

# Parents handbook

## 2022/2023



**Dear parents,**

**Welcome to the Nordic School!**

**The Nordic school is a parent-run school that requires and expects involvement and commitment from both parents and teachers. It is vital that we can communicate and cooperate well with each other to make sure that all the children are thriving and developing.**

**In the Nordic School we strive to create a healthy and safe learning environment, where the values of equality, mutual respect, equity, and diversity are paramount. We believe that childhood has intrinsic value, and we have a holistic and acknowledging approach to every child to meet their individual and collective need for security, care, belongingness, and respect.**

**With this handbook we wish to share various relevant information about the school. The focus is on more practical issues, whereas the focus of our curriculum deals with the pedagogical approach and practice. Combined, the Parents Handbook and the Nordic School Curriculum will hopefully equip you with the necessary knowledge about the school and daily life.**

**We kindly ask you to carefully read through the Parents Handbook. Feel free to approach us if you have any questions, doubts, or comments. Our aim is to update the Parents Handbook in the beginning of every new school year so that the information you find in it is always up to date.**

**Kind regards,**

**The Nordic School**

### **Opening hours**

The preschool is open from Monday to Friday from 7:00 to 16:30. Until 12:00, the children are mainly divided into two groups, Kidogo and Kubwa, and do separate age-appropriate activities. After lunch, and whenever the youngest children finish their naps, the children play together outside and/or in Kubwa.

Afterschool is open from Monday to Friday from 13:30 to 16:30.

### **What to bring**

All children enrolled in the preschool should bring one piece of fruit every day, which will then be shared between the children during snack time in the morning. Furthermore, all children must bring the following items to keep at the school: Swimming costume, towel, and water wings for swimming. Also, extra clothes, sunscreen and mosquito repellent. All items should have the child's name written on it with a permanent marker. For the children in Kidogo, you must also bring diapers and wet wipes.

The children in the Afterschool group should bring a swimming suit and a towel to keep at the school for whenever they are going swimming in the pool.

### **The settling in period**

Every child is unique and so are their settling in periods. The most important part is that everyone feels comfortable and safe in the process and that the home and school work together to ensure a positive transition. The following will be a description of how a settling in period might look like at the Nordic School.

### **New in Pre-school:**

Before the first day of school, the parents and the child will usually be invited for a tour and a chance to meet the teachers, ask questions, and exchange experiences and expectations. Furthermore, parents and teachers will talk about the individual needs of the child to agree on how to begin the settling in process, ensuring that the child feels as safe as possible in the new environment.

During the first few days at school, a parent should be present together with the child – preferable the same parent all days. Your child will be assigned a primary teacher, whom they will be spending most of their initial time with. The primary teacher will also be the one welcoming your child in the morning. Depending on how your child reacts during the first days, you might stay for 30 minutes or some hours (usually longer time in Kubwa than in Kidogo). The time is agreed upon between the parents and the child's primary teacher. The most important factor for a child to feel comfortable and safe is the relationship between the parents and the teachers, since this is what the child will mirror. We therefore ask you as parents to always feel free to share your opinions, worries or questions with us for you to be able to feel confident in the settling in period as well.

When your child establishes a positive relationship to a teacher (or to another child, if the child is a bit older), you can leave for a short period of time. Remember to tell your child whenever you leave, so that your child gets the experience of being able to count on you. It is natural if your child reacts when you leave. If you wish for us to send you a message after some time to know how your child is doing, we are happy to do so, just let us know, and we will keep in touch with you.

Gradually, you can increase the time that your child is staying at the school - eventually they will get to participate during the meals, and maybe also sleep there too. Some children are ready for staying a whole day at the school after only a few days, while it might take some weeks for others, especially the younger children. It is vital that there is strong dialogue between parents and teachers, so that agreements can be made on an ongoing basis, that everyone feels comfortable with. We recommend that you remain close by the school for at least the first two weeks in Kubwa and for three weeks in Kidogo. This way you will be able to come within short notice to attend or pick-up your child.

You may experience a reaction from your child when returning from school, which is natural. Your child may be emotional, be more difficult to get in contact with or be tired and will need some extra care, closeness, and hugs during those days. Some children will mainly react during the first few days, while others do not show any reaction until after some weeks.

#### **New in Afterschool:**

Since the children in Afterschool are older, they usually do not have the need for their parents to be present during the first few days, but if you or your child will feel more comfortable, you are welcome to stay, while they settle in. We encourage you to come and visit the school for a tour and a talk together with your child prior to the child's first day, so that they can get a bit familiar with the surroundings and get the chance to ask whatever questions they might have before starting.

#### **Dropping off and picking up children**

We ask all children in the preschool to arrive before 8:30, where we start our daily program. If you are late, or if your child is sick or not coming to school for any other reason, please let us not by either calling or sending us a text.

When coming to pick up your child, remember to bring your school ID with you. To get your ID, you need to bring a passport size photo of yourself and any others that might need an ID (such as your nanny) to the office. We ask you to respect the set pick-up times (14:30/16:30 for preschool and 16:30 for afterschool). If you are running late, please call us ahead of time to let us know. Note, it is important to come in a few minutes earlier than the school closes to get a chance to talk to the teacher about your child's day.

In case your child will be picked up by another parent (if they have a play date for instance), we ask you to fill out a permission form. The forms are kept in the classrooms and can be given to you by a teacher upon request.

#### **Parent/teacher cooperation and communication**

Good cooperation and communication between parents and teachers are fundamental to foster a sense of community for the children, who must navigate between the two environments. Parents and teachers play a key role in ensuring that the children are thriving, and strong communication and well-functioning cooperation thus becomes vital.

We wish to have an open and honest relationship with all parents and encourage you to contact us whenever you have any questions, comments, or concerns. Furthermore, it is important that you make sure

to inform the teachers if something special is happening in your child's life that might affect them, such as one parent being away for a longer period, as this can help us understand any reactions your child might show.

We hold Parents Meetings in the Preschool twice per year and once per year in the Afterschool and we encourage all parents to participate. Here we will update you on the daily life at the school, how things are going in the specific groups and discuss other subjects that are relevant. We furthermore arrange Parent/Teacher conferences twice per year for all the children in Preschool, where we will discuss and exchange knowledge and experiences regarding the specific child and their well-being and development. Conferences can also be offered for the children in Afterschool upon request.

Every month, we will update you on what is going on at the school with a newsletter and calendar from both Kidogo, Kubwa and Afterschool describing what we have been doing for the past month and what the plan is going forward. You are also welcome to follow the school on Facebook and Instagram, where we give small updates from the daily life at the school.

### **Food**

In the preschool, the children are offered food three times daily. In the morning all the children will get some buns and share the fruits that they have brought from home together. For lunch, our kitchen prepares a hot meal for us following a 4-weeks menu plan. The updated menu plan is always available on our website. We take pride in offering nutritious and tasty meals and snacks that represent both Tanzanian and Nordic/Western cuisine. If you wish for your child to receive vegetarian

food, kindly let us know. In the afternoon, the preschool children receive snacks as well. This usually consists of pastry and fruits. Drinking water is available throughout the day.

The children in Afterschool receive a hot meal for late lunch every day and drinking water is available for them to take whenever they need it.

### **Transitioning within the Nordic School**

#### **Kidogo to Kubwa:**

Within preschool, we have children transitioning from Kidogo to Kubwa. This transition generally happens around the age of 3, but is determined by the evaluation of the specific child's overall readiness made by the teachers in cooperation with the parents. This evaluation is based on numerous factors such as the child's ability to participate in the daily routines, engage in social relations, follow instructions, and express themselves. It also depends on the child's ability to be self-reliant in situations such as dressing and undressing and taking initiative to go to the toilet. Since we do not have changing facilities in Kubwa, the child should no longer have the need for diapers, when going there. Besides the individual assessment, we will also look at the whole group of children in Kidogo and Kubwa and on the number of teachers available in each group too.

Before transitioning from Kidogo to Kubwa, the parents will be invited for a meeting where they get to meet the teachers and see the facilities in Kubwa, if they are not already familiar with it. There will also be a transition meeting between the teachers of the two groups to ensure that the change will happen as smooth and save as possible for the child. Around one month before the shift takes place, the child will go on visits

to Kubwa twice per week, where they will join for “samling” (circle time) and fruits in the morning to get more familiar with the slightly different routines and environment in Kubwa.

The transition between the two groups will in principle only take place twice a year – in January and in August.

### **Kubwa to Afterschool:**

Once children start primary school elsewhere, they may transition from the preschool to Afterschool. The transition process is similar to the one from Kidogo to Kubwa, where the child can go visit Afterschool a few times per week in order to get more familiar with the place and the teachers and children there. If needed, there will also be a transition meeting between the teachers of the two groups to ensure a positive transition where the child feels safe and welcome.

### **Transitioning between the Nordic School and Primary School:**

The Nordic School wants to make sure that the oldest children in preschool are as prepared as possible for when having to enter primary school. To ensure a smooth transition, children should be familiar with what will happen when they start primary school so that they can look forward to it with both excitement and motivation. Therefore, we have our “Darasa” program - preparatory classes for the oldest children in Kubwa where they are introduced to a classroom environment.

Darasa, which is the Swahili word for class, is an inspiring introduction to formal education. The teacher is focused on promoting the children’s abilities to concentrate and stay attentive with a specific task and on encouraging the children to have the confidence and self-esteem to work and solve problems independently, but also to be able to participate in

different kinds of group work with their peers. The starting point is the interest of the children and their inherent curiosity and eagerness to acquire new knowledge and competences. Children have an impressive imagination and are always ready for exploring the world around them, which we benefit from in Darasa.

With regards to academics, children are introduced to the alphabet, foundations for reading and writing and for basic mathematics and science in Nordic and English languages using a playful approach that is age appropriate. This means that they will practice a proper pencil grip, how to write different letters and numbers and simple words such as their own names, wait for one’s turn and how to feel confident in speaking in front of others among many other things. Some of the activities will be closely connected to the different themes throughout the year, while others will arise of the specific interest of the children. Ultimately, the Darasa program will help the children to look forward to starting primary school with excitement and curiosity while also helping them find closure from their preschool experience. When completing Darasa, we host a small “graduation” for the children celebrating that they are now ready to move on to the next chapter.

We are currently running our Darasa program twice per week. In cooperation with the parents, the teachers will make an individual assessment on when a child should join the group.

### **The School Board and Trustees**

The Nordic School is a parent-run organization, that is governed by a General Assembly of parents overseen by an elected Board of parents. The Nordic school is financially self-sustained.

The ordinary General Assembly is held every year in October, where all parents are invited and encouraged to participate. At the General Assembly, the members of the Board will be elected.

The Board consists of seven parents in total – five members and two alternates. They are elected for two years at the time and eligible for re-election twice. All parents of the Nordic School are eligible for election to the Board.

The Nordic School also has three trustees, who are elected by the Board. The trustees hold office for five years at the time and are eligible for re-election. A trustee must be a resident of Tanzania and adhere to the rules governing the Board of Trustees.

An updated list of the members of the Board and the trustees of the school is always available on the school's website.

### **Illness and accidents**

Infections and bacteria spreads very quickly in a preschool setting. We therefore ask you all to wash your hands by the washing station before entering the school premises. The child's general condition determines when he/she may return to school after falling sick. However, the child should have been without symptoms like fever, vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours and should be able to comfortably participate in school activities that may also include outdoor activities. A day at home after being sick helps the child to fully recover and can help prevent that the child falls sick immediately after again.

If your child shows any signs of sickness when at school, and/or the general condition is affected, you will be contacted by a teacher and requested to pick up your child. The child should stay home until fully

recovered, and depending on the disease in question, relevant physician consultation should take place. The school does not administer any medication to children.

If your child gets injured while at the school, you will be contacted immediately and if necessary, a teacher will take your child to the IST Clinic if immediate medical attention is needed. The expenses for medical treatment received at the IST Clinic will not be covered by the school.

The spread of diseases in groups of children cannot be completely avoided. For some infections, the infected child may not have any symptoms, but the infection can still be transmitted to other children in the group. No individual is at "fault" when there are infections present, but we all have a responsibility to be vigilant and when parents and teachers have knowledge about the common infectious diseases and how they are transmitted, it is possible to prevent unnecessary spread. Below we have included some of the more common infections among children and when they can return to school:

#### Diarrhea and/or vomiting:

Your child should stay at home until he/she is eating normally and drinking well and has not vomited or had water-thin diarrhea for a minimum of 24 hours.

#### Fever:

Children's normal temperature varies and can be affected by how active the child is. However, a temperature of 38.0 degrees or above is fever and can be a symptom of infection. Your child should stay at home and be fever-free for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication) before returning to school. It is equally important that your child's general condition is also good before returning to school.

Colds:

The general condition of your child may determine whether the child should be at home or not. To return to the group of children, the child must be able to participate in activities.

Sore throat:

In case of streptococcal infections, your child should stay at home for at least one day with treatment. The child's general condition determines when he/she can return to school.

Influenza:

Your child should stay at home and be fever-free for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication) before returning to school. It is equally important that your child's general condition is also good before returning to school.

COVID-19:

Your child should stay home until 48 hours without any symptoms.

Head lice:

Check your child for head lice regularly. If infected, your child can return to school after receiving treatment. Remember to do follow-up checks to make sure that all the lice are gone and to inform the school, if your child is infected.

Chickenpox:

If your child gets chickenpox, he/she must stay at home until all sores are dry and scabs have formed, and the general condition is good.

Eye infection:

Eye infections are common among children and can have several causes.

Your child should stay at home in case of acute inflammation with redness and light sensitivity.

Ear infection:

Ear infections are common among children and are usually not contagious. Your child can return to school, whenever the general condition is good.

**The Administration Office**

The Administration Office at Nordic School is open from Monday to Friday from 8:00-16:00. You are always welcome to stop by or contact us to arrange a meeting.

You can also reach the administration through e-mail:

Director: [mail@nordicschool.net](mailto:mail@nordicschool.net)

Head of Administration/Accountant: [administration@nordicschool.net](mailto:administration@nordicschool.net)

Head of Education: [nordicschoolheadmaster@gmail.com](mailto:nordicschoolheadmaster@gmail.com)

**Telephone numbers:**

Office: 0777 007 160

Kidogo: 0777 000 028

Kubwa: 0777 000 182

Afterschool: 0777 000 058

**The Nordic Sports Club**

As a parent at the Nordic School, you will be offered a family membership to the Nordic Sports Club at the price of 150 USD yearly. If you are a

member, you can use the school's sports facilities outside the school's opening hours. This also include the playground.

All members will receive a membership card, which must be presented to the security guards when entering the school premises. If you have any further questions regarding the Nordic Sports Club, please contact the administration.

### **Use of the Nordic School's premises**

It is possible for parents of the Nordic School to rent the school's premises and facilities for smaller or bigger events such as birthday parties. The playground, swimming pool, tennis court and Aula can all be rented. Please contact the administration for availability and prices.

### **The Nordic House**

Adjacent to the school's premises is The Nordic House. The house has rooms for rent to teachers or other people in need of housing in Dar es Salaam, for longer or short periods of time. Please contact the administration for availability.

### **The Nordic School Library**

The Nordic School Library is situated in our Afterschool. We have books in all Nordic languages as well as in English for both younger and older children. The preschool children visit the library once per week, where the children get the opportunity to borrow a book and bring with them home. The children in Afterschool can visit the library whenever they have free time in their schedule.

Every school year, a parent volunteer will be responsible for the library and organize a sign-up sheet where other parents can sign up for reading

for the children in a language of their choice. The children love having someone else than their teachers coming in to tell a story or read for them, so we really appreciate parents signing up whenever possible.

### **Donations**

In case you have any children's books or toys at home that you no longer need, we are always happy to receive it. We are especially happy to receive books or toys that can activate more children at the time such as board games, puzzles, or cars. In case we receive a donation that we do not need in the school, we make sure that it is passed on to someone else.

We are also always happy to receive materials that we can use for some of our many arts and crafts projects such as empty toilet rolls, glass jars or cardboard boxes.

### **Supplementary classes in Swedish**

The Nordic School receives grants from the Swedish National Agency for Education for conducting supplementary classes in Swedish for Swedish children living in Tanzania. To receive a grant for a child, the child needs to be between 6-20 years of age, have at least one parent/guardian who is a Swedish citizen, and the language must be spoken daily at home.

The supplementary classes in Swedish are free of charge for the children and it is also open for children, who do not otherwise attend the Nordic School. It is required to have at least five pupils in total to be eligible for state grant. The Nordic School strives to admit all Swedish children who apply and fulfill the requirements for participating.

NORDIC SCHOOL TANZANIA | 2022-2023 CALENDAR

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School Holidays	Professional Development Days	5	Days in Term 1	89
Teacher Pedagogical Development	Public Holidays	10	Days in Term 2	102
Public Holidays	Optional Extra Days	28	Total School Days Involved	191

\*Depending on teacher availability/confirmed registrations from parents. Additional charges will apply.

### School calendar

The school calendar might change slightly throughout the year. If this is the case, we will always orientate the parents. An updated version of the school calendar is always available on the school website.

### Admission

According to the Agreement between Sweden and Tanzania<sup>1</sup>, Sweden has permission to, directly or through an agent, establish and run schools in Tanzania for Swedish personnel. Sweden also has permission to admit other expatriates to the school. This means that the Nordic School can enroll children if at least one of their parents is an expat.

If at least one of the child's parents (or guardians) is a citizen of Sweden or any other Nordic country, the Director is authorized to decide on admission of the child depending on availability. If not, the family must write a message to the Board describing the family's connection to the Nordic region (if any) and/or why they wish for their child to attend the Nordic School. The board then decides on a case-by-case basis, whether the child can be admitted or not. When taking this decision, the board needs to take different factors into account such as the number of children already enrolled, available staff resources and if the family supports the Nordic principles and pedagogy and our approach to child-centered education. The family must be able to communicate in English too.

<sup>1</sup> Agreement between the Government of Sweden and the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania on general terms and conditions for development cooperation dated 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2005

In our preschool, we welcome children aged 1 to 6 – from 1 year to approximately 3 years of age, the children will be in Kidogo, and from approximately 3 to 6 years, the children will be in Kubwa. Before starting Kidogo, we expect the children to be able to eat mainly independently, either by using a spoon or their hands - it is okay, if it is messy. To be enrolled in Kubwa, you need to be free of diapers.

In our afterschool, we welcome children aged 5,5 to 12 years. The children must have started primary school.

The teacher/child ratio is 1 teacher per 3 children in Kidogo, 1 teacher per 5 children in Kubwa and 1 teacher per 12 children in afterschool. Besides the last 30 minutes of the day there will always be minimum two teachers present with each group.

### Fee schedule and payment policy

#### Preschool fees

Preschool	Annual Fee	1 <sup>st</sup> Term (Aug-Dec)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term (Jan-Jun)
07:00 – 14:30	11,248	5,242	6,006

Additional Preschool hours	Annual Fee	1 <sup>st</sup> Term (Aug-Dec)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term (Jan-Jun)
14:30 – 16:30	3,000	1,397	1,603

#### Afterschool fees

Full-time (5 days weekly)	Annual Fee	1 <sup>st</sup> Term (Aug-Dec)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term (Jan-Jun)
13:30 – 16:30	3,254	1,516	1,738

Part-time (3 days weekly)	Annual Fee	1 <sup>st</sup> Term (Aug-Dec)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term (Jan-Jun)
13:30 – 16:30	1,995	930	1,066

#### Other fees

Capital Fee for Preschool or Full-time Afterschool	500
Capital Fee for Part-time Afterschool	300
Annual Nordic Sports Club Parents Family Membership Fee	150

*Annual Fee* – An annual fee shall be paid for each child for each year enrolled at the school. Annual fees vary according to the number of hours a child is attending school and depending on the school service the child is enrolled in. The annual fee covers all operating costs including educational materials, extra-curricular activities, snacks, and a warm lunch. A child starting school after the school year has commenced will be invoiced on a pro rata basis. Fees shall be invoiced fully for a whole term regardless of the days the child has attended school.

*Capital Fee* – The capital fee is a one-off payment that is non-refundable and non-transferable. It is to be paid in addition to the annual fee and collected as a contribution from parents to cover the school’s capital expenditure for larger renovations, upgrades, or future extensions. The capital fee is to be paid together with the first annual fee instalment irrespective of the payment plan selected by the parent.

Annual Nordic Sports Club Fee - The annual Nordic Sports Club fee is optional; it is non-refundable and non-transferable once paid. It is collected as an optional contribution from parents to cover the sports facilities upkeep and gives access to parents and all their children to use the swimming pool, football field and tennis court throughout the year.

#### **Guidelines and Terms for Payment of Fees and Refunds**

1. Fees are based in US Dollars and are subject to change on an annual basis corresponding to inflation.
2. Fees are to be paid either in full, for the whole school year, or per term (there are two terms in a school year) unless other arrangements are approved by the school Management.
3. Fees are due by the dates indicated on the invoice unless other arrangements are approved by the school Management.
4. Minimum 3 months should be paid.
5. All fees are paid in advance.
6. Fee payments are to be done by direct transfer or cash/cheque deposit into the school US Dollar account (as indicated on all invoices).
7. Please provide the child’s name as a reference on all payments being directly made to the school account.
8. Please note that the school is NOT responsible for bank transfer charges or commissions. If these are incurred by the school for incoming transfers/wires, the school will debit parents concerned.
9. Parents are requested to contact the school bank directly to make payments in any other currency outside US Dollars. The bank will convert the currency into US Dollars at their internal rates prevailing on the day the payment is credited into the school’s account.
10. Refunds shall be made only after submitting a written notification for withdrawal from the school 8 weeks before the commencement of the new term. No refunds will apply for partial completion of a term nor capital portion of the fees. Refunds will be calculated based on school days and shall apply to annual fees only and made by bank transfer only. The school does not take responsibility for bank charges.
11. The school reserves the right to deny entry to children in arrears of fees.
12. A child enrolled at the Nordic School, belongs to one of the following categories, depending on who pays the fees: Private or Employer. Families that receive little or no support/subsidy by their employer for school fees are discounted. Private Rate: In cases where parents/guardians personally pay for more than 50% of the total fees, the student is considered to belong to the category Private Rate. Private Rate receives maximum 20% discount on the term fees. Employer Rate: In cases where employers pay at least 50% (or more) of the total fees, the student is considered to belong to the category Employer Rate. This category is not discounted.