

Child Safeguarding Statement 2024

St John Ambulance Ireland is a National Volunteer Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Service provider and training institute, with local Divisions currently in Dublin, Cork, Cavan, Kildare, Limerick, Louth and Mayo.

Our adult membership provides our services locally, regionally, and nationally. Members aged 11-18 years – known as Cadets – are organised in “Cadet” Divisions where we provide training in emergency care practice and social activities. St John Ambulance Ireland, in accordance with our Code of Conduct and our legislative requirements, has agreed this Child Safeguarding Statement which is binding on all Members of the organisation.

The goal of St John Ambulance Ireland includes fostering and developing our Youth Divisions in all first aid provision and community care activities, providing emergency care treatments to children and the development of young adults to work with children in training and general organisational activities.

These activities are organised and promoted by dedicated volunteers at Divisional and National levels with the cooperation and support of an equally dedicated cohort of staff all of whom are committed to the safeguarding of children in our organisation – or who may come into our temporary care - as we seek to create a safe environment for young people in which to grow and develop.

St John Ambulance Ireland through our policies are fully committed to adhering to all aspects of safeguarding and the aligned organisational procedures will ensure that we follow and maintain both best practice and legislative requirements. St John Ambulance recognise that the welfare of children must always come first, regardless of all other considerations. Children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously. Our guiding principles are fully aligned with Children First 2015 Legislation and are applicable to all our staff and volunteers. We aim to ensure that all children and young people have a positive experience when participating in our activities or being treated by our volunteers as a patient.

We have completed an assessment of the potential for harm to children when they are participating in our youth training Divisions and attending our activities under the following headings: Volunteer Recruitment; Complaints & Discipline; Reporting Procedures; Use of Facilities; Social Media Communications and a further heading of General Risk of Harm.

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk	Local Measure implemented to reduce risk
1	Risk of harm of sexual abuse (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child by a member of staff/volunteer.	Child Safeguarding Policy. Six stage process for Member recruitment Garda Vetting of each volunteer, Relevant Safeguarding training completed, All Adults re-vetted and re-trained every 3 years.	
2	Bullying of a child.	Anti-bullying Policy	
3	Risk of harm of physical/psychological/emotional abuse (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child by a member of staff/volunteer.	Safeguarding Policy Manual Regional Support Leads & Trainers	
4	Risk of harm of abuse when away for overnight stays / excursions.	Induction of Adult Leaders Activity Safety as outlined in our 5 th addition Child Safeguarding Policy & Procedures. "Out and About Policy" for youth leaders, which includes multiple levels of training.	
5	Risk of harm of online abuse through social media.	Social media policy and Monitoring	
6	Risk of noncompliance with legal, moral, financial requirements	Audits, self-evaluation processes, compliance checks, organisational standdown of non-compliant members	
7	Risk of loss of key personal in safeguarding positions	Full department structure, succession planning, member training and supports.	
8	Risk of harm to vulnerable person	Member supports, CISM team and identified external supports in place. National Welfare Lead	



In addition to our Risk Assessment document described above, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children availing of our services:

Procedure in respect of any member of staff/volunteer who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child availing of our service. As outlined in our Safeguarding Manual, updated 5th Edition 2023.

Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of 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 St John Ambulance Ireland and TUSLA.

The following processes are in place for all adult membership:

- Recruitment & Induction procedures for those working and caring for Youth Members
- Garda Vetting in advance of active membership
- Child safeguarding training & supports
- Critical Incident Stress Management for all members (CISM)
- Health & Safety Policy and Risk Assessments
- Anti-Bullying policy and procedures
- Social Media policy & guidance for all divisions within the organisation
- Guidance for Dealing and Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse by volunteers or reported allegations from patient contact
- Appointing Designated Liaison Person for the organisation with Safeguarding team to assist in all areas of Safeguarding promotion, advice and Monitoring.
- Managing and reporting allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers.

The St John Ambulance will approve in advance the Safeguarding Officer, this person will be chosen based on experience and competencies to ensure safeguarding for the organisation.

All mandated persons as set out in Children First Act 2015, Part 3, Mandated Persons, 14 (1) (2), who will have a legal obligation to report harm of children will be informed both on joining the organization and during all training and provision of adapted/ amended policies and procedures.

The recorded list of such mandated persons will be held centrally and accessible by request where required by any statutory agency.



St John Ireland has developed a procedure for the appointment of a relevant person to act in the role of Safeguarding officer/ Designated Liaison Person, this person will hold experience and knowledge of youth work and the safeguarding of vulnerable persons. Selection of this person is approved through our Commissioner.

Our current Safeguarding Officer is Pamela Skerritt, deputised by Padraig Treacy.

Contact: child.protection.team@stjohn.ie

We are committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures contained therein that outline our intentions to keep children safe from harm. Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been prepared in accordance with the legislature requirements contained in the Children First Act 2015 as required by our organisation rules and will be reviewed in March 2026.

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.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed March 2026 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

On Behalf of

John Hughes

Commissioner

St John Ambulance Ireland.

For queries, please contact

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