



ISLAMIC CHARITY FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE  
ICFESW

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**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

*Ensuring the safety, dignity and best interests of every child in ICFESW programmes*

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## 1. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

ICFESW is unconditionally committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children under 18 years of age who come into contact with our organisation, whether as beneficiaries, family members of beneficiaries, participants in activities, or as part of the communities we serve. No child shall be subject to harm, abuse, exploitation or neglect as a result of ICFESW activities.

*The best interests of the child are the primary consideration in all decisions and actions taken by ICFESW.*

## 2. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This policy applies to all ICFESW staff, volunteers, board members, consultants and partners. It applies in all contexts of ICFESW work at the orphanage (Orphelinat Oasis du Sahel), in schools and vocational training centres, in community outreach, during humanitarian response, and in all media and communication activities involving children.

## 3. KEY PRINCIPLES

- Non-discrimination: every child has equal protection regardless of gender, origin, religion, disability or status.
- Best interests of the child: all actions affecting children are assessed for their impact on the child's wellbeing.
- Right to survival and development: ICFESW supports the holistic development of children in all its programmes.
- Participation: children's views are taken into account in ways appropriate to their age and maturity.
- Do No Harm: ICFESW programmes shall not, intentionally or unintentionally, expose children to additional risk.

## 4. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

*Any violation of this policy is a serious misconduct. Depending on its severity, it may result in immediate dismissal and referral to the relevant authorities.*

No ICFESW-associated person may:

- Engage in any sexual act, relationship or behaviour with a child.
- Physically assault, humiliate or use corporal punishment on a child.
- Use language that is demeaning, threatening or harmful towards a child.
- Be alone with a child in an unsupervised setting.
- Photograph, film or record a child without written parental/guardian consent.
- Share images, videos or identifying information about a child without consent.
- Exchange money, goods or services with a child in an exploitative manner.
- Condone or ignore child abuse, exploitation or neglect by others.

## 5. SAFE CONDUCT STANDARDS

### 5.1 Physical Contact

- Physical contact with children is limited to what is necessary, appropriate and in the child's best interest (e.g., helping a young child to walk, first aid).
- All physical interaction with children occurs in open, visible settings.
- Children's physical boundaries are respected at all times.

### 5.2 Communication with Children

- Communication with children is professional, age-appropriate and in the presence of others where possible.
- No ICFESW-associated person shall communicate privately with a child via social media, messaging applications or telephone without parental consent.

### 5.3 Photography and Media

- Photographs or videos of children require signed consent from a parent, legal guardian or authorised caregiver.
- Images used in ICFESW communications are respectful of children's dignity and do not expose identifying information.
- No image shall portray a child in a manner that could be construed as exploitative or degrading.

## 6. RECOGNISING ABUSE

Type of Abuse	Signs to Watch For
Physical	Unexplained injuries, bruising, burns; flinching or withdrawal from adults; reluctance to go home.
Emotional	Sudden changes in behaviour; low self-esteem; extreme anxiety; delayed development.
Sexual	Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge; unexplained physical symptoms; withdrawal; fear of particular individuals.
Neglect	Poor hygiene; persistent hunger; inadequate clothing; unsupervised; chronic absenteeism.
Exploitation	Child working excessively; signs of trafficking; forced marriage; restricted movement.

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## 7. REPORTING PROCEDURE

1. If a child discloses abuse or you observe or suspect abuse, remain calm and listen without judgement.
2. Do not promise confidentiality and explain that you may need to share the information to keep the child safe.
3. Document what was said or observed (using the child's own words where possible).
4. Report immediately to the ICFESW Safeguarding Focal Point within the same working day.
5. Do not investigate independently, confront the alleged perpetrator, or share information beyond the Focal Point.
6. If the child is in immediate danger, contact local authorities (police, social services) first.

*Reports can be made confidentially to the Safeguarding Focal Point at [contact@icfesw.cm](mailto:contact@icfesw.cm).  
Anonymous reporting is also accepted.*

## 8. SPECIFIC OBLIGATIONS — ICFESW ORPHANAGE

Given the residential nature of the Orphelinat Oasis du Sahel, additional standards apply:

- All resident staff must undergo enhanced background checks including police clearance.
- Dormitories are single-sex and staff do not sleep in children's quarters.
- Children have access to a private, confidential space to raise concerns.
- Regular independent monitoring visits are conducted at least quarterly.
- Children's guardians or designated contacts are informed of any safeguarding incident.

## 9. TRAINING

- All staff and volunteers working directly with children complete child protection training before starting work.
- Annual refresher training is mandatory.
- The Safeguarding Focal Point receives specialised child protection training.

## 10. REVIEW

This policy is reviewed annually by the Bureau Exécutif or following any significant child protection incident. All updates are communicated to staff, volunteers and partners.