



SUNYATA
BUDDHIST CENTRE

CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

1. NAME OF SERVICE AND ACTIVITIES PROVIDED

Sunyata Buddhist Centre, Snaty, Sixmilebridge, Co Clare

Sunyata Buddhist Centre is a meditation retreat centre in the Thai Forest tradition of Buddhism. In addition to attending meditation retreats, people come at any time to learn about Buddhism and mindfulness while helping with the running of the centre. Also offered are a variety of events on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis, such as daily meditation sits, women's day retreats and mindfulness-based recovery meetings. In addition, Sunyata hosts a two 5 day residential family camps each year as well as regular mindfulness workshops geared towards children.

2. OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. While protecting children from abuse is one part of safeguarding, children and young people also need safeguarding in order for them to grow, develop and achieve their full potential.

At Sunyata we are committed to safeguarding the children in our care and to providing a safe environment in which they can learn, develop and be happy. We commit to child-centred practice in all our work with children.

Sunyata identifies a Relevant Person who is responsible for leading the development of guiding principles and child protection and welfare, and safeguarding procedures. The relevant person is responsible for ensuring Sunyata meets its responsibility under Children First legislation and Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017) and will ensure that policies and procedures are consistent with best practice.

The Relevant Person is Colm Kavanagh.

Sunyata are committed to upholding the rights of every child and young person who attends our service, including the rights to be kept safe and protected from harm, listened to, and be heard. Our policy and procedures to safeguard children and young people reflect national policy and legislation and applies to all volunteers and board members within our organisation. All board members and volunteers must sign up to and abide by the policies, procedures and guidance encompassed by this policy declaration and our child safeguarding policy and accompanying procedures.

3. RISK ASSESSMENT

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending services at Sunyata. An assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the procedures for managing those risks is summarised below:

RISK IDENTIFIED	POLICIES/PROCEDURES IN PLACE TO MANAGE RISK
Children at risk of harm from other children	Code of Behaviour (Child Protection and Welfare Policy)
Children at risk of harm from adults eg. parents/guardians, volunteers.	Child Protection and Welfare Policy Code of Behaviour Volunteer Policy (Garda Vetting for those working directly with children)
Children having unsupervised access to the internet	Code of Behaviour (Child Protection and Welfare Policy)
Disclosures of abuse from a child	Child Protection and Welfare Policy
Disclosures of abuse from an adult who experienced abuse as a child	Child Protection and Welfare Policy
Disclosures of abuse from an adult perpetrating abuse to a child	Child Protection and Welfare Policy
Staff and volunteers are unaware of their duty to children and unfamiliar with Child Safeguarding Statement, and related policies and procedures	Volunteer Policy

4. CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act (2015), the Children First: National Guidance, and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Procedures to maintain a list of mandated persons under the Children First Act, 2015
- A Relevant Person has been appointed
- A Designated Liaison Person and Deputy have been appointed
- Child Protection and Welfare reporting procedures have been devised and implemented
- Policy for dealing with allegations of abuse or neglect against volunteers
- Procedure for managing child protection records re. GDPR
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of volunteers to work with children
- Code of Behaviour for working with children

5. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

- We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service.
- This statement will be reviewed every 2 years., being reviewed next on September 1st 2025, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.
- This statement has been published on the centre's website and is displayed in the service. It has been provided to all staff, volunteers and any other persons involved with the service. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this statement will be made available to Tusla if requested.

SIGNED:

Elaine Dalton

Chairwoman of the Board

Service Provider's Name and Contact Details:

Sunyata Buddhist Centre

Snaty

Sixmilebridge

Co Clare, Ireland

info@sunyatacentre.org

For further information on this statement contact Relevant Person:

Colm Kavanagh