

Muckamore Presbyterian Church

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

JUNE 2026

“Ensuring a safe environment for children, young people and leaders”

Policy Statement

This policy statement is aimed at providing a safe environment where children and young people may enjoy social contact, personal and spiritual development. Adults selected to work within youth ministries and who abide by the Guidelines & Policies should be secure in the knowledge that they have the full support of the Kirk Session of Muckamore Presbyterian Church.

1. Adoption of Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) Child Safeguarding Guidelines & Policies

The Kirk Session of Muckamore Presbyterian Church has adopted The Presbyterian Church in Ireland's Northern Ireland Safeguarding Guidelines & Policies approved by the General Assembly and revised 2026. All organisations are expected to adhere to these Guidelines as agreed by the General Assembly. The Kirk Session will review the policy every three years.

2. Leadership

The Kirk Session believes that the selection procedures outlined in the Child Safeguarding Guidelines & Policies greatly assist the assessment of a person's suitability to work with children and young people and that those appointed therefore will be more assured of their position and of the confidence placed in them by the Kirk Session and members of the congregation.

The following procedures must be followed for the appointment of leaders/helpers who will be 18 years or over:

- i. All leaders will be required to complete an Application Form;
- ii. Applicants will be required to provide 2 references, by persons who are not relatives. (All confidential records e.g. applications and references will be stored safely by the Designated Person, see Point 6);
- iii. The Kirk Session has given the Designated Person the role to furnish any individual who seeks to serve our church with an Application Form. Upon completion, this will be returned to the Designated Person for processing and training information;
- iv. All leaders must be given the 'Safeguarding Card' and access the **Safeguarding** guidelines at www.muckamore.com/policies-and-forms;
- v. A letter of approval will be sent to the Designated Person from the Safeguarding Team and stored securely on church premises.

3. Training

Leaders and helpers who work with children and young people should attend Safeguarding training every three years (as church policy or legislation demands). Even those who have a good knowledge of child protection issues in another field should attend as Safeguarding Training is the only training available that is specifically dealing with church activities within a church environment.

4. Reporting of Concerns

The leaders in each of our organisations will be fully conversant with the opportunity for consultation and of the referral procedure where there is concern about the welfare of a child, as outlined in the Child Safeguarding Guidelines & Policies.

5. Parental Consent Forms

Organisational leaders must ensure that Parental Consent Forms are completed at the commencement of each session for each child attending organisations. Special consent forms will be issued for any 'off the premises' activity and residentials. Leaders in charge will store these forms in a safe place, and copies will be held in the church in compliance with the Safeguarding Guidelines & Policies requirements.

6. Designated Person

The Kirk Session has appointed a Designated Person (Jess Kirk) who will provide consultation, advice, and support to organisations and to the Kirk Session on matters concerning the welfare of children and young people. The Kirk Session will keep organisational leaders updated with the name of the Designated Person. Any matter brought to the attention of the Designated Person will be treated in strict confidence. Information will be divulged only where there is a legitimate need to know.

Additional advice and consultation can be accessed from the Safeguarding Team in Assembly Buildings.

7. Working Together

It is important that all leaders know the boundaries and rules of an organisation and that these are explained to children and parents. A code of conduct for children and young people will be drawn up at the commencement of the year's activities in each organisation. A code of conduct will help to create a safe, secure environment and an atmosphere where children will feel that they can relate to the leaders and helpers.

All leaders must abide by the discipline guidelines as set out in the Safeguarding Guidelines & Policies.

8. Technology

Leaders should limit the direct internet communication they have with individual children and young people in the organisation of which they are leaders. All such communication with children and young people should, as far as possible, be within an open forum; in order to protect both young people and leaders. Leaders should be wise as to how they use this form of communication.

Leaders should not post photographs of young people from the organisation in which they are leaders, on a social networking site or anywhere on the internet, unless they have written parental consent.

Leaders involved in Youth and Children's work should only have children's mobile numbers if the nature of their involvement requires them to phone or text children.

9. Health and Safety

The Kirk Session expects organisations to adhere to the guidance on health and safety matters outlined in the Safeguarding Guidelines & Policies. A Risk Assessment form should be completed for each organisation as well as for any outings or occasional events. Leaders will be informed of fire and first aid procedures.

10. Transport

Organisations are expected to adhere to the guidance of the Safeguarding Guidelines & Policies relating to use of private cars and minibuses for transporting children to and from youth activities.

11. Residential

Guidance on residential trips is provided in the Residential Trips Policy and will be followed on all residential trips organised by the leadership of each organisation.

12. Implementation and Review

The Kirk Session is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, and will review it every year with the leaders in charge of youth organisations.

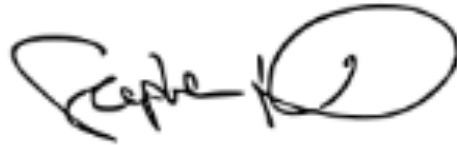
13. Safeguarding Guidelines & Policies

A copy of **all our safeguarding policies, forms and proformas** will be available for study and reference by accessing an electronic version from the Muckamore Presbyterian Church website:

www.muckamore.com/policies-and-forms

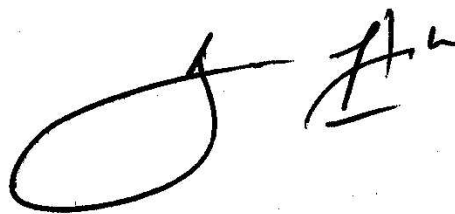
14. Date of authorisation by Kirk Session

This policy was adopted by the Kirk Session at a meeting on 17th October 2023



Signature: _____

_____ (Moderator)



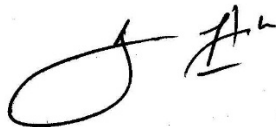
Signature: _____

_____ (Clerk of Session)

15. INTERNAL REVIEW

Kirk Session will periodically review this Policy and its procedures to ensure that the congregation is in full compliance with relevant new or amended regulations.

Signed: _____



Position: _____ Clerk of Session _____

Date: _____ 16th June 2026 _____

Review Date: _____ 16th June 2027 _____