

Child Safeguarding Statement for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ireland

Statement of Intent

The Seventh-day Adventist Church places great importance upon family life. In line with our world church position statement¹ we affirm the dignity and worth of each human being and decry all forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and domestic abuse. The Church recognises the global extent of this problem and the serious long-term effects upon the lives of all involved. We therefore believe that Seventh-day Adventists must respond to abuse and domestic abuse within both the church and the community. We believe that to remain indifferent and unresponsive is to condone, perpetuate and potentially extend such behaviour.

As a religious organisation whose primary purpose is the advancement of religious belief, we provide an array of services to the community including opportunities for worship, social gatherings, educational instruction and recreation. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ireland acknowledges its duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and is committed to ensuring our safeguarding practices reflect statutory responsibilities, Government guidance, and comply with best practice and Seventh-day Adventist Church requirements.

The Church recognises that the welfare and interests of children and vulnerable adults are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community, all children and vulnerable adults have a positive and enjoyable experience of Church life in a safe environment and are protected from abuse whilst taking part in any Church activities.

Our Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with the requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017), and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.

In addition to our Safeguarding Statement, more comprehensive documentation entitled, "Keeping Our Church Family Safe (KCFS)", sets out the local and national church's guidelines relating to safeguarding. It also provides full procedures to be followed in order to reduce, to the minimum, the risk of abuse to children and vulnerable adults we have contact with through our paid and voluntary activities.

Risk Assessment

The table below sets out the risks to the safety of children involved in Church activities and the steps taken to minimise the risks of abuse.

¹ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists' position statement on abuse and family violence (1995)

<i>Risk identified</i>	<i>Policies/Procedures in place to manage risk</i>
Harm ² or risk of harm ² of a child by church personnel or visitors to church premises.	Procedures for Choosing the Right Staff; Managing Staff, Church Members and Volunteers; as outlined in Keeping our Church Family Safe.
Harm ² or risk of harm ² of a child by another child during activities	Procedures for Working Safely; Procedures for Online and Digital Safety; Health & Safety Policy
Harm ² or risk of harm ² of a child during online activities	Procedures for Online and Digital Safety
Church personnel fail to recognise harm ² or risk of harm ²	Procedures for Code of Conduct; Safeguarding Training
Church personnel fail to report harm ² or risk of harm ²	Procedures for Responding to Concerns; Management of Workers
Failure to provide information, instruction and/or training to personnel	Safeguarding Training
Failure to observe Keeping Church Family Safe and legislative requirements	Procedures for Code of Conduct

In addition to our risk assessment, KCFS includes the following procedures in supporting our intention to safeguard children or vulnerable adults while they are availing of our services:

- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers
- Procedure for provision of and access to safeguarding training and information including the identification of the occurrence of harm
- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers / volunteers
- Procedure for the reporting of safeguarding or welfare concerns to Tusla
- Procedure for maintaining a list of persons who are Mandated Persons.
- Procedures for the appointing of a Relevant Person.

All procedures are available on request.

As part of our safeguarding policy we will:

- Promote and prioritise the safety and well-being of children
- Ensure all volunteers and staff members understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and are provided with appropriate education to recognise, identify and respond to sign of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and vulnerable adults.

² 'harm', as defined by section 2 of the Children First Act 2015

- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and that support is provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern.
- Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ireland recognises that the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults in our care is the responsibility of all volunteers and staff, and we encourage all to play their part in ensuring that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ireland remains a safe place for all.

Implementation & Review

We recognise that the implementation of a robust safeguarding policy is an ongoing process. We are committed to the implementation of this Safeguarding Statement and all aspects of Keeping our Church Family Safe.

This statement has been published on the safeguarding website for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ireland and is readily accessible to any person upon request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla if requested.

This Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed by the 30th June 2023 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

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Relevant person: Pastor Adam Keough

To contact the Relevant Person please call 089 2111 507 or email safeguarding@adventist.ie

Name: Adam Keough

Position: Relevant Person (DLP) for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ireland

Signed:



Date: 6th July 2022