

TOP NOTCH YOUNG MINDS EMPOWERMENT FOUNDATION



Safeguarding Policy

Policy Number: TNYMEF/SP/2026/02

Effective Date: June 2026

Review Date: June 2027

Approved By: Executive Committee

Policy Owner: Board Secretary & Safeguarding Officer

1. Introduction

Top Notch Young Minds Empowerment Foundation (TNYMEF) is committed to creating a safe and protective environment for all children, young people, and vulnerable adults participating in our programs and activities.

This Safeguarding Policy outlines our commitment to preventing and responding to harm, abuse, and exploitation. It applies to everyone who works with or on behalf of the Foundation, and it is binding on all staff, volunteers, partners, and stakeholders.

2. Policy Statement

We recognise that children, young people, and vulnerable adults have the right to be protected from harm, abuse, and exploitation.

We are committed to ensuring that our programs and activities are designed and implemented with the utmost care, so as to prevent harm and ensure the wellbeing of all participants.

We have **zero tolerance** for harm, abuse, and exploitation. Any breach of this policy will be treated as a serious matter and may result in disciplinary action, termination of engagement, and referral to the relevant authorities.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, whether full-time or part-time
- All volunteers, interns, and students on placement
- All partners, contractors, and consultants
- All stakeholders, including donors, sponsors, and supporters
- All Executive Committee members

This policy applies to all Foundation activities, including direct work with children, home visits, school-based programs, online communications, fundraising, and any other activity conducted in the name of the Foundation.

4. Definitions

Word	Definition
Child :	Any person under the age of 18 years, in accordance with the Ugandan Constitution and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
Young person :	Any person aged 18 to 24 years.
Vulnerable adult :	Any person aged 18 years or above who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness, is unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.
Safeguarding :	The action taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and protect them from harm.
Harm :	Physical, emotional, sexual, or psychological injury or damage.
Abuse :	Any action that intentionally or unintentionally causes harm to a child or vulnerable adult.
Exploitation :	The use of a child or vulnerable adult for another person's advantage, profit, or gratification.
Safeguarding concern :	Any suspicion, allegation, or disclosure of harm, abuse, or exploitation.

5. Safeguarding Principles

Our Safeguarding Policy is guided by the following principles:

5.1 Child-Centred Approach

We prioritise the needs and wellbeing of children, young people, and vulnerable adults. The best interests of the child are paramount in all decisions and actions.

5.2 Zero Tolerance

We have zero tolerance for harm, abuse, and exploitation. No form of harm is acceptable, and no one is exempt from this policy.

5.3 Prevention

We take proactive measures to prevent harm, abuse, and exploitation before they occur, through training, awareness, risk assessment, and safe recruitment.

5.4 Reporting and Response

We have clear procedures for reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns. All concerns will be taken seriously, treated confidentially, and acted upon promptly.

5.5 Partnership and Collaboration

We work with partners, stakeholders, and authorities to ensure effective safeguarding practices.

5.6 Accountability

We are accountable to the children and communities we serve, to our partners and donors, and to the relevant authorities.

5.7 Non-Discrimination

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, or any other characteristic. All children and vulnerable adults have equal right to protection.

6. Safeguarding Procedures

6.1 Recruitment and Selection

We conduct thorough background checks, interviews, and reference checks for all staff and volunteers.

For all roles:

- Application form with declaration of any criminal convictions
- Two references (professional and personal)
- Identity verification
- Interview by at least two people

For roles involving direct contact with children:

- Criminal record check (where available)
- Verification of qualifications
- Safeguarding self-declaration form
- Signed acknowledgement of the Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct

6.2 Training and Capacity Building

We provide regular training and capacity building programs for staff and volunteers on safeguarding policies and procedures.

Induction training (before starting work):

- Overview of the Safeguarding Policy
- Code of Conduct
- How to recognise and report concerns
- Signs of abuse and exploitation

Refresher training (annually):

- Updates to policy and procedures
- Case studies and lessons learned
- Reporting and response procedures

6.3 Risk Assessment and Management

We conduct regular risk assessments and develop mitigation strategies to prevent harm, abuse, and exploitation. These risk assessments cover:

- Physical environment (safety of venues, transport, home visits)
- Activities (workshops, sports, community outreach)
- Interactions (staff-to-child, volunteer-to-child, child-to-child)
- Communications (social media, photography, data protection)
- Partnerships (due diligence on partners and contractors)

6.4 Reporting and Response

We have established clear procedures for reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns, including incidents of harm, abuse, and exploitation. All staff, volunteers, and partners are required to report any safeguarding concern immediately.

Reporting procedure:

1. **Recognise:** Be alert to signs of harm, abuse, or exploitation.

2. **Respond:** If a child discloses harm, listen calmly, do not promise confidentiality, and reassure them they have done the right thing.
3. **Record:** Write down what was said or observed as soon as possible, using the person's own words.
4. **Report:** Report immediately to the Safeguarding Focal Point.
5. **Refer:** The Safeguarding Focal Point will assess the concern and refer to the relevant authorities if necessary.

Designated Safeguarding Focal Point:

- **Name:** Naigaga Suzan
- **Position:** Board Secretary & Safeguarding Officer
- **Email:** safeguarding@tnymef.com
- **Phone:** +256 713 887 426

Alternative contact (if the Focal Point is unavailable):

- **Name:** Matege Yusuf
- **Position:** Chairperson & Executive Director
- **Email:** chair@tnymef.com
- **Phone:** +256 702 351 442

6.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

We regularly monitor and evaluate our safeguarding practices to ensure effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.

Monitoring activities:

- Review of incident reports and trends
- Feedback from children, families, and staff
- Safeguarding audits and spot checks
- Annual review of the Safeguarding Policy

7. Code of Conduct

All staff, volunteers, partners, and stakeholders are required to comply with the following Code of Conduct:

7.1 Do

- Treat all children and vulnerable adults with respect and dignity
- Listen to children and take their views seriously
- Work in an open and transparent manner
- Be aware of your own behaviour and how it may be perceived

- Report any safeguarding concern immediately
- Follow the Foundation's policies and procedures

7.2 Do Not

- Do not hit, push, shake, or physically assault a child or vulnerable adult
- Do not engage in any form of sexual activity with a child or vulnerable adult
- Do not develop inappropriate relationships with children or vulnerable adults
- Do not use language that is abusive, discriminatory, or sexually suggestive
- Do not take photographs or videos of children without consent
- Do not share personal contact details with children or vulnerable adults
- Do not meet a child alone in a private place
- Do not do things of a personal nature for a child that they can do for themselves
- Do not ignore or dismiss a safeguarding concern

8. Safeguarding Incident Register

The Foundation maintains a Safeguarding Incident Register to record all safeguarding concerns, allegations, and incidents.

The register includes:

Field	Description
Incident ID	Unique reference number
Date of incident	When the incident occurred
Date reported	When the incident was reported
Reported by	Name and role of person reporting
Nature of concern	Category (physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, exploitation, other)
Description	Brief factual description
Action taken	Steps taken in response
Referred to	Authorities or external agencies (if applicable)
Outcome	Resolution or ongoing status
Date closed	When the case was closed

The register is kept securely and confidentially by the Safeguarding Focal Point and is reviewed by the Executive Committee annually.

9. Safeguarding Risk Register

The Foundation maintains a Safeguarding Risk Register to identify and manage risks.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Harm to a child by a staff member or volunteer	Low	High	Safe recruitment, training, Code of Conduct, supervision
Harm to a child by another child	Medium	Medium	Supervision, positive behaviour management
Harm to a child during home visits	Low	High	Home visit protocol, two-adult rule, risk assessment
Harm to a child during transport	Low	High	Approved transport providers, supervision
Inappropriate use of images	Medium	Medium	Consent policy, image guidelines
Breach of confidentiality	Low	Medium	Data protection policy, training
Failure to report a concern	Medium	High	Training, clear reporting procedure, accountability

10. Consent and Data Protection

10.1 Consent for Photography and Storytelling

The Foundation will not publish or share identifiable images or stories of children without written consent from a parent or guardian.

Consent covers:

- Photographs and videos
- Use in reports, websites, and social media
- Use in fundraising materials
- Use in presentations and conferences

Consent forms include:

- Name of child
- Name of parent or guardian
- Signature and date
- Description of how the image or story will be used
- Right to withdraw consent at any time

10.2 Data Protection

All personal information about children, families, and staff is treated as confidential and stored securely.

Data protection principles:

- Data is collected only for legitimate purposes
- Data is accurate and up to date
- Data is stored securely and access is restricted
- Data is not shared with third parties without consent, except where required by law
- Data is retained only as long as necessary

11. Whistleblowing

The Foundation has a separate Whistleblowing Policy that outlines procedures for reporting wrongdoing, including safeguarding concerns.

Key principles:

- Any person who reports a concern in good faith is protected from retaliation
- Reports are treated confidentially
- Concerns are investigated promptly and fairly
- The identity of the reporter is protected unless disclosure is required by law

12. Review and Update

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually or as necessary.

Review process:

- The Safeguarding Focal Point prepares a review report
- The Executive Committee reviews the report and any proposed changes
- The policy is updated and re-approved

- All staff and volunteers are informed of changes
- Training is updated accordingly

13. Approval

This policy was approved by:

Name: Matege Yusuf

Position: Chairperson & Executive Director

Signature: 

Date: 10 June 2026

Name: Naigaga Suzan

Position: Board Secretary & Safeguarding Officer

Signature: 

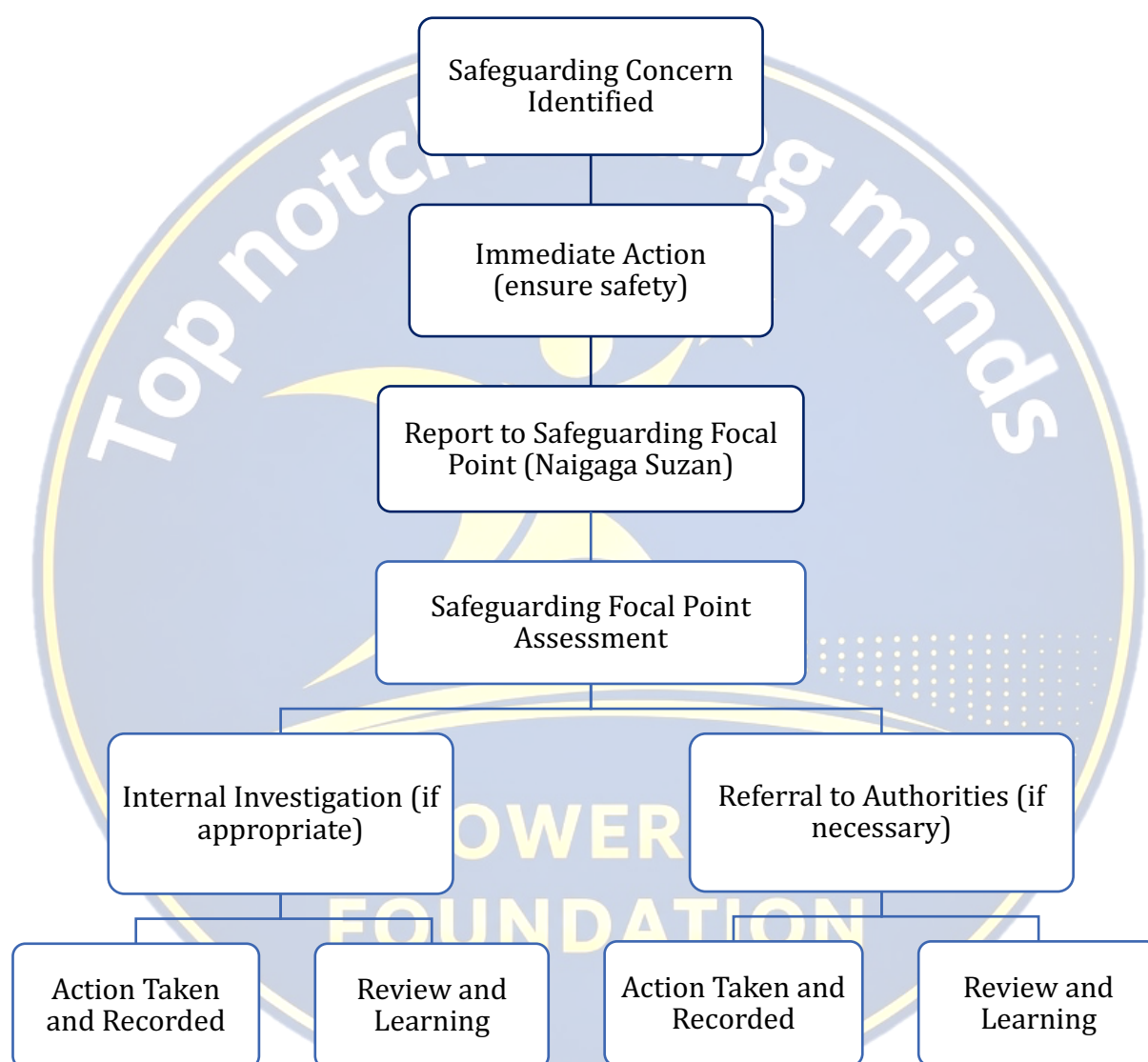
Date: 10 June 2026

Official Stamp/Seal:



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ANNEX A: REPORTING FLOWCHART



ANNEX B: SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Field	Details
Incident ID	
Date of incident	
Date reported	
Reported by	
Role of reporter	
Child/vulnerable adult involved	
Nature of concern	☐ Physical ☐ Emotional ☐ Sexual ☐ Neglect ☐ Exploitation ☐ Other
Description of incident	
Action taken	
Referred to	
Outcome	
Date closed	
Signature (Safeguarding Focal Point)	
Signature of Chairperson	

ANNEX C: PHOTOGRAPHY & STORYTELLING CONSENT FORM

Top Notch Young Minds Empowerment Foundation

Consent for Photography and Storytelling

I, _____ (parent/guardian), give permission for my child, _____, to be photographed or filmed, and for their story to be shared by Top Notch Young Minds Empowerment Foundation.

I understand that:

- The images and stories may be used in reports, websites, social media, and fundraising materials.
- My child's name may or may not be used, as I indicate below.
- I can withdraw my consent at any time by contacting the Foundation.
- The Foundation will not use the images or stories in any way that is undignified or harmful.

Please tick as applicable:

- ☐ I give permission for my child's **image** to be used.
- ☐ I give permission for my child's **story** to be used.
- ☐ I give permission for my child's **first name** to be used.
- ☐ I give permission for my child's **full name** to be used.
- ☐ I prefer my child to remain **anonymous**.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

ANNEX D: SAFEGUARDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Top Notch Young Minds Empowerment Foundation

Safeguarding Acknowledgement

I, _____, acknowledge that:

1. I have read and understood the Safeguarding Policy of Top Notch Young Minds Empowerment Foundation.
2. I have read and understood the Code of Conduct.
3. I agree to comply with the Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct at all times.
4. I understand that any breach of the Safeguarding Policy may result in disciplinary action, termination of engagement, and referral to the relevant authorities.
5. I understand that I have a duty to report any safeguarding concern immediately to the Safeguarding Focal Point.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Role: _____

Date: _____

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