



Guidance for Mini Vinnies & Youth SSVP

School Contacts

School year 2019/20



For New Groups

If you are in contact with a primary school and they want to set up a group, please contact National Office to request a 'Mini Vinnies Starter Kit'. This can either be sent to you or directly to the school. Be sure to follow up with the staff member within a week or two of providing the information. The remainder of the steps will be the same as for existing groups. Newer groups may need more support initially.

Suggested procedure for school year- for existing groups

1. Make contact with school contact as near to start of school year as possible to arrange initial visit and meeting.
2. Meet with Mini Vinnies/Youth SSVP group- check if any new badges or prayer cards are needed for the members. Ensure that the meeting always starts with a prayer and a reflection (there may not always be time for a reflection at every meeting).
3. Contact national office to request badges etc. to be sent out.

These can either be sent to you or straight to the school. If they are sent to you, it is a good excuse for a follow up with the group. Please contact National office to let them know that the Mini Vinnies/Youth SSVP group is running in the school again. It would be useful to have the following information ready.

- a. Number of pupils in group and primaries/year groups
 - b. Name of teacher/teachers running group with email address if available
 - c. Any projects or works that are being planned for the next term/year
4. Arrange visits for the term if possible.

Once per month would be ideal. This is a good opportunity for the group to share with you what they have been doing, and you can also share your experiences with them. Remember that you can talk to the groups about the work that you are doing without mentioning any names. They learn a great deal from the experiences of members.

If the group are organising any events, it would be a good idea for at least one person from the Conference to attend. If someone is able to take photographs* at either

events or meetings, this is very helpful as it means that we can share these with other schools and Conferences.

(*Seek permission from teacher first)

How to help the group identify activities

If the group needs new projects for the term/year, a good starter discussion is to ask the group what they think they need in their lives and why they need this (NOT what they want, but what they need!)

Some examples of feedback are;

- Food- gives you energy, keeps your body going
- Water- hydrates you, helps you to keep clean
- Shelter- protects you from the elements and in most cases keeps you safe.
Usually a discussion ensues about the difference between 'shelter' and a home- this teases out the difference between simply physical shelter and somewhere that you feel that you belong.
- People - family, friends, teachers, etc.-someone who shows you that they care.

This is where you would point out that many people do not have these things that they all agree that they need. However, SSVP members work hard to make sure that people's needs are met.



Christmas appeal at Holyrood Secondary School, Glasgow



Afternoon tea at Trinity High School in Renfrew

Suggested Activities

Groups are most successful when the ideas for activities have come from the children or teachers themselves, but it is a good idea to have some in mind that you can suggest.

For school groups, their work would usually fall into two categories.

a) Projects

Practical projects are a good start-off activity for groups and younger children in particular. We would discourage fundraising in the first instance as we want to encourage the children and young people to think about the people that they are serving. Focussing on the things that they identified that people need, they usually come up with ideas for appeals for food, clothing/shoes, toiletries, small gifts or winter woollies (winter only mostly. However, socks and new underwear are always needed)

b) Person to person service

- Invite local people to attend existing school events – Mini Vinnies/Youth SSVP would act as hosts and perhaps organise refreshments for them. For example, Our Lady and St Patrick's Secondary School in Dumbarton invites members of their community to attend a Burns supper.
- Organise event in school. For example, Trinity High School in Renfrew organised an afternoon tea in March 2017 and St Rose of Lima Primary School in Glasgow welcomed older people to their school and treated them to tea and pies. These events are always very well received.

More examples of activities for Mini Vinnies and Youth SSVP groups can be found online at www.ssvpscotland.com

What are the benefits of SSVP members working with Mini Vinnies and Youth SSVP groups?

- We can be sure that school groups are carrying out work that is truly Vincentian in spirit and helping those in need.
- It helps to provide accurate information and support to primary and secondary schools that have Mini Vinnies and Youth SSVP groups respectively.
- Builds strong relationships between parishes and schools, ideally helping young people to become more involved in parish life in general and the SSVP in particular.
- Ensure that school groups have all the resources that they need to function as an SSVP group, such as prayer cards, badges and suitable reflection materials.

What does the SSVP do in Scotland?

For more information on what SSVP does across the country, please see Page 11 of the Mini Vinnies Starter Kit booklet.

What does the SSVP do in your local area/Diocese? It is very valuable for our young people to hear of what work is going on and in particular what you and your Conference are doing.

Thank you for taking the time to support our youngest SSVP members. With the support and guidance of more experienced SSVP members, we hope that they will go on to have a life long calling as Vincentians.

Contact Us:

Email: youth@ssvpScotland.com

Telephone: 0141 226 8833

Website: www.ssvpScotland.com

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Youth SSVP Scotland



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