

Job Title: Senior Childcare Worker
Reports To: Childcare Centre Manager
Department: Child & Family Services
Location: St Joseph's Childcare Centre, Co. Waterford
Job Holder: VACANT
Date of JD: 2025



Contract Type: Permanent Part Time
Hours: 22.5 hours
Salary: €17.13 per hour lvl 6
€17.31 per hour lvl 8

About SVP

SVP is a large, national, voluntary organisation with extensive experience of working with a diverse range of people who experience poverty and exclusion. Through its network of volunteers and employees, it is strongly committed to working for social justice and advocates the creation of a more just and caring society.

SVP is an equal opportunity employer committed to treating all individuals with dignity and respect. We are dedicated to protecting everyone we encounter from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation, in accordance with Irish equality legislation. All employees are expected to adhere to SVP's Dignity & Respect and Safeguarding policies, including those pertaining to children and vulnerable adults.

The founder of the Society, Blessed Frederick Ozanam, was a devout Christian and his legacy of spirituality remains a key element of the make-up of every Conference within the Society. It is normal practice within the Society that prayers are said at the beginning and end of Conference meetings or at other meetings where members are in attendance as this underpins the ethos of the Society. You are not required to take part.

Purpose of the Role

The Senior Childcare Worker plays a key leadership role in supporting the delivery of high-quality care and education in line with national frameworks and centre policies. Reporting to the Childcare Centre Manager, they ensure the well-being, safety, and development of children, while supervising staff and maintaining effective relationships with families. The role requires a sensitive, professional, and proactive approach, with autonomy in day-to-day responsibilities and escalation only when significant concerns arise.

Guidance and Authority

The post holder is expected to operate with considerable autonomy, referring matters to their line manager when significant resistance is encountered in implementing good practices or policies, when actions may place stakeholders such as children, vulnerable adults, scheme participants, volunteers, or the Society's reputation at risk, or when decisions could substantially impact the workload of others.

Principle Accountabilities

The role holder will be responsible for:

Compliance with Policies & Procedures:

- Ensure compliance with childcare legislation and centre policies.
- Work with staff and parents to maintain a safe, secure, and stimulating environment.
- Support delivery and implementation of policies in consultation with the manager.

Child Wellbeing & Care:

- Attend to children's emotional and physical needs with care and sensitivity.
- Address wellbeing issues and report child protection concerns to the Designated Liaison Person.
- Maintain safe sleep practices, hygiene, and personal care routines.
- Design routines and activities tailored to children's needs and interests.
- Plan, implement, and review developmental programmes using the Anti-Bias Approach.
- Follow Siolta, Aistear, Tusla regulations, and Children First Guidelines.

Staff Supervision & Team Leadership

- Supervise and support staff, students, and volunteers.
- Lead the room team, acting as a role model and ensuring staff-child ratios are maintained.
- Monitor records and ensure cleaning duties are completed to standard.
- Foster positive, respectful working relationships across the team.
- Support induction and training for new staff and students.
- Implement and oversee the Key Worker system effectively.

Daily Classroom Activities

- Lead educational activities, games, and outdoor play.
- Keep rooms tidy, children's records updated, and follow daily routines.
- Ensure Aistear themes are integrated into curriculum and displays.
- Encourage self-directed play and holistic learning.
- Monitor child development and support emergent interests.
- Perform related administrative tasks and follow centre policies.

Working with Parents & Families

- Greet and engage with parents in a professional and welcoming manner.
- Provide regular updates on children's progress.
- Respond to parent concerns and escalate complaints when necessary.
- Conduct centre tours for prospective families and explain policies.
- Promote the centre's image and services.
- Encourage inclusive practices for families of all backgrounds.

Administration

- Maintain accurate and up-to-date childcare room records.
- Complete daily, weekly, and compliance documentation (e.g. attendance, medication, observations).
- Act as point of contact for room-related information and tasks.

Training & Meetings:

- Attend all required training (e.g., first aid, fire safety, child protection).
- Participate in staff meetings and supervision sessions.

Training, Meetings & Programme Delivery

- Attend mandatory training (first aid, child protection, health & safety, etc.).
- Organise and lead staff meetings and planning sessions.
- Contribute to ongoing programme development and policy implementation.
- Participate in external meetings and liaise with relevant agencies (e.g., TUSLA, HSE).
- Remain open to additional training and continuous professional development.

Children's Mealtimes

- Encourage healthy eating habits and hygiene.
- Promote self-feeding and use mealtimes as enjoyable, social learning opportunities.
- Follow all relevant policies and procedures.

Health & Safety Compliance

- Follow the centre's safety procedures and risk assessment practices.
- Maintain hygiene and cleanliness in indoor and outdoor environments.
- Ensure compliance with fire and first aid policies.
- Monitor staff adherence to safety protocols and carry out room risk assessments.
- Take responsibility for the children's safety and well-being at all times.
- Maintain high standards of hygiene and report concerns to management.

Safeguarding

- Follow SVP and centre safeguarding policies.
- Stay informed on best practices in protecting children and vulnerable adults.

Other Duties

- Perform any additional responsibilities as reasonably requested by management.
- Demonstrate flexibility, creativity, and commitment to the centre's mission and values.

Challenges

There are a number of challenges in this role, largely determined by the scale, complexity, voluntary nature and high levels of local autonomy with the Society.

- Ensuring confidentiality at all times
- Ensuring a friendly and supportive atmosphere at all times.

Other Information

In addition to the duties and responsibilities listed above, the job holder may be required from time to time to perform other duties as deemed reasonable and necessary by the employer. The job holder may also be required from time to time to work or attend training/meetings at another location. As much notice as is reasonably practicable will be given of any such requirement/ change.

Employees are responsible for notifying their manager in writing of any statutory rest period or break to which they are entitled to and were not able to avail of on a particular occasion and the reason for not availing of such rest period or break within one week.

Education, Experience, Knowledge and Skills Required

Qualifications

- A minimum FETAC Level 6 in Childcare/Early Years Educator is essential.
- A degree in Early Childcare or Early Years Educator or equivalent would be an advantage.

Experience

- 2 years 'experience in relevant childcare role is essential.
- Experience of delivering best practice supervision sessions is an advantage

Knowledge

- Knowledge of the needs and issues of the poor and disadvantaged.
- Knowledge of Aisteoir, Siolta, Better start programmes and aim.
- Good knowledge of underlying principles in early years education.
- Knowledge of Covid-19 health and safety measures and procedures.
- Knowledge of up-to-date legislation, regulation and guidance governing childcare and afterschool.

Skills

- Be a strong team player.
- Ability to lead, support and motivate a team.
- Ability to work on own initiative.
- Enthusiasm and an interest in supporting and empowering young children and their families.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- Demonstrate excellent listening and supportive skills.
- Be patient with a well-developed sense of humour.
- Have a child centred approach to activities.

The person must also demonstrate the following personal attributes:

- Be honest and trustworthy
 - Be respectful
 - Be flexible
 - Demonstrate sound work ethics
 - Confidentiality
 - Other
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Compensation & Benefits

All SVP benefits are subject to the prevailing policy and associated length of service requirements	
Pension	A core DC pension offering with a 5% employer and employee contribution, and an option to increase to 7% employer contribution on a matching basis
Life assurance	Four times salary
Sick pay	Entitlement to sick pay following 13 weeks, with level of entitlement increasing with length of service (Subject to terms of policy)
Health plan	Group discount for Hospital Saturday Fund (HSF)
Annual leave	23 days annual leave for all staff. Additional day's leave at 5, 10, 15 & 20 years, with a cap of 27 annual leave days
Discretionary days	2 Discretionary days (Christmas Eve & Good Friday)*
Maternity/ Adoptive leave	18 weeks full pay for staff with more than 12 months service
Paternity leave	2 weeks full pay for staff with more than 12 months service
Christmas Voucher	€250 voucher for all staff (Subject to terms of policy)
Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)	6 counselling sessions provided per annum
Life Appreciation recognition	Additional one-off 5 days annual leave allocated in year that 25, 30, 35 & 40 years service achieved, plus €250 voucher
Retirement	Staff with 10+ years service will receive a €250 voucher on retirement
Education Support	Fee support up to €1,500 for job relevant courses, plus exam and study leave Further Education Support (Subject to terms of the policy)
Hybrid/Flexible Working Available	SVP support and embrace Flexible Working, including working from home, in line with the SVP Flexible Working Policy (Where appropriate and subject to role requirements and policy)
SVP Experience Day	Up to one discretionary day per year to experience a different aspect of the work of SVP (Subject to conditions)

The information contained in this job description is a true and accurate reflection of the job as at the date specified.