



Società cooperativa
“Accoglienza Vincenziana”

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Update: April 2025

1. Introduction and Scope

Accoglienza Vincenziana, as a long-standing actor in the field of social solidarity, education and inclusion, recognises the full scope of its institutional responsibility to uphold, protect and actively promote the rights, safety and well-being of all children involved in its activities. This responsibility is not only a legal and ethical obligation but a fundamental expression of the organisation's values and mission. Grounded in the principle of human dignity and the recognition of children as full rights-holders, the present Child Protection Policy formalises the commitments and procedures through which Accoglienza Vincenziana guarantees a coherent, structured and proactive safeguarding system across all operational levels.

This policy is developed in full alignment with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), ratified by all EU member states and universally recognised as the foundational instrument in the field of children's rights. In particular, it operationalises key articles of the Convention, such as Article 3 (the best interests of the child), Article 12 (the right to be heard), and Article 19 (protection from all forms of violence, abuse and neglect). It also draws on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, especially Article 24, which enshrines the rights of the child within the broader framework of the European legal order. Furthermore, the policy reflects the priorities and methodologies of the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child 2021–2024, which calls for integrated, participatory and inclusive child protection systems across Member States.

Accoglienza Vincenziana interprets these frameworks not merely as compliance tools but as a strategic orientation: a way to translate abstract principles into everyday practice, through a combination of institutional capacity, community engagement, and continuous learning. The organisation understands that safeguarding children requires both structure and culture — that is, not only the existence of formal policies and mechanisms, but the creation of a workplace and project environment where protection, inclusion and participation are the norm, and not the exception.

It extends to all professionals operating under the auspices of the organisation, including but not limited to permanent staff, educators, pedagogical coordinators, social workers, psychologists, administrative personnel, external consultants, volunteers, interns, and occasional collaborators. The policy also applies to third-party providers, subcontractors, and anyone else who, in the course of their function, may interact with children on behalf of or in the name of the organisation.

The applicability of the policy is not limited by geography or funding source. Whether an activity is financed through public, private, national or European funds, and whether it takes place in Italy or abroad, the same standards of protection shall apply. This universality is central to ensuring that children can enjoy consistent safeguards regardless of the context or channel through which they come into contact with the organisation.

The policy is also designed to interact with other institutional documents, including the Code of Ethics, project-specific operational guidelines, staff regulations, and protocols concerning the protection of personal data, inclusion, gender equality and non-discrimination. It is intended to be a living document — adaptable to the evolving needs of children and responsive to changes in the legal, social and technological landscape.

Accoglienza Vincenziana considers it essential that this policy be actively known, understood, and endorsed by all individuals and entities bound by its scope. Therefore, all personnel and partners will receive structured induction and regular updates on the policy content and its practical implications. Children and families participating in the organisation's programmes will also be informed — through accessible and child-friendly communication — of their rights, the mechanisms in place to protect them, and the channels available for feedback and complaints.

The protection of children is not an isolated responsibility but a collective duty that must permeate all aspects of the organisation's structure and practice. It entails a constant effort of vigilance, prevention, education and accountability. Accoglienza Vincenziana is aware that the simple existence of a policy does not automatically guarantee safety: implementation, ownership and monitoring are essential. To this end, the organisation will ensure that this policy is not only formally adopted but effectively integrated into organisational governance, operational systems, and institutional culture.

2. Philosophy and Principles

The child protection philosophy embraced by Accoglienza Vincenziana is rooted in a rights-based paradigm that recognises children not as passive recipients of care but as full holders of rights, dignity and agency. This approach marks a clear departure from paternalistic or charity-based models, and positions the organisation within the contemporary European and international framework on child safeguarding, where the child is viewed as an active protagonist in their own life and in the shaping of their environment. The policy is thus not limited to preventing harm, but is aimed at enabling a protective ecosystem in which each child can flourish, express themselves, and be meaningfully involved in decisions that affect their lives.

Central to this vision is the principle of the best interests of the child, which functions as the guiding norm in all organisational decisions, actions and interventions. This principle, enshrined in Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and in Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, obliges institutions to treat the well-being of the child as a primary consideration. In practice, this means that any activity involving children — from educational workshops to policy advocacy, from digital interactions to project design — must be planned, implemented and assessed with a clear focus on its impact on children's rights, security and holistic development.

This principle is complemented by a robust commitment to non-discrimination, which ensures that every child — regardless of gender, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, disability, socio-economic status, family composition, or any other condition — is equally entitled to protection and respect. Accoglienza Vincenziana recognises the intersectional nature of vulnerability and actively addresses the specific needs of children in marginalised or disadvantaged situations. In doing so, the organisation ensures that protection measures are not only universal but also equitable, tailored and responsive to diversity.

The policy also incorporates the fundamental principle of child participation, which affirms that children must not only be protected but also heard. In line with Article 12 of the UNCRC, Accoglienza Vincenziana promotes the meaningful and age-appropriate involvement of children in decision-making processes. Participation is not interpreted as tokenism or consultation limited to formal procedures, but as an ongoing process in which children contribute to shaping the policies, services and environments that concern them. This includes their active role in the co-design of educational materials, digital tools, awareness campaigns and feedback mechanisms.

Closely linked to participation is the principle of transparency, which ensures that all procedures related to child protection — including reporting mechanisms, response protocols, and safeguarding standards — are clearly communicated and understood by all stakeholders, including children and families. Transparency fosters trust, reinforces accountability, and supports a culture in which safeguarding responsibilities are shared and visible. Accoglienza Vincenziana understands that safeguarding systems are effective only when they are accessible and credible in the eyes of those they are meant to serve.

Equally important is the principle of accountability, which requires that all members of the organisation, regardless of role or seniority, are held to clear standards of behaviour and performance in relation to child protection. Accountability entails institutional mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, but also a culture of ethical responsibility in which each individual is aware of their duties and the consequences of their actions. It includes the obligation to report suspected violations, the transparency of investigations, the implementation of corrective measures, and the availability of effective remedies.

Taken together, these principles — best interests, non-discrimination, participation, transparency and accountability — constitute the ethical and operational backbone of the policy. They inform the design of training programmes, the development of educational and digital tools, the criteria for partner engagement, and the procedures for recruitment, monitoring and evaluation. They are integrated into all internal and external communications and are reflected in the visual, narrative and symbolic language used in activities involving children.

Moreover, these principles are not static; they are operationalised through context-sensitive adaptation. This means that their application takes into account the developmental stage of the child, the socio-cultural context in which the interaction occurs, and the specific vulnerabilities that may arise in certain environments — including online spaces, refugee or migrant settings, or communities experiencing poverty or exclusion. The organisation commits to a constant process of reflection and dialogue to ensure that these principles are not only declared but lived, interpreted and renewed in response to evolving challenges.

By grounding its child protection policy in these normative principles, Accoglienza Vincenziana reaffirms its identity as an organisation that does not separate protection from empowerment, nor care from rights. The policy, and the principles that inspire it, are intended to act as a moral compass and a practical guide — ensuring that each action taken in the name of safeguarding is consistent, legitimate and justifiable from the perspective of the child.

This principled approach also offers a shared ethical vocabulary for cooperation with European and international partners, particularly in projects such as DIGIKIDS. It enables the organisation to participate in transnational networks on child rights protection, to contribute to the development of common standards, and to act as a multiplier of best practices at local, national and European level.

In conclusion, the philosophy underpinning this Child Protection Policy reflects a coherent, ambitious and forward-looking vision. It is based on the recognition that children are subjects of law, capable of expression

and entitled to grow up in environments that protect and enhance their potential. It affirms that safeguarding is not a matter of contingency or exception, but a systemic priority embedded in every aspect of the organisation's identity and practice. It demands professionalism, vigilance and humility — and above all, it calls for the continuous effort to ensure that every child is protected not only from harm, but from invisibility, silence and exclusion.

3. Institutional Commitment and Preventive Action

The institutional commitment of Accoglienza Vincenziana to child protection is not an ancillary dimension of its work, but a structural and strategic axis that permeates its governance systems, its operational procedures and its internal culture. This commitment is grounded in the conviction that the protection of children is not merely about responding to harm once it occurs, but about cultivating an ecosystem of trust, safety and ethical responsibility that actively works to prevent harm from arising in the first place. Child safeguarding is therefore treated as a cross-cutting priority, integrated systematically into the organisation's planning, decision-making, recruitment, training and evaluation processes.

From a governance perspective, Accoglienza Vincenziana ensures that child protection considerations are embedded at the highest levels of institutional oversight. The Board of Directors and the Senior Management Team assume explicit responsibility for the strategic direction and compliance of safeguarding commitments. This includes the adoption and periodic review of the Child Protection Policy, the allocation of human and financial resources to support its implementation, and the establishment of reporting lines and accountability frameworks to monitor progress. Governance documents and institutional charters explicitly reference the rights and protection of the child as guiding principles of the organisation's mandate.

Operationally, safeguarding is integrated into all phases of programme and project management. In the planning stage, child protection is included in risk assessments, both as a standalone dimension and as a transversal concern intersecting with education, health, social inclusion and digital innovation. For every initiative involving children, a safeguarding plan is developed, outlining potential vulnerabilities, risk mitigation strategies, staff roles, communication protocols and incident response procedures. These plans are not static: they are revisited regularly and adjusted based on field observations, participant feedback and changes in context.

Accoglienza Vincenziana places particular emphasis on prevention, recognising it as the most effective and ethically sound form of protection. Prevention begins with capacity-building: all staff, volunteers and external collaborators who come into contact with children are required to participate in comprehensive training on child protection standards, child development, rights-based approaches, ethical conduct and digital safeguarding. This training is not conceived as a one-time formality but as an ongoing process, embedded in professional development pathways and updated in line with emerging risks and international best practices. Training sessions include both theoretical knowledge and practical scenarios, enabling participants to identify warning signs, manage disclosures, and adopt proactive safeguarding behaviours.

In parallel, the organisation works to build awareness and agency among children and families themselves. Educational activities are designed not only to transmit content, but to create safe spaces for dialogue about rights, boundaries, safety, and trust. Children are informed — in age-appropriate, accessible formats — about their right to be safe, their right to be heard, and the existence of channels to report concerns. Awareness materials are also developed for parents and caregivers, who are engaged as essential partners in the safeguarding ecosystem. In this way, protection becomes a shared responsibility, co-constructed by the community and not imposed in a top-down manner.

The organisation adopts a preventive posture that is particularly attentive to situations of structural and contextual vulnerability. Accoglienza Vincenziana operates in diverse settings where children may be exposed to multiple, intersecting risk factors, including poverty, migration, social exclusion, disability, family instability or exposure to violence. In these contexts, children may experience increased invisibility and reduced capacity to seek help. The organisation responds by applying a vulnerability-sensitive lens to all safeguarding measures, ensuring that children who are most at risk receive the highest level of attention and tailored protective strategies.

A distinctive area of preventive intervention relates to digital environments, which pose new and rapidly evolving challenges. Children today interact in digital spaces that are often unregulated, hyper-connected and algorithmically driven, making them vulnerable to cyberbullying, online grooming, data misuse, misinformation, and emotional manipulation. Accoglienza Vincenziana integrates digital safeguarding into all activities involving technology, including the use of educational platforms, social media, messaging applications and digital storytelling tools. Guidelines are established for safe digital communication, consent for the use of images and data, and protocols for identifying and responding to online harm. Children and families are also educated on

digital rights and responsibilities, enabling them to navigate virtual spaces with confidence and critical awareness.

To institutionalise prevention, the organisation has established internal coordination mechanisms for safeguarding. A Child Safeguarding Officer is formally appointed, tasked with supporting implementation, monitoring compliance, managing reports, and providing technical advice. In addition, interdepartmental safeguarding focal points ensure that protection concerns are addressed across units and functions — from human resources to communications, from project delivery to infrastructure management.

The commitment to prevention is also reflected in recruitment and human resources policies. All personnel working with or near children undergo rigorous screening procedures, including background checks, reference verifications and structured interviews that assess safeguarding attitudes and experience. Employment contracts and volunteer agreements include explicit reference to the organisation's Code of Conduct and safeguarding obligations. Breaches of policy result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal or referral to authorities, depending on the severity of the incident.

The organisation is aware that prevention requires not only rules and training but also a supportive institutional culture. For this reason, Accoglienza Vincenziana promotes a workplace ethos of ethical vigilance, peer support and reflective practice. Staff are encouraged to raise concerns without fear of reprisal, to debrief difficult situations, and to seek guidance when faced with uncertainty. Leadership models accountability, communicates the importance of safeguarding, and fosters an environment in which the safety of children is not negotiable but assumed as a collective standard.

Finally, prevention is approached as a dynamic process. The organisation commits to regular internal audits, external evaluations, and stakeholder consultations to assess the effectiveness of its preventive systems. Lessons learned from incidents, simulations, or routine monitoring are integrated into policy reviews and training modules. Preventive action is never finished; it evolves as the organisation learns, as contexts change, and as children themselves express new needs and perspectives.

4. Professional Conduct and Behavioural Standards

Accoglienza Vincenziana affirms that the quality and credibility of its commitment to child protection depend not only on institutional policies but also, and above all, on the conduct of the individuals who act in its name. Professional ethics and behavioural integrity constitute the most immediate and visible expressions of the organisation's values. For this reason, all persons working with or on behalf of the organisation — including permanent staff, consultants, educators, volunteers, interns, contractors and associated personnel — are required to uphold and embody the highest standards of ethical, professional and relational behaviour in their interactions with children.

These expectations are not abstract ideals, but are operationalised through a set of concrete behavioural standards that serve both preventive and pedagogical functions. First and foremost, all personnel must avoid situations of private or unsupervised contact with children, unless strictly necessary and justified by the nature of the activity, and always in accordance with clearly defined protocols. This requirement is designed not only to prevent abuse but also to protect staff from false or misinterpreted allegations. Where individual contact is essential — for example, in psychosocial support sessions or individualised tutoring — it must take place in spaces that are visible, accessible and registered in the institutional schedule. Doors should remain open when possible, or glass partitions should be used; parents, colleagues or supervisors should be informed; and sessions should be documented.

Staff are expected to refrain from any form of physical, verbal, or non-verbal behaviour that could be perceived as inappropriate, ambiguous, or intrusive. This includes overt actions such as physical contact that is unnecessary or excessively intimate, as well as more subtle behaviours — such as prolonged eye contact, exclusive attention, emotionally suggestive language, or unsolicited personal disclosures — which may cross boundaries or generate discomfort. Expressions of care and encouragement are natural in educational and social work, but must be guided by professional restraint, respect for the child's personal space and dignity, and an awareness of the relational power asymmetry that characterises adult-child interactions.

The same standards apply to digital communication, which has become an integral component of many educational and social inclusion programmes. Digital interactions with minors — whether through educational platforms, messaging apps, video calls or social media — must be conducted exclusively via institutional channels, monitored when necessary, and subject to clear time, content and format boundaries. Private messaging between staff and minors through personal accounts is strictly prohibited. All digital communication must protect the child's privacy, confidentiality and psychological safety, and avoid informal, emotionally charged or ambiguous tones. Staff are trained to recognise the specific vulnerabilities associated with digital

spaces, including online grooming, emotional dependency and algorithmic exposure, and to intervene preventively when these risks are identified.

In accordance with the principles of equity and non-discrimination, staff must avoid all forms of favouritism, exclusion or differential treatment. This includes tangible actions, such as providing gifts or privileges to specific children, as well as intangible cues, such as excessive praise, preferential attention, or alignment with certain individuals or groups. These dynamics can distort educational relationships, create divisions among children, and lay the groundwork for emotional manipulation. Staff are instructed to maintain a consistent, impartial and transparent stance in all relational contexts, encouraging group cohesion, mutual respect, and a balanced distribution of time, resources and recognition.

The organisation explicitly prohibits ambiguous gestures, suggestive comments, and any form of emotional manipulation that could compromise the autonomy or emotional well-being of the child. This includes pressuring children to disclose personal information, testing their emotional reactions, inducing loyalty conflicts, or using them to mediate interpersonal tensions. Emotional integrity is a non-negotiable component of safeguarding: the child must never be instrumentalised, idealised or subjected to projection, even unconsciously. For this reason, reflective practice, peer supervision and psychological support are offered to staff to help process the complexity of their roles and manage relational boundaries appropriately.

To ensure that these standards are not merely aspirational, Accoglienza Vincenziana adopts a system of contractualisation and verification. The Code of Conduct for Child Protection is annexed to all employment, consultancy and volunteer agreements, and must be signed by the individual as a condition of engagement. The document outlines in clear language the acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, the rationale behind each standard, and the consequences for violations. Refresher sessions are conducted periodically, and ethical dilemmas are discussed in staff meetings and supervision spaces, to foster a culture of vigilance and mutual accountability.

Supervisory structures play a central role in monitoring behavioural compliance. Line managers are trained to observe relational dynamics, provide feedback, and intervene constructively when concerns arise. Observation is not seen as intrusive but as a shared responsibility: a collective effort to ensure the quality, safety and ethical soundness of the organisational environment. When breaches are suspected or reported, a confidential and structured investigation process is activated, in line with the response procedures outlined in the subsequent sections of this policy.

In addition to professional staff, special protocols are established for external collaborators, such as artists, facilitators, digital experts or guest speakers, who may not be part of the organisation's regular training cycles. These individuals receive targeted orientation sessions and are required to sign the Code of Conduct and adhere to child protection standards. No individual is allowed to interact with children under the auspices of Accoglienza Vincenziana without having been formally briefed and vetted in accordance with institutional procedures.

Importantly, behavioural standards are not imposed in isolation but are contextualised within a broader framework of educational ethics and participatory dialogue. Children are involved in the co-construction of relational norms, particularly in workshop and laboratory settings. Group agreements, codes of respect and classroom charters are developed collaboratively, empowering children to articulate their expectations, set boundaries, and hold adults accountable. This dialogical approach reinforces children's agency, fosters mutual respect and enhances the protective function of behavioural standards by embedding them in shared understanding and reciprocal commitment.

5. Reporting Mechanisms and Response Procedures

A key pillar of any effective child protection framework is the existence of accessible, trustworthy and well-structured reporting mechanisms, capable of responding to suspicions or disclosures of abuse, misconduct or risk in a way that ensures safety, confidentiality, procedural rigour and legal compliance. Accoglienza Vincenziana fully acknowledges its institutional responsibility not only to establish such mechanisms but to ensure that they are well understood, actively used, and continuously improved in light of experience and contextual developments.

The organisation guarantees that all children, their families, staff members, volunteers, external collaborators, and any other stakeholders have the right and the means to report concerns, suspicions or confirmed cases of abuse, neglect, exploitation or inappropriate behaviour without fear of reprisal, discrimination or secondary victimisation. This commitment reflects a broader organisational culture of transparency and accountability, where child protection is considered a shared duty, and where silence or inaction in the face of risk is never tolerated or normalised.

To implement this guarantee, Accoglienza Vincenziana has developed a multi-channel reporting architecture, which includes both internal and external pathways. Internally, a clearly designated Child Safeguarding Officer (CSO) is appointed and formally mandated to act as the primary focal point for all matters concerning child protection. The CSO is a professionally qualified individual, trained in safeguarding legislation, child development, trauma-informed practices, and incident management. Their responsibilities include receiving and documenting reports, coordinating appropriate responses, ensuring compliance with national and EU legal frameworks, and liaising with statutory child protection services and law enforcement authorities when necessary.

The CSO operates with the support of a Child Protection Advisory Group, a multidisciplinary body that may include representatives from programme teams, legal affairs, psychological support services, and external child protection experts. This structure ensures that decisions regarding complex or sensitive cases are made collaboratively, based on evidence and with a clear understanding of risks, obligations and child-centred ethical standards. However, the CSO retains primary authority for immediate case management and communication with reporting parties.

To ensure accessibility, reporting can be done in person, via telephone, through a secure digital form, or via a dedicated email address monitored by the CSO. In physical spaces — such as schools, centres, or community hubs — clearly marked reporting boxes and child-friendly visual materials explain in accessible language (and where needed, in multiple languages) how children can report concerns. Staff and volunteers receive regular training to help children understand that they can speak up at any time and will be taken seriously.

All reports — whether they originate from a direct disclosure, an observation, a third-party notification or an anonymous submission — are treated with maximum discretion and confidentiality. The identity of the child, the reporting party, and any other involved individual is protected, and information is shared strictly on a “need-to-know” basis within the safeguarding and legal framework. Reports are formally registered in a secure, access-controlled registry and are subject to retention rules in line with data protection regulations and procedural integrity.

Once a concern is reported, a triage and risk assessment is immediately carried out by the CSO to determine the appropriate course of action. This may include:

- providing immediate psychosocial or medical support to the child;
- initiating a fact-finding internal review or inquiry;
- referring the case to public child protection services or law enforcement;
- temporarily suspending the subject of the allegation from child-related activities;
- convening a case conference if the situation is complex or involves multiple stakeholders.

Response procedures are strictly time-bound, with defined benchmarks for acknowledgment of the report, preliminary assessment, protective action, and follow-up communication. All actions are documented in a structured case file, and any deviation from the standard protocol must be justified and validated by a second reviewer within the safeguarding system.

Particular attention is paid to the emotional and psychological well-being of the child throughout the entire process. The organisation employs a trauma-sensitive approach to communication and interviewing, ensures the presence of trusted adults where appropriate, and avoids repeated questioning or re-traumatisation. In cases involving allegations against staff or trusted adults, support is also provided to peers, groups, and parents, as collective distress may arise from the incident.

Staff members are trained not only to report but also to recognise early signs of potential harm, including subtle changes in behaviour, indicators of neglect, or risky dynamics in digital communication. A proactive “duty to report” is instilled in all organisational actors: no concern is too small to raise, and all suspicions are logged, even if no immediate action is required. This contributes to a safeguarding culture where vigilance is routine and not reactive.

Importantly, Accoglienza Vincenziana ensures that reporting mechanisms are protective rather than punitive. The aim is not to criminalise or stigmatise but to intervene constructively, respecting all legal rights while always prioritising the safety and dignity of the child. Internal reviews focus on lessons learned and systemic improvements, rather than scapegoating or blame. When an allegation is unfounded, measures are taken to restore the reputation of wrongly accused individuals, while reinforcing a culture that values transparency over silence.

The organisation also provides mechanisms for appeal and review, whereby parties involved in a case can contest decisions or request a second-level evaluation. This guarantees procedural fairness and strengthens the legitimacy of the safeguarding system.

Finally, periodic simulations and drills are carried out within the organisation to test the effectiveness of the reporting system under real-time constraints. Feedback is collected from all participants — including children where appropriate — and integrated into procedural updates. These exercises are not only operational but cultural: they reinforce the message that safeguarding is active, serious and central to the organisation's identity.

6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

A Child Protection Policy must never be a static or merely formal document; it must instead function as a dynamic, reflexive and evolving framework that adapts to contextual changes, integrates emerging knowledge and remains attuned to the lived experiences of children. In this perspective, Accoglienza Vincenziana affirms that ongoing monitoring, systematic evaluation and structured mechanisms for continuous improvement are indispensable to ensuring the effectiveness, relevance and legitimacy of its safeguarding strategy.

The organisation has developed an integrated monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework specifically tailored to child protection. This framework includes both quantitative and qualitative methodologies and is designed to assess not only procedural compliance but also the actual impact of safeguarding measures on children's well-being, on institutional culture and on stakeholder trust. The M&E system operates across multiple levels — from day-to-day supervision and activity reports to mid-term reviews and strategic impact assessments — and it is embedded within broader organisational governance and quality assurance structures.

At the heart of this system lies the principle of contextual sensitivity and child-centred accountability. This means that monitoring tools are designed not only to check that procedures are followed, but to verify whether they actually serve the purpose of making children safer, more empowered and better protected. The organisation acknowledges that checklists and compliance indicators, while necessary, are not sufficient. True effectiveness can only be measured by listening to children's voices, observing their environments, and analysing patterns over time.

To this end, children and families are systematically involved in feedback processes. Feedback is collected through multiple channels — anonymous surveys, structured interviews, focus groups, suggestion boxes, creative expression activities — and is disaggregated by age, gender, vulnerability profile and setting. The organisation ensures that these mechanisms are age-appropriate, linguistically accessible and culturally sensitive. Particular efforts are made to reach children who may be less likely to speak up, such as those with disabilities, language barriers, traumatic experiences or limited digital access.

Feedback from children is not limited to specific incidents or formal complaints. It also informs the broader perception of safety, inclusion, trust and emotional well-being. Questions such as “Do you feel safe here?”, “Do you know whom to talk to if something worries you?”, and “Have adults listened to your concerns?” are integrated into regular activities and programme evaluations. This allows the organisation to detect blind spots, identify systemic risks and act before harm occurs.

In parallel, internal monitoring is carried out through regular audits, which assess the implementation of training obligations, documentation standards, staff performance, case handling quality and interdepartmental coordination. These audits are conducted by the Child Safeguarding Officer in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit and, when appropriate, with the involvement of external evaluators. Findings are reviewed by the senior management team and presented to the Board of Directors with clear recommendations for corrective action, resource allocation or policy revision.

The evaluation system also tracks training effectiveness and knowledge retention. Participants in safeguarding training — including staff, volunteers and external collaborators — are assessed before, during and after the sessions through practical exercises, scenario-based discussions, and knowledge tests. Follow-up assessments are conducted after six and twelve months to verify behavioural integration and identify needs for refresher training. The results of these evaluations feed into the design of new training cycles and the update of educational materials.

Another core component of the evaluation system is the monitoring of digital safeguarding practices. As digital contexts evolve rapidly, with new platforms, behaviours and risks emerging constantly, Accoglienza Vincenziana has established a dedicated Digital Safety Taskforce. This unit reviews data protection compliance, monitors online interaction protocols, and analyses incident reports related to cyberbullying, digital overexposure, or misuse of images. The Taskforce issues quarterly reports and collaborates with both IT and educational departments to ensure that the policy reflects real-world dynamics and digital ethics standards.

The commitment to continuous improvement is formalised through an annual Policy Review Cycle, coordinated by the Child Safeguarding Officer and overseen by the Executive Committee. This cycle includes four stages: (1) collection of feedback and data, (2) analysis and synthesis, (3) stakeholder consultation and drafting of revisions, and (4) formal approval and dissemination. The review process considers new legal obligations (both national and European), emerging international best practices, jurisprudential developments, lessons learned from incidents, and innovations in safeguarding theory and methodology.

In addition, the organisation conducts benchmarking against external standards and peer organisations. It participates in European-level networks and projects — such as DIGIKIDS — that offer opportunities for comparative learning, peer review, and policy harmonisation. External experts are periodically invited to provide independent reviews, ensuring that the policy remains aligned with international conventions, regulatory evolutions, and ethical expectations in the field of child rights.

Policy updates are formally communicated to all internal and external stakeholders. Changes are integrated into staff orientation materials, highlighted in team meetings, and disseminated through internal digital platforms. Where relevant, updated materials are adapted into child-friendly formats, including visual guides, illustrated booklets and simplified videos, so that children can understand their rights and protections directly, without needing adult mediation.

Accoglienza Vincenziana also commits to a culture of institutional humility and openness to change. Mistakes are acknowledged, systemic issues are addressed transparently, and the organisation views feedback — even critical — as a source of improvement rather than a threat. Corrective actions are tracked, results are communicated, and a continuous dialogue is maintained with stakeholders to ensure that progress is sustained over time.