To ensure accountability, effective follow-up, and compliance with legal and policy requirements:

- All incidents and concerns shall be documented promptly and securely.
- All safeguarding records shall be kept separately from student files to ensure confidentiality.
- Only the DSL and authorised personnel shall have access to the above records.

14. Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed annually and updated in line with laws, regulations, international standards and best practices.

Last Reviewed: 13.11.2025

Next Review Due: 12.11.2026