

What to do if you have a concern

All SVP members must treat seriously any concern or allegation regarding abuse.

Whenever concerns are raised, whether through an allegation or the observation of a set of circumstances, members should make an accurate written record at the earliest opportunity and expedite as per the relevant procedures. All records regarding concerns or allegations must be kept in a confidential and secure place and will only be shared in line with the relevant SVP procedures on a need-to-know basis. When an allegation is made about an SVP member, the Policy dictates that the member will be suspended immediately, pending investigation. This does not presume guilt, but is the procedure demanded by the competent authorities. This procedure will apply even if the allegation is not linked to their activity with the Society. SVP members may only return to their normal activity if and when the allegation is deemed to be unfounded by the relevant body undertaking the investigation and conveyed in writing.

Information sharing

The general policy is that information will only be shared with the consent of the subject of the information. The exception to this is when seeking consent would:

- Place the child or others at increased risk of significant harm or
- Place an adult at risk of serious harm, or
- Undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime (i.e. any crime which causes or is likely to cause significant harm to a child or serious harm to an adult).

The safety and welfare of children, young people, vulnerable adults, and older people must be the primary consideration. Where information is shared, those doing so must ensure it is accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose for which they are sharing it, shared only with those people who need to see and know it, and shared securely. Information may also be legitimately shared with the diocesan or congregational insurers where appropriate as well as with the Charity Commission, to comply with their serious incident reporting requirements.

Whistleblowing

SVP members, volunteers and staff must acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of the SVP Safeguarding Officer or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children and vulnerable adults may be at risk. When a member raises a concern or reports an allegation they cannot do so anonymously.

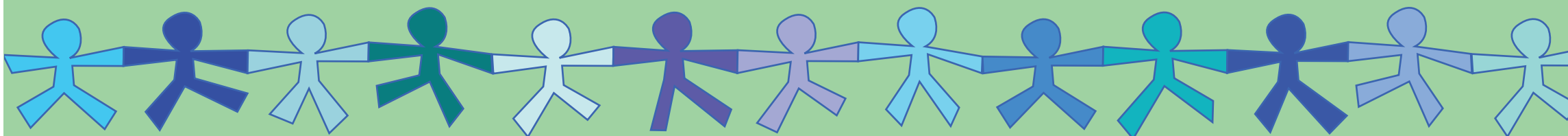
Further information

Detailed safeguarding policies and procedures can be obtained from the Secure Members' Area of the SVP website www.svp.org.uk or by request from National Office on 020 7407 4644.



Safeguarding Information for SVP Members

St Vincent de Paul Society (England & Wales)
Reg Charity 1053992 Co.3174679
A member of the International Confederation of the
Society of St Vincent de Paul



Policy statement

The St Vincent de Paul Society recognises the personal dignity and rights of children, young people, vulnerable adults, and older people towards whom it has a special responsibility. It flows from our belief in the dignity and sanctity of every human life.

The SVP and its individual members make every effort to take all reasonable steps to create a safe environment to prevent any form of abuse. This includes the undertaking of CRB Disclosures, the provision of an induction course with ongoing training and the adherence to National Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Procedures and Policies.

The SVP will liaise closely with statutory agencies to ensure that any allegations of abuse are promptly and properly dealt with, victims supported and perpetrators held to account.

All SVP members, volunteers and staff who come into contact with children, young people, vulnerable adults, or older people in their everyday work have an **INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY** to:

- Promote the welfare of these groups.
- Safeguard anyone who is considered to be at risk.
- Recognise any potential or actual safeguarding situations or concerns and act appropriately.

SVP Safeguarding Structure



Recruitment

Recruitment to the SVP will be subject to:

- The completion of a standard SVP application form
- The provision of 2 written references from suitable sources
- A formal recruitment meeting with a minimum of 2 existing SVP members
- The recorded verification of the applicant's identity
- The completion of a Safeguarding Self Declaration form by the chosen applicant
- Application for a CRB Disclosure
- The recording and storage of the applicant's details on the CSAS National Database
- Successful completion of a probationary period

Training

There is an expectation that all new members will access induction training in safeguarding awareness, policy and procedures, commensurate with the role that is being performed and the level of responsibility of the individual. This training will take place as soon as possible during the probationary period. Members will also receive regular communications on up-to date safeguarding information.

Safe working practice

All members should have an awareness of the main areas for concern and how to reduce risks in respect of:

- Relevance of risk assessments
- Visiting in pairs
- Rotating visiting pattern
- The taking of photographs
- Giving financial advice
- Assuming right of attorney of clients
- Handling of client monies for shopping, etc.
- Receipt of gifts and payments
- Improper use of Internet and communication media (mobile phones and social networking sites)

More detailed information can be found in the SVP Conference Activity Safeguarding Procedures.

