



Child Safeguarding Statement

Emerald Park is a theme park and zoo dedicated to creating adventure, passing on knowledge, conserving nature and serving our community.

Emerald Park provides a range of educational and recreational activities to children and their families throughout Ireland and abroad. Emerald Park staff members have a variety of levels of contact with children.

Activities include:

- Formal taught Education sessions delivered in our “Education centre” and throughout the site.
- School tours featuring access to activities in our theme park and a guided tour of the zoo for primary and secondary school children.
- Access and entry to amusement rides for children without the accompaniment of an adult (subject to height/age restrictions).
- Public engagement events delivered by staff within the Discovery & Learning and zookeeping teams.
- Delivering outreach speaker events or promotional expositions.
- Private family events, including birthday parties and corporate events hosting.
- Employment of young people at Emerald Park in a variety of roles.

Emerald Park agrees that:

- The protection and welfare of children are of paramount importance.
- We will fully comply with our obligations under Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Tusla Children First - Child Safeguarding Guide 2017, and the Children First Act 2015, and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children.
- We will fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities concerning child safeguarding measures.
- We promote safe practices to mitigate the possibility of harm to children and protect our staff from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect.
- Confidentiality requirements when dealing with child protection matters will be respected and carried out accordingly.

Emerald Park believes that the safety and welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Our objective is to ensure that through our educational/recreational activities and interactions that the best interest of the child is continually at the forefront of our operational procedures.

Emerald Park is committed to safeguarding children through the following processes:

- Comprehensive recruitment of all staff and work experience university students
- Thorough vetting including Garda vetting (as applicable)
- Comprehensive training and induction protocols and procedures
- Child safeguarding policy and training, which includes a code of conduct for staff interacting with children and visitors
- Comprehensive health and safety policy and risk assessments for all activities, rides and the zoo
- Comprehensive ‘lost child’ policy and reporting procedures to minimise stress/negative welfare of children and parents who find themselves in this difficult situation

Risk Assessment

Under the Children First Act 2015, Emerald Park has assessed risk and any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Taking the definition of harm in relation to a child as: “assault, ill treatment, or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child’s health, development or welfare, or sexual abuse of the child”

Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing risks.

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk
1.	The child may be subject to harm from other children in playground climbing and slide structures, the Spiral Mound, and Maze where parents may not have a child in view at all times.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant child protection and awareness training for staff members (Staff Recruitment and Training Policy) • Parents/guardians are advised regarding the requirement to supervise children when visiting the park (Playground attendants do not replace parent supervision but offer additional safety and support). • Procedures to deal with an allegation of abuse made against another visitor.
2.	The child may be subject to harm from staff or work experience students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Child Protection Policy in line with Children First Requirements • Robust recruitment procedures • Relevant child protection and awareness training • Appointment of Child Protection Liaison officer • ‘Education Policy’ ensures staff/child ratios mandate that all formal education programmes must always include supervision by one of the visiting school’s teachers.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers are advised regarding the requirement to supervise their pupils when visiting the park. • Code of behaviour for staff members with guidance on how to treat children 'Induction & Training Policy' • Relevant child protection training for staff members. • Procedures to deal with an allegation of abuse made against a member of staff or a work experience student.
3.	Lost Child subject to harm from adult visitors or staff members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive 'Lost Child Policy' and procedures which includes a wristband programme to enable staff to track down parents quickly and efficiently and reunite families. • Lost Child Policy which requires staff members to double up when a lost child is encountered, ensuring the child is always with two members of staff. • Training for staff to effectively respond and manage a 'Lost Child' incident • Appropriate use of CCTV • Security staff present during operating hours • Parents/guardians are advised regarding the requirement to supervise children when visiting the park
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Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, *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 the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

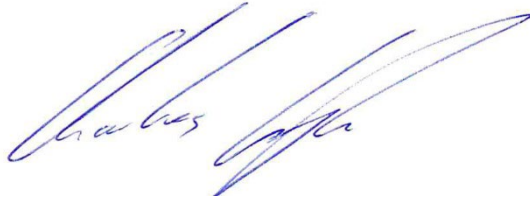
- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of our service;
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and work experience university students to work with children;
- Procedure for the provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm;
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla;
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated, persons;
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available upon request.

Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an on-going process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service.

The Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed every twelve months or as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.



Signed:

Charles Coyle, GM Emerald Park



Signed:

Jamie Dunne Designated Relevant Person Under the Children First Act 2015

For queries, please contact Jamie Dunne at Emerald Park Kilbrew, Ashbourne Co. Meath
Jamie.dunne@emeraldpark.ie