



COVID-19 School closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at St John's Catholic Comprehensive School

Child Protection Policy Addendum

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum of the St John's Catholic Comprehensive School Safeguarding policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

1. Vulnerable Children
2. Attendance monitoring
3. Designated Safeguarding Lead
4. Reporting a concern
5. Safeguarding training and induction
6. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff
7. Online safety in school
8. Children and online safety away from school
9. Supporting children not in school
10. Supporting children in school
11. Peer on Peer abuse
12. Additional resources

School name: St John's Catholic Comprehensive School

Policy Owner: Odette Kelham

Date: 30th March 2020

Date shared with staff: 2nd April 2020

Key Contacts:

Role	Name	Contact Number	Email
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Headteacher	Mr Matthew Barron	01474 534718	mbarron@stj.kent.sch.uk
Chair of governors	Mr Tony Thomas	N/A	

1. Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

The lead people for this will be: Mrs Kelham, Mrs Brooker and Mrs Butler (CiC).

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, St John's Catholic Comprehensive School, or the social worker, will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

2. Attendance monitoring

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not arrive at school on any given school day. St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

To support the above, St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will, when communicating with parents/carers and carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will notify their social worker.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school will complete both the KCC and the government daily online attendance form to keep a record of children of critical workers and vulnerable children who are attending school.

3. Designated Safeguarding Lead

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and 5 Deputy DSLs.



The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mrs Odette Kelham

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Mr Matthew Barron, Mr Dan Walton, Mr Mike O'Shea, Mrs E Brooker and Mrs P Butler

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to our child protection online management system, 'My CONCERN' and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required, liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school.

It is important that all St John's Catholic Comprehensive School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day, staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

The DSL or deputy DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

4. Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the processes outlined in the school's Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via 'My CONCERN', which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their 'My CONCERN' from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead, one of our deputy DSLs (e.g. Mrs Brooker) and the Headteacher. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

If the concern is urgent, the member of staff will speak to a DSL in person or via phone/video if they are not on site, immediately.

In the event that a member of staff or volunteer cannot make contact with a DSL, this will not delay them taking immediate action to safeguard a child.



Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should use a welfare form to report the concern to the headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Mr Tony Thomas. St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

5. Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID-19 virus.

For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter St John's Catholic Comprehensive School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:-

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of our school's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

6. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (KCSIE).



In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact. Where St John's Catholic Comprehensive School are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral.'

During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

7. Online safety in school

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system. Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

8. Children and online safety away from school

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the Staff Code of Conduct. St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. The following expectations must be adhered to at all times when a staff member is running a virtual lesson:



- The staff member running the lesson has administered a pilot session with the Associate Head teacher, or alternative senior staff member that the Associate Head teacher has delegated this responsibility to, and has been given authorisation to proceed with running virtual lessons with students.
- The virtual lesson is administered using a platform that has been agreed with the Associate Head teacher, or alternative senior staff member that the Associate Head teacher has delegated this responsibility to.
- A pre-agreed invitation email, detailing the school's virtual lesson expectations and protocols, has been sent to all of the students, and their respective parents, that are to be invited to attend the virtual lesson by the staff member.
- The Associate Head teacher, or alternative senior staff member that the Associate Head teacher has delegated this responsibility to, has been informed of the details (timing, which students are to be invited to join the virtual lesson) by the staff member prior to it taking place.
- The virtual lesson takes place on an audio only basis (no video/webcam)
- The virtual lesson only takes place if two or more student attends the virtual lesson (no 1-1s)
- The staff member running the lesson records the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.
- The staff member running the lesson records the entire audio and associated chat/messaging of the virtual lesson using the recording software incorporated to the platform being used.
- The aforementioned recording is uploaded directly to one-drive, or where this is not possible, is saved onto the staff member's school computer until technical support can assist in uploading the recording to one-drive.
- The staff member running the on-line session agrees to the subsequent viewing of the recording by a member of the school's safeguarding team if any safeguarding concern is raised.
- For those students who do not have access to the internet and/or a device that can support the Zoom app, wherever practical, the school will make alternative arrangements for them. An example of this could be to allow a pupil to borrow a school laptop, to enable them to have equal access to this remote education.

9. Supporting children not in school

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan must be recorded on 'My CONCERN', as should a record of contact that has been made.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan. This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers at St John's Catholic Comprehensive School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

10. Supporting children in school

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID-19.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Where St John's Catholic Comprehensive School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – a member of the Headship team will discuss them immediately with the governors.

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11. Peer on Peer Abuse

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School recognises that during the closure, a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where the school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of the Child Protection Policy.

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on 'My CONCERN' and appropriate referrals made.

12. Additional support and links

- As well as through existing St John's Catholic Comprehensive School mechanisms, learners, staff and parents/carers can access age appropriate and practical support and advice via a range of national and local services:
 - Childline: www.childline.org.uk
 - Kent Resilience Hub: <https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk>
 - NSPCC: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/how-to-have-difficult-conversations-with-children/>

DfE Guidance

- Closure of educational settings: information for parents and carers: www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers
- Vulnerable Children Guidance: www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people
- COVID-19: guidance for educational settings: www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers: www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): attendance recording for educational settings: www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings

Specific Links relating to Coronavirus for Learners and Parents/Carers

- Kent County Council: www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/coronavirus
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/
- Mind: www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/
- Young Minds: <https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/talking-to-your-child-about-coronavirus/>



- Kent Children's University: Home Resources Learning Packs:
www.theeducationpeople.org/blog/kent-childrens-university-home-learning-resources-pack-is-live/
- Children's Commissioner:
 - Children's guide to coronavirus:
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publication/childrens-guide-to-coronavirus/
 - Resources for parents during coronavirus:
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/coronavirus/resources/
- Sport England: www.sportengland.org/stayinworkout
- Place2be:
 - www.place2be.org.uk/about-us/news-and-blogs/2020/march/coronavirus-supporting-children-who-may-be-especially-vulnerable/
 - www.place2be.org.uk/about-us/news-and-blogs/2020/march/coronavirus-information-for-children/

Online Safety

- NCA-CEOP: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/
- Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org/
- Childnet: www.childnet.com/blog/keeping-children-happy-and-safe-online-during-covid-19
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/working-remotely-advice-professionals-parents-posh-rhc
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/
- Parent Info: <https://parentinfo.org/>
- BBC Own it: www.bbc.com/ownit

Domestic Abuse

- Domestic Abuse Services: www.domesticabuseservices.org
- Victim Support: 0808 16 89 111 www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/supportline
- Clarion Housing Association – Service provider for North and South Kent
 - North Kent: (Dartford & Gravesham, Swale and Maidstone) Clarion DA confidential Helpline: 07376 637069 (Mon-Fri 9am – 5pm)
- National Women's Aid Domestic Abuse 24hr helpline: 0800 2000247



St. John's Catholic
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