

<b>Version</b>	2.0
<b>File number</b>	CP.01
<b>Short description</b>	This policy outlines Sonoma Adventist College's commitment to child protection and recognises the important role and responsibility of all staff, students and representatives in the protection of children. It includes Sonoma's expectations when child abuse is reported or suspected by Sonoma.
<b>Relevant to</b>	All Sonoma Adventist College staff and students (including those in part-time and temporary roles, contractors and volunteers) are expected to be familiar with this policy, its associated procedures and protocols and must abide by them.
<b>Authority</b>	This Policy has been approved by the SAC Administration Committee.
<b>Responsible officer</b>	HR, Principal
<b>Responsible office</b>	HR
<b>Date introduced</b>	October 2019
<b>Date(s) modified</b>	July 2021
<b>Next scheduled review date</b>	July 2024
<b>Related College documents</b>	Child Protection Delegates
<b>Related legislation</b>	Lukautim Pikinini Act 2015; Family and Sexual Violence Policy; PNG Country Report  Child and Vulnerable Person Protection Policy (SPD) FV1.2.docx
<b>Key words</b>	Sonoma Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy Child, protection, abuse, safety, rights, cultural, family, sexual, GESI

## 1. RATIONALE

Sonoma's motto is "To know, to Love, to Serve" and the College's commitment to uphold the beliefs and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are based on Scripture. The Bible states that all people, male and female, are created equal, in the image of a loving God (Genesis 1:27); and that Christ died for all (2 Corinthians 5:15), regardless of GESI.

Sonoma Adventist College has developed this document, the *Lukautim Pikinini Gut Long Birua* – Child Protection Policy to promote child protection practices within all of its operations including weekend volunteer work. This document exists to protect children from harm in the delivery of Sonoma Adventist College's work and voluntary services on the campus and to the wider community, and to ensure an effective response, if harm to a child is alleged or detected.

This policy content is informed by the principles in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), PNG law (including the Lukautim Pikinini Act 2015) and contextual knowledge and experience.

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- (a) Ensure that child protection is clearly promoted to all engaged with Sonoma Adventist College in PNG;
- (b) Facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within Sonoma Adventist College;
- (c) Promote an organisational culture of child safety;
- (d) Ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs;
- (e) Provide guidance to Sonoma Adventist College staff and representatives as to action that should be taken where they suspect any abuse within or outside of the organisation, including by those in stakeholder organisations Sonoma Adventist College works with.
- (f) Provide a clear statement forbidding any such abuse;
- (g) Provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated; and;
- (h) Provide clear guidelines for Sonoma Adventist College's management of child protection incidents or allegations.

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This Policy applies to anyone who works at Sonoma Adventist College or represents Sonoma Adventist College including students, but not limited to, staff, students, volunteers, contractors, visitors and Administration Committee members (hereafter referred to as 'Sonoma Adventist College staff and representatives'). Its content will be advocated to our partners, and others we work with as part of our institutional commitment to promoting child protection.
- 2.2 Sonoma Adventist College core business is to provide higher education for post-secondary students who are usually over 18 years of age and considered to be adults. However there may be a younger student who enrolls and would therefore be a "child" in relation to the definition and application of this policy.
- 2.3 Sonoma Staff and students are often required to partake in voluntary programmes over the weekends. During this time the college staff and students organise and supervise programmes for children. Each staff member and student needs to be informed of this policy and receive training to ensure that it is implemented in the contexts where they work or volunteer.
- 2.4 For clarity, this Policy applies both to staff and students who are working directly with young children as well as those engaged in other areas of the college such as administration, financial, media, governance, or any other roles.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

- **Child:** As defined by the CRC and as set out in the *Lukautim Pikinini Act 2009*, any person under the age of 18 years is a child.

- **Child abuse:** Child abuse includes all forms of physical, emotional and sexual abuse, violence in the home (sometimes referred to as domestic violence or family violence), neglect, commercial sexual exploitation (such as child prostitution), child trafficking and child labour as defined below. (Child abuse is not limited to only males or females, it can happen to any gender and involves the abuse of children’s rights as outlined in the CRC).
- **Child emotional abuse:** A persistent attack on a child’s self-esteem. For example, but not limited to, teasing, name-calling, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating the child.
- **Child labour:** Work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. Child labour refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children and that interferes with their schooling.
- **Child neglect:** The persistent failure, where there are means, or the deliberate denial to provide a child with clean water, food, shelter, sanitation or supervision or care to the extent that the child’s health and development are placed at risk.
- **Child physical abuse:** When a person purposefully injures, or threatens to injure a child. For example, but not limited to, slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving, grabbing and throwing stones and other objects.
- **Child protection:** An activity or initiative designed to protect children from any form of harm, particularly arising from child abuse or neglect.
- **Child protection incident:** A child protection incident is:
  - any form of child abuse as defined in section 3 Definitions; **or**
  - (b) any breach of this Policy **and**, that is:
  - (c) committed by a Sonoma Adventist College staff, student or representative; **or**
  - (d) where Sonoma Adventist College has a duty of care towards the child.
- **Child rights:** Children have the “right to life, survival and development” where development encompasses physical, emotional, cognitive, social and cultural development. Depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.
- **Child sexual abuse:** When a child is used by another child, adolescent or adult, for his or her own sexual stimulation or gratification. Sexual abuse involves contact and non-contact activities which encompasses all forms of sexual activity involving children, including exposing children to pornographic images, or taking pornographic photographs of children.
- **Child trafficking:** Relates to any role in the recruitment, transportation or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation, by means of threat, force or other forms of coercion. This includes abuse of power.
- **Commercial sexual exploitation:** Where a child is sexually abused or exploited and the child or a third person/s is remunerated in cash or kind.
- **Cultural safety:** An environment that is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for people; where there is no assault challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need.
- **Duty of care:** Duty of care is a term used to define the complex obligation that exists between Sonoma Adventist College and the people with whom it has a relationship. Sonoma Adventist College (and all its office holders and staff) hold a duty to take reasonable care of a person who is reasonably likely to be affected by the activities of Sonoma Adventist College. Family

violence means any violence between family members including current or former partners in an intimate relationship. Family violence may include physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, stalking, damage to property, and control through socially isolating the victim, or threats to do any of the aforementioned acts.

- **Family and sexual violence:** Sexual violence means any sexual act against a person's sexuality using coercion including an attempt to obtain a sexual act and unwanted sexual comments or advances, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work.

Family and sexual violence encompasses family violence and sexual violence as described above. It should be noted that while family violence may be perpetrated by family members, sexual violence may be perpetrated by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim.

This refers to anyone who represents Sonoma Adventist College including, but not limited to, staff, students, volunteers, contractors, visitors and Administration or Academic Committee members.

#### **4. RESPONSIBILITIES**

This is a belief based on reasonable grounds that child abuse has or is occurring. Considerations forming such reasonable grounds may include Sonoma Adventist College staff, students, volunteers and representatives.

Reasonable grounds for belief of child abuse:

- relevant information from a credible person; and/or
- relevant information about the alleged perpetrator; and/or
- the child may have stated abuse has occurred; and/or there may be other signs of abuse.  
Note that 'proof' is not required at this stage.

#### **5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Sonoma Adventist College *Lukautim Pikinini Gut Long Birua* – Child Protection Policy and practices adhere to the following guiding principles:

##### **5.1 Zero Tolerance of Child Abuse**

Sonoma Adventist College staff, students and representatives understand that any form of child abuse and exploitation is unacceptable and will not be tolerated by anyone who is working within our organisation or who represents our organisation. We will not permit staff, students or representatives who present a risk to child safety to work for or represent our institution.

Sonoma Adventist College will ensure that all staff, students and representatives, new and existing, are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it, and understand that abiding by this policy is mandatory.

##### **5.2 Child Rights**

Sonoma Adventist College is committed to protecting and promoting the rights of all children, including the right to safety, without fear of abuse or exploitation, and to have their views heard on matters affecting them, as enshrined in the Child Rights Constitution.

##### **5.3 Duty of Care**

Sonoma Adventist College recognises its duty of care to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the children it assists are kept safe from harm and to ensure staff, students and representatives have access to the training and systems to ensure this duty is met. This includes having child protection and case management policies in place and ensuring that staff understand and implement them.

#### **5.4 Shared Responsibility**

Sonoma Adventist College's model of working in close coordination with a range of volunteer and school programmes requires Sonoma staff and students to promote child protection as a responsibility shared by all. In accordance with its operating procedures, Sonoma Adventist College is committed to developing broad understanding among the stakeholders, Sonoma Board, Staff Members, students, volunteers and communities it works with of the importance of child protection and ways to achieve it. Sonoma understands this policy cannot bind the partner and other stakeholder organisations it works with, but as part of Sonoma Adventist College's commitment to child protection, Sonoma will make clear to all its zero tolerance of child abuse.

#### **5.5 Representation**

Sonoma Adventist College believes all children, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, religious and political beliefs, family background, economic status, physical or mental capacity (see Sonoma GESI Policy) have a right to assistance and will be assessed according to Sonoma Adventist College intake procedures without discrimination. This includes children who have engaged in criminal activities, including child survivors who are also perpetrators of violence. This is in accordance with CRC Article 40, and is in recognition of international evidence that children affected by violence and abuse often (but not always) act out similar behaviours, particularly if they are unsupported child survivors.

#### **5.6 Confidentiality**

Sonoma Adventist College will ensure it provides a service and environment where children are respected and feel safe at all times. This includes Sonoma Adventist College meeting its obligation to maintain the confidentiality of children's information as much as practicably possible, unless for example Sonoma Adventist College is required by legal or professional duty to disclose information, or, if the child is able to, the child gives permission for disclosure. If Sonoma Adventist College is compelled to disclose information, and the child is of an age where s/he is able to comprehend the relevant issues, Sonoma Adventist College will ensure the child's right to be engaged on the issue is met.

### **6. OPERATING CONTEXT**

#### **6.1 Organisational Characteristics**

Sonoma Adventist College is a PNG Christian Institution, owned by the Seventh-day Adventist Church PNGUM, which provides tertiary education programmes for up to 800 post-secondary and mature-aged students each year. The college employs both academic and general staff who have responsibilities organised under the college operating systems where children may be provided with special programmes at weekends or through professional experience activities at the local and wider community primary and secondary schools. Students at the college also have contact with children through the learning and teaching activities facilitated as part of their education programmes.

#### **6.2 Child Protection Risks**

There are a number of potential child protection risks arising in the course of Sonoma Adventist College work. Sonoma is committed to identifying and managing these risks. They include:

- Exposure to Sonoma Adventist College staff and students or representatives who may harm the child/ren in some way;
  - exposure to visitors to Sonoma Adventist College who may harm the child/ren in some way;
  - exposure to transport providers, security providers, accommodation providers, police, hospital or other staff who may harm child/ren in some way; and
  - other risks, seen and unforeseen.
- Sonoma Adventist College is committed to identifying, together with its Management Committee, Executive Management Committee, staff and stakeholders, the risks facing children and ways to effectively mitigate them in accordance with this Policy and other relevant Sonoma Adventist College policies and risk management tools.

## 7. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 7.1 Sonoma Adventist College has zero tolerance for child abuse.
- 7.2 Sonoma Adventist College is committed to promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of all children and protecting them from exploitation and abuse. We are committed to the cultural safety of children and to providing a safe environment for children, including children living with a disability.
- 7.3 Sonoma Adventist College recognises that perpetration of harm against children is more likely to occur where an organisation lacks the culture, ethics, leadership, policies and professionalism to promote child protection.
- 7.4 All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background (GESI) have equal rights to protection from abuse.
- 7.5 Sonoma Adventist College staff, students and representatives are responsible for the care and protection of children and are obligated to report information about any harm to children, especially child abuse and suspected child abuse.
- 7.6 In line with international evidence that children are often reluctant to disclose abuse and rarely falsely claim abuse, Sonoma Adventist College takes the position that children are to be believed when disclosing abuse.
- 7.7 Sonoma Adventist College staff, students and representatives are all responsible for ensuring our child protection approach is understood and integrated into all areas of our work and our organisation's ethics and culture.

## 8. IMPLEMENTATION

The following mechanisms will be used to implement Femili PNG's *Lukautim Pikinini Gut Long Birua* – Child Protection Policy.

### 8.1 Child Protection Code of Conduct

The Child Protection Code of Conduct clearly outlines acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour regarding interactions with children. It applies to all Sonoma Adventist College staff, students and representatives and provides them with clear guidance on how to minimise risks to children, including when working with other organisations. All Sonoma Adventist College staff, students and representatives must demonstrate their commitment to this Code of Conduct by signing it, indicating they will abide this Code at all times. The Principal and Human Resource officer is responsible for ensuring that a signed copy of the Code of Conduct is held on file for all Sonoma Adventist College staff, students and representatives.

### 8.2 Risk Management

Whilst Sonoma Adventist College is aware that it cannot control all risks of child abuse and exploitation, it commits to ensuring the risks of child abuse and exploitation are identified, monitored and reasonably mitigated against. The Administrative Committee, and staff are critically important to effective risk management and will specifically discuss child protection in the course of developing and implementing risk management plans. Sonoma Adventist College risk management tools and skills shall be utilised to mitigate child protection risks. Sonoma Adventist College recognises child protection risks proactively and manages these risks to children in all our activities to reduce the risk of harm. This is achieved by examining each category of activity and its potential impact on children. Activities and work direct with children are automatically considered as higher risk and therefore require more stringent analysis and child protection risk mitigation.

### **8.3 Accessibility**

Sonoma Adventist College *Lukautim Pikinini Gut Long Birua* – Child Protection Policy will be publicly available to all and accessible on our website.

The Code of Conduct and copies of all child protection documentation will be provided to all staff and students during training and induction.

### **8.3 Training and Induction**

Sonoma Adventist College will provide specific training to all staff and students on child protection, and staff and students will be supported to ensure commitments are met. Child protection training will be arranged for Sonoma staff approximately every two years. New staff will be provided with a comprehensive induction on the Policy and Code of Conduct on joining the institution. This Policy will be referred to in the Staff Handbook, the Student Handbook, and available on the Sonoma website.

### **8.4 Nomination of Child Protection Delegates**

Heads of Departments (HOD's) and the Human Resource Officer are designated as focal points for all child protection issues, and one or both will manage or oversee significant child protection issues. Child Protection Delegates have also been nominated within each department. These delegates may also, as required, delegate certain specific issues and enquiries to the Sonoma Child Protection Officer. The Child Protection Delegates are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented. See Appendix A.

### **8.5 Photos, Images and Story Gathering**

Sonoma Adventist College will at all times portray children in a respectful, appropriate and consensual way. Our guidelines on the use of children's images are:

- No child client of Sonoma Adventist College will have their image captured in still or film form, out of respect for them as child survivors who have a right to privacy.
- Any other child images captured should only be captured with the consent of the child/ren and parents. When asking for consent, clear details should be given as to how and where this image will be used, and the ability to retract permission at any time should be made clear.
- Children should always be portrayed in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner.
- Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
- There should be no identifying information of the child used in the publication of images with their location.
- Children should be portrayed as part of their community.
- Local cultural traditions should be assessed regarding restrictions for reproducing personal images.
- Images should be an honest representation of the context and the facts.
- When sending images electronically, file labels should not reveal identifying information.

### **8.6 Recruitment**

Sonoma Adventist College undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all staff and volunteers which aims to:

- promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of the organisation;
- identify the safest and most suitable people who share Sonoma's values and commitment to protect children; and
- prevent a person from working at Sonoma if they pose a risk to children. This screening process includes:
  - stating in all job advertisements that Sonoma Adventist College is committed to child protection and that recruitment and selection procedures will reflect this.
  - criminal record checks, or where these are not available, the candidate must sign a written statement disclosing whether they have been charged with any child protection offences;
  - verbal referee checks; and

- use of behavioural-based interview questions that probe the applicant's past behaviour relating to children in specific situations relevant to the position (these give interviewers additional information as to the applicant's suitability to work with children).

Sonoma Adventist College will not engage any person who poses an unacceptable risk to children.

All employment contracts must contain provisions for immediate dismissal for any personnel who breach the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct.

## 9. CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING PROCEDURES

Sonoma Adventist College child protection reporting procedures are guided by the following:

- Swift, appropriate action where there is reasonable grounds for belief of child abuse;
- reporting and notification obligations under PNG law;
- duty of care obligations;
- client confidentiality obligations;
- child and client safety; and
- employees and other relevant individuals' legal rights.

### 9.1 Responsibility to Report

**All** Sonoma Adventist College staff, students and representatives are responsible to report any suspicion, allegation or witnessing of a child protection incident. A child protection incident is:

- (a) any form of child abuse as defined in section 3 Definitions; **or**
- (b) any breach of this Policy **or**
- (c) where Sonoma Adventist College has a duty of care towards the child.

It is **not** the role of Sonoma staff/representatives to **prove** that a child protection incident has occurred, but to report any knowledge or concern, founded or otherwise, that they may have of a child protection incident occurring.

### 9.2 Reporting Procedure and Flow Chart

Sonoma Adventist College staff and representatives must report the child protection incident (or suspected child protection incident) to a Child Protection Delegate *immediately*, or within 24 hours of the incident/receipt of information if they are in a location or situation which prevents them from reporting immediately. The report will generally be made verbally in the first instance, but must be followed up by a detailed written account of the incident. Whether reporting verbally or in writing, it should be done confidentially. The below flow-chart depicts the reporting process and the responsibility of each party:

1. Must report child protection incident or suspected child protection incident to HOD, Supervisor or appropriate Manager immediately or at most within 24 hours.
2. Records incident.
3. Works with management to determine action and investigation required.
4. As appropriate, the Sonoma Pastoral team will provide support and counselling.
5. Responsible for overseeing referral of incident to relevant authority where required; or to Adsafe PNGUM.
6. Updates reporting staff member that action has been taken.
7. Reports child protection incidents immediately to Administration Committee if high risk, complex, or circumstances require, and otherwise at quarterly meetings.
8. If unsure speak with the HOD's or Human Resource Officer.

### 9.3 Confidentiality and Safety

Confidentiality (i.e. protection of the identities of the reporter, victim and perpetrator) should be ensured to the fullest degree possible under the circumstances. All details of the reporting and investigation process are kept as confidential as possible within the requirements of the law, and only shared with relevant persons (this could include local authorities). Provisions will be made for the protection of the person reporting an issue or concern if they have a genuine fear for their physical safety. Likewise, Sonoma will ensure that any staff member, student or representative who is accused of breaching this policy is treated justly and is safe (until the point their engagement as a Sonoma Adventist College staff member, student or



representative ends). The child's safety is the paramount consideration for Sonoma Adventist College and provision for the child's safety and wellbeing will be prioritised.

#### 9.4 Investigation

Adsafe's role is an independent organisation of the SPD Seventh-day Adventist Church set up to safeguard the church and its entities from abuse toward children and vulnerable persons. This involves the development of Policy, Guidelines and Practices to guide the church in developing safer environments for people to experience and discover the love of God. Adsafe PNGUM has employed Dr Agnes Kola, and Pr Benjamin Kola to work with PNG organisations in the protection of children.

It is the role of the Adsafe PNGUM to confidentially investigate each report as part of a process to:

- Understand the circumstances surrounding the alleged child protection incident;
- determine what actions were taken by Sonoma Adventist College staff, students and representatives involved in the incident; and
- to address the needs of the survivor (child).

The appropriate and necessary, actions taken as a result of each investigation, will be determined by the Principal, the appropriate Department Head, (HOD), and the Human Resource Officer, on a case-by-case basis.

### 10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

Monitoring of the application of this Policy is the responsibility of all staff, led by the Principal and Human Resource Officer and overseen by Sonoma's Administration Management Committee, and at the highest level at the Sonoma Adventist College Board of Governors. Reviews of this policy will be conducted in light of and informed by any reported child protection incident(s) to assist assessment of whether this Policy requires modification to enable better protection of the children who engage with the organisation, its staff and representatives.

#### RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Sonoma Adventist College Code of Conduct
- Sonoma Adventist College HR Policy Manual
- Sonoma Adventist College Risk Management Framework

#### Table of amendments

Version number	Date	Short description of amendment	Implementation Plan and Date

## Appendix A

### Appointment of SAC Child Protection Delegates in each faculty and Department area.

Overall Child Protection Officer for Sonoma - Malinda Phillips (expertise in Children's services and Public Relations associate officer).

*These officers must ensure that all areas of the campus are Child Safe Zones at all times. (Signs must be placed in every faculty area to demonstrate that Sonoma leaders are obligated to report Child Abuse in all its forms, Physical, Sexual, Neglect, Verbal etc)*

*Each of these delegates will present the policy at their faculty or department meetings for review and reminders to all staff and students).*

PLEASE Note: A child OR children who are a witness to the abuse of a family member is also a victim of abuse and can experience a lifetime of trauma as a result.

#### Child Protection (ACTING) Delegates

These are Acting Delegates until elected within each faculty area

SAC Child Protection Manager - Malinda Philips - All departments will report to Malinda if there is suspected abuse of children or children are witness to abuse of others.

Education: Matthew Laena

Theology: Jacklyn Nembai

Business: Jessalyn Billai and Project Development

Building: Morrison Bogew (Building and Pathfinders)

Agriculture: Marleya Banta

Chaplain: Pr Nelson Gah

Martha Banas- Female Residence

Pr Willie Karara - Male Residence

Farm/Plantation Manager - Kavuway Kengava

Nurse: Wendy Bogew

Technology Screening - Stuart Mondo

Media and promotion - Joros Sawi

Employment Matters: Elvis Wagi - ie If a staff member is suspected of abusing a child or causing a child to witness abuse - then they are given an immediate warning in relation to their employment status.

SODEM Representative to be nominated