



Society of St. Vincent de Paul

SVP Volunteer Role Description

St Joseph's Childcare – Volunteer Activities Leader

Our Organisation

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVP) is a Christian voluntary organisation working with people experiencing poverty and disadvantage. We are involved in a diverse range of activities characterised by support and friendship, promoting self-sufficiency, and working for social justice. SVPs childcare centres provide a safe, welcoming place for children and their families to learn and grow, to develop new skills, helping to build self-esteem and confidence and make friends. St Joseph's Childcare Centre provides services for Waterford City Area.

Overview of the Volunteer Role

Our volunteers not only support the children attending the centre but they also support each other. This support means volunteers can share their learning in the role, and benefit from each other's experience, sharing knowledge and skills. Our volunteers support and deliver a quality programme to children ensuring a standard level of safety and a fun environment. Our volunteers support the provision of services to children in local communities that aid and enhance the personal and social development of children.

St Joseph's Childcare is now looking for volunteers who can share special skills with the children in our care, including music, arts and crafts, cooking, magicians, sport for example afterschool football club, knitting, drama, dancing and much more.

Key Tasks & Responsibilities

1. Build positive relationships with the children and families who attend the service.
2. Take part in activities, spend time with the children, and encourage them to participate.
3. Create a safe environment in which children can thrive.
4. Role model positive behaviours.
5. Maintain a child-centred approach while volunteering.
6. Help plan and prepare activities for the childcare class.
7. Provide supervision to children during activities while the service is running.
8. Attend outings and trips and where appropriate be part of the planning process for these.
9. Promote a culture where the child's voice is paramount by listening to complaints by children or allegations of bullying and taking these seriously.
10. Support the Conference with record keeping such as attendance.
11. Uphold and adhere to SVP's policies and procedures and those procedures specific to your service.
12. Familiarise yourself with the Code of Conduct and adhere to this.
13. Ensure the protection and welfare of children attending the service by reporting any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).
14. Attend on-going member development workshops and refresher trainings.

Key Skills, Experience & Qualities

1. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills with an ability to relate to children from all walks of life.
2. A strong commitment and enthusiasm for working with children and an understanding of the challenges they face.
3. Treat people with dignity and respect by cultivating an accepting, non-judgemental, non-authoritarian approach.
4. An ability to express empathy and treat children's concerns with respect, sensitivity and tact.
5. Be a team player and work with your Conference to support the provision of the service.
6. Reliability, patience, resilience, and flexibility.
7. Ability to be aware of your own limits and a willingness to ask for help.
8. An openness to learning and developing further good practices to support children.



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9. Experience with children is desirable but not essential.

Time Commitment

The minimum time commitment is 2 hours a week (*depending on each individual service/role*). Some services are provided daily whereas others may only operate one evening a week. The time commitment should be agreed between each volunteer and Conference and recorded on the Volunteer Agreement.

Induction & Training & Support

Volunteers will complete a comprehensive induction with a designated member of the Conference/service that will include reviewing the role description, volunteer agreement, the Code of Conduct, general operations of the group, health and safety information, and safeguarding procedures, in addition to relevant policies and procedures etc.

Volunteers will also receive a Volunteer Handbook detailing the policies and procedures of **St Joseph's Childcare** that they should familiarise themselves with.

Volunteers will also have to complete mandatory Child Protection Training prior to commencing. This training will provide volunteers with information on recognising and reporting child protection concerns and the legal responsibilities of SVP under the Children First Act, 2015.

The centre will appoint a direct support person to you in your new role both formally and informally. There will be debriefs at the end of the night where you can discuss any issues that arose during club time. Other members of the Conference/service/team will also provide support on an ongoing basis during your time as a volunteer. Contact numbers for SVP personnel are provided below for additional support if you require it.

Key Requirements

1. Complete the SVP recruitment process which includes the application form, interviews, reference checks and Garda Vetting.
2. Complete the full mandatory induction training and undertake ongoing member development training and refresher training provided by the Society.
3. Complete Safeguarding Training as requested.
4. Adhere to the Society's ethos, mission statement, and policies and procedures.
5. Commitment to the safety and welfare of children through upholding children's rights.
6. Belief that the best interests of children availing of SVP services are paramount.

Benefits

1. The opportunity to contribute positively towards the development of children, enhancing their sense of self-worth and self-belief.
2. Personal and professional development in terms of confidence, patience, adaptability, leadership, communication, decision-making etc.
3. General happiness and satisfaction.
4. To make a difference in the lives of children.
5. An opportunity to use and develop your own skills and talents.
6. An opportunity to develop friendships and meaningful relationships with like-minded peers

SVP's National Children & Family Services Support Coordinator can be contacted for information on 085 855 6334