

## Safeguarding Statement

### Version history

Version	Date Adopted	Facilitator	Note
1.0			

### Document controls

Action	Responsibility
Approval of document	Secretariat and Plenary
Implementation	Secretariat, Plenary, Staff and Supervisory Working Group, Members
Review	Secretariat
Date of next review	

## 1. Introduction and Purpose

South Dublin County Public Participation Network (SDC PPN) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and to ensuring that they are protected from harm while engaged in any activities associated with the PPN.

This Safeguarding Statement sets out:

- SDC PPN's commitment to safeguarding
- The principles that guide safeguarding practice
- The potential risks associated with PPN activities
- The measures in place to manage and reduce those risks

This statement is prepared in accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

## 2. Scope

This Safeguarding Statement applies to:

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Secretariat members
- PPN Representatives

in their role acting on behalf of SDC PPN.

It applies to safeguarding concerns relating to:

- Children (persons under the age of 18), and
- Vulnerable adults who may be at increased risk due to disability, illness, age, or other circumstances

## 3. Commitment to Safeguarding

SDC PPN is committed to:

- Providing a safe and respectful environment for all participants
- Acting in the best interests of children and vulnerable adults
- Taking safeguarding concerns seriously and responding appropriately
- Promoting a culture of awareness, responsibility and accountability

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility within SDC PPN.

#### 4. Nature of SDC PPN Activities

SDC PPN is a network and participation structure. It does not provide direct services to children or vulnerable adults.

However, safeguarding considerations may arise through:

- Public meetings, plenaries, events or consultations
- Engagement with member groups and representatives
- One-to-one or small group interactions
- Online meetings, communications or digital engagement

#### 5. Identification of Safeguarding Risks

The following safeguarding risks have been identified as potentially relevant to SDC PPN activities:

- Unsupervised or inappropriate contact during meetings or events
- Inappropriate behaviour or language
- One-to-one interactions without appropriate boundaries
- Online engagement without clear standards of conduct
- Failure to recognise or respond appropriately to a safeguarding concern

#### 6. Measures to Manage Safeguarding Risks

SDC PPN has the following measures in place to manage and reduce safeguarding risks:

- Clear standards of behaviour set out in the Code of Conduct
- A culture of respect, dignity and inclusion supported by relevant policies
- Clear reporting routes for safeguarding concerns
- Oversight and governance by staff and the Secretariat
- Proportionate safeguarding awareness for those acting on behalf of the PPN

Relevant policies include, but are not limited to:

- Code of Conduct
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Complaints Policy

## 7. Reporting of Safeguarding Concerns

Any safeguarding concern should be reported as soon as possible to the PPN Coordinator or designated staff member.

Concerns will be taken seriously and handled in line with Children First guidance. Where appropriate, concerns may be referred to external authorities in accordance with statutory requirements.

No individual will be penalised or treated adversely for raising a safeguarding concern in good faith.

## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

Staff, led by the PPN Coordinator, have primary responsibility for receiving and responding to safeguarding concerns.

The Secretariat has an oversight role in ensuring that safeguarding commitments and procedures are upheld.

All individuals acting on behalf of SDC PPN are expected to:

- Be aware of safeguarding responsibilities
- Act appropriately and respectfully
- Report concerns in line with this statement

## 9. Training and Awareness

SDC PPN is committed to ensuring that staff, volunteers, Secretariat members and representatives are made aware of safeguarding responsibilities and relevant guidance, appropriate to their role.

Safeguarding awareness will be proportionate to the nature and level of contact with children and vulnerable adults.

## 10. Confidentiality

Safeguarding concerns will be handled sensitively and confidentially, with information shared only on a need-to-know basis.

## South Dublin County PPN Safeguarding Statement

Confidentiality will be balanced with the requirement to protect children and vulnerable adults and to comply with statutory obligations.

### **11. Review and Publication**

This Safeguarding Statement has been approved by the Secretariat of SDC PPN.

It will be:

- Reviewed periodically and updated as required
- Reviewed if there is a significant change to SDC PPN activities
- Published on the SDC PPN website