

SVP National Child Safeguarding Statement

The Society of St Vincent De Paul (SVP) is a volunteer lead national organisation covering the thirty-two counties. SVP provides community and family support to children under 18 years of age nationally through our network of regions and local Conferences throughout the Island of Ireland.

1. SVP services include a range of universal and targeted services:

- Home visitation within the community (To families for financial support)
- Community based creches
- Family resource centres
- Prison Visitors centres
- Residential holiday activities
- Youth Clubs & Youth Services
- Young SVP – Youth development programme with Secondary schools and collages
- Supporting Transition year student placements within retail

Each SVP Children's Activity, conference or Service will conduct a specific written risk assessment and child safeguarding statement in line with Children First Act 2015, Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998, NVB Act 2012 and 2016, Children First Guidance 2017 and Tusla Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement.

2. SVP's Principals to safeguarding Children from Harm are:

- We are committed to safeguarding children who avail of our service by working under the guidance of our national safeguarding policies and procedures
- We are committed to creating a safe environment for children and young people to grow and develop and be safe from harm.
- We are committed to ensure that all children will be equally protected from harm regardless of race, religious beliefs, ethnicity, or sexual orientation etc
- We are committed to ensure that every child who is involved with our service is treated with dignity and respect.
- We commit to work in partnership with families and recognise the right for parents/ guardians to be consulted and involved in matters involving their family.
- We recognise that the welfare of children availing of our service is paramount

3. Risk Assessment:

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the amalgamated areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks. SVP's

Organisational Risk Management Policy and our Incident Management policy support the identification and management of strategic and specific risks in support of our Child Safeguarding Statement.

Risk Identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
1 Risk of harm (including bullying) to a child by staff, volunteer, or Members of the Society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure - Home visitation Handbook: Application, vetting and training process for home visitation - Garda Vetting Policy - Access NI Policy - SVP Vetting procedure - National Safeguarding Policy and procedure - SVP declaration of guiding principles - SVP policy on recognising Child Safeguarding Concerns - SVP Policy on responding to and reporting Child Safeguarding Concerns - SVP Policy on reporting a Safeguarding Concern - SVP Supervision Policy - Home Visitation Handbook: Safeguarding - Staff, Member and Volunteer procedure for reporting child protection and welfare concerns - SVP policy on dealing with allegations against staff/ volunteers - Policy on Safeguarding Training - SVP Rule, 2012 for volunteer Members. - Child Safeguarding Statement: Additional Guidance to manage risk of harm - SVP Code of Conduct - SVP Dignity & Respect Policies
2 Risk of Harm by a visitor to a service (workers parents, placement etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SVP Policy on Working Safely with Vulnerable Groups - SVP Policy on Recognising and Reporting Welfare & Protection Concerns About Children or Adults Who May Be Vulnerable - Safeguarding Awareness Training for staff, volunteers and Members. - SVP Policy and Procedures for In-Service Days involving staff visiting services and activities involving children. - SVP HR House Staff Handbook - SVP Volunteer Handbooks - SVP Visitation Handbook - Code of Conduct. - Service 'Critical Incident' Policy and SVP Serious Incident and Risk Management Policy. - SVP Supervision policy - Sign policy for visitors/ Parent Handbooks / Childcare Services Visitors Policy / Childcare Policies and Procedures as relevant to local services
3 Risk of Harm by another child in the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervision/ accompaniment/ admission/ Anti-bullying policies as relevant to local services. - Policies, protocols, procedures and guidelines regarding safe practice and service delivery - Service 'Critical Incident' Policy and SVP Serious Incident and Risk Management Policy.
4 Non-compliance with the Children First Act 2015 and Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SVP Working Safely with Vulnerable Groups including requirement for risk assessment in each service and activity - SVP Policy on Recognising and Reporting Welfare & Protection Concerns About Children or Adults Who May Be Vulnerable.

	First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SVP Supervision Policy - SVP HR Staff Handbook - SVP Volunteer Handbooks - SVP Membership Visitation and SVP Rule 2012 to ensure all Members operate under the supervision of the Conference President and provide visitation services in pairs to support vulnerable groups including home visitations to families in the community. - Student Placement Policy - SVP Risk Management Policy and Serious Incident Policy - Procedure for maintaining list of mandated persons as relevant to local services
5	Risk of harm or concern not being recognised or reported by SVP staff, Members or volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SVP Policy on Recognising and Reporting Welfare & Protection Concerns About Children or Adults Who May Be Vulnerable. - SVP Policy on Working Safely with Vulnerable Groups - Display of Infographics on Recognising and Responding to 1. Child Abuse, 2. Childhood Neglect, and 3. Domestic Violence and Coercive Control. - Provision of Child Safeguarding Awareness induction and refresher training - DLP / Mandated Persons role training and ongoing refresher training and quarterly DLP national network meetings and Learning & Development events with a focus on risks of child abuse within the context of SVP - Upkeep of DLP directory as the main reporting pathway and published on SVP website and in location across services and activities. - Safeguarding as a standing agenda item in conference meetings - Data Protection Policy and GDPR - SVP Volunteer Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SVP Supervision Policy • HR Staff Handbook • SVP Visitation Handbook • SVP Volunteer Handbooks • SVP Student Placement Guide – SVP Young SVP policy - Mandatory Children’s first training for relevant local services
6	Risk of harm to a child through use of ICT and social media, and inappropriate use of photography and imagery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SVP Policy on Recognising and Reporting Welfare & Protection Concerns About Children or Adults Who May Be Vulnerable including consent policy and code of conduct and safe use of devices • SVP Working Safely with Vulnerable Groups • SVP Social Media Policy • SVP Communication Policy • SVP Recruitment Policy and Procedures including SVP Garda Vetting & Access NI Policy • SVP HR Handbook • SVP Data Protection Policy

Note: The definition of harm in relation to a child is: ‘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’.

Note: Each relevant service delivery conference maintains additional risks on the required template

4. 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 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 services:

- 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 volunteers to work with children
- Procedure for 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

5. Implementation:

We recognise that implementation is an on-going process. SVP 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 services. This National Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed on 03rd of March 2026 and will be reviewed on **3rd March 2028** or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

The Relevant Person for our National Child Safeguarding Statement is:

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