

Seventh-day Adventist Schools (WA) Ltd

Child Protection Policy

1 Rationale

Seventh-day Adventist Schools (WA) Ltd, trading as Adventist Christian Schools Western Australia (ACSWA), and its schools is committed to protecting and making provision for the safety of children. Child protection is based on the understanding that each person is created in the image of God and is precious in His sight. Further to this God has a plan for each child to develop in such a way to reach his or her full potential. This can be achieved by creating a loving nurturing Christian environment established by significant adults who understand God's ideal for wholesome relationships that allows a child to flourish within a community empowered by selfless service to each other and the children. There is a Biblical imperative to ensure that children are treated with care and respect as modelled by Jesus Christ (Matthew 18:6; 19:14).

All children have a right to feel and be emotionally and physically safe. As school staff, we have a legal and moral responsibility to respond to serious incidences involving abuse and neglect of the children with whom we have contact, and to report instances that we believe involve physical abuse or neglect. Children can't properly develop and flourish without being in an environment free of abuse and anxiety. It is recognised that Child Protection is a community responsibility.

The safety, protection and well-being of all students is of fundamental importance to the School. All employees, contractors, and volunteers have a range of different obligations relating to the safety, protection and welfare of students including:

1. a duty of care to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm to students;
2. obligations under child protection legislation; and
3. obligations under work health and safety legislation.

2 Aims

This policy aims to:

1. ensure that children's rights to be safe are maintained and each child is protected against abuse and neglect.

2. summarise the obligations imposed by child protection legislation on the School and on employees, contractors and volunteers on ACSWA and its schools and to provide guidelines as to how the School will deal with certain matters.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all staff, contractors, volunteers, education practicum students, students and other stakeholders at schools operated by ACSWA and covers information about reporting allegations of:

1. inappropriate behaviour by a staff member causing harm to a child or group of children;
2. harm or suspected harm of a student by any other person.

4 Responsibility

To the ACSWA governing body, Adventist Christian Schools Board of Directors (ACSBOD).

5 Point of Contact

Director of Education or Principal and approved authority.

6 Definitions

Term	Definition
Adventist Christian Schools Western Australia (ACSWA)	The trading name for Seventh-day Adventist Schools (Western Australia) Ltd.
Adventist Christian Schools Board of Directors (ACSBOD)	The Governing Body of Adventist Christian Schools Western Australia.
Adventist Schools Australia (ASA)	The Education Department of the Australian Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists Church. This Department provides strategic direction and support to the Schools' Companies across Australia.
AdSAFE Ltd	The child protection service for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific Division established to implement prevention strategies to mitigate against the risk of sexual and physical abuse against children and vulnerable persons within its churches and affiliated entities.
Director of Education	Executive Director or delegate

Term	Definition
Mandatory Reporter	Teachers, Boarding Supervisors, Nurses/Midwives and Police Officers are Mandatory Reporters.
School or Schools	Refers to the schools affiliated with ACSWA: Carmel Adventist College Primary, Carmel Adventist College Secondary, Esperance Christian School, Landsdale Christian School, Victoria Park Christian School.
School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA)	The School Curriculum and Standards Authority is responsible For Kindergarten to Year 12 curriculum, assessment, standards and reporting for all Western Australian Schools.
Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA)	The TRBWA is the body responsible for the registration of teachers in Western Australia and registers all teachers, from early childhood to Year 12, who teach in a Western Australian educational venue. The TRBWA is also responsible for the accreditation of initial teacher education programmes in WA.
South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SPD)	A division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that incorporates Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the Islands in the South Pacific

7 Key Legislation

There are two key pieces of legislation in Western Australia relevant to child protection and two associated regulations. These are:

Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)

Children and Community Services Regulations 2006

Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 (WA)

Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Regulations 2005

There is three key pieces of legislation in Western Australia relevant to education and three associated regulations. These are:

School Education Act 1999 (WA)

School Education Regulations 2000

School Education (Student Residential Colleges) Regulations 2017

Teacher Registration Act 2012

Teacher Registration (General) Regulations 2012

Teachers Registration (Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programmes) Regulations 2012

8 Compliance

8.1 SPD working policy and ASA Child Protection Frameworks and Policies

As part of the Constitution of ACSWA, there is an imperative to comply with policy developed by SPD and ASA. At present the relevant SPD policies are **ADM.20.45 Child Protection** and **SER.10.55 AdSAFE Ltd**. The relevant ASA documents are “**A National Framework for Creating Safe Communities for Children, Adventist Schools Australia**” and “**Adventist Schools Australia, Child Protection Policy**”.

The National Framework for Creating Safe Communities for Children sets out a number of imperatives that seeks better practice in Child Protection for school communities. This Child Protection Policy addresses these imperatives.

8.2 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations – Statement Regarding Implementation

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Principles) were developed by the Australian Human Rights Commission in response to recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The National Principles are comprised of 10 Principles that were informed by, but go further than, the 10 Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission. They are:



The SPD and AdSAFE Ltd, utilising CompliSpace, have developed a Child Safe Program for implementation in all ASA schools called The Peace Project. This Child Safe Program is made up of work systems, practices, policies and procedures designed to maintain a safe and supportive school environment, and to embed an organisational culture of child safety within the School community.

The Program deals specifically with creating and maintaining a child safe organisation, including child protection issues, and is designed to ensure compliance with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

The ACSWA implementation of the Peace Project is due for completion by the end of 2021.

9 Implementation

9.1 Legal Obligations

1. ACSWA and its schools will abide by the key legislation listed above.

9.2 Compliance with SPD and ASA Policy

1. ACSWA and its schools will abide by the SPD Working Policies listed above and the ASA Child Protection Policy.

9.3 Staff Obligations to Report

1. While the accompanying guidelines set out circumstances in which the legislation requires staff reporting of particular child protection issues, the ACSWA and its schools requires staff to report any concerns held about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person to the Principal. The exception to this is that current legislation states that Mandatory Reporters are not required to notify the Principal if a Mandatory Report is lodged.
2. If these concerns implicate the Principal, staff are required to report to the Director of Education. This obligation is part of ACSWA and its schools' overall commitment to the safety, welfare and well-being of children.
3. From January 2009, teachers and boarding supervisors are required by law to make a mandatory report of child sexual abuse when a belief, based on reasonable grounds, is formed that sexual abuse is occurring or has occurred. This applies to staff working in a paid or unpaid capacity as a teacher, school nurse and/or boarding supervisor.

Staff who are not teachers, school nurses or boarding supervisors must report all forms of abuse to the school's Principal or, if the Principal is named in the allegation, to the Director of Education who will report it to the Chair of Adventist Christian Schools Board of Directors.

NB: Sexual abuse that occurred before 1 January 2009 is not considered a mandatory report but must be reported to the Principal.

4. In cases where a former student (still under the age of 18), or the parent or guardian of a former student, makes an allegation about child sexual abuse at the school occurring before 2009, the Department of Communities – Child Protection Service is to be informed immediately. An allegation involving a former student who is now aged 18 or over is reportable to the Police. In either case, the Principal must submit a Reportable Incident Notification Form to the Director General, Department of Education and may also be required to notify the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia.

9.4 Staff

1. All new staff are required to undergo an orientation program as outlined in the accompanying guidelines.
2. All staff are required to undergo appropriate annual professional development in child protection as outlined in the accompanying guidelines.
3. Access to support services will be provided for a child related worker accused of abuse to Child Protection Policy.

9.5 Record Keeping

1. The Principal will keep thorough records of all child protection issues, incidents and allegations.
2. All reports, information sheets and subsequent discussions and information relating to child protection allegations are to be recorded and kept strictly confidential.

9.6 Other related policies and Guidelines

1. Please note that there are a number of other School policies that relate to child protection of which staff need to be aware and understand including (but not limited to):
 - a) the Code of Conduct which sets out information about the standards of behaviour expected of all employees, contractors and volunteers of ACSWA and its schools;
 - b) the School's Work Health and Safety Policy which summarises the obligations imposed by work health and safety legislation on the school and workers; and
 - c) the School's Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Statement which summarises your obligations in relation to unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying; and
 - d) the School's guidelines on student bullying.

9.7 Attached Guidelines

There are three types of policy documents attached to this policy that forms part of the child protection framework. These are:

Roles, Responsibilities and Processes

This type of policy outlines the staff who will have responsibility for the implementation of the policy, and what processes are required for its implementation.

Information for Staff

This type of policy provides information for staff on the purpose of the policy and answers any questions around how it will be implemented.

Information for Community members

This type of policy provides information for school and wider community members on why the policy is important to the school and answers any basic questions on how it will be implemented.

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