

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

Child Protection Policy Addendum

From the week commencing 1 June 2020, the government is asking schools and colleges to plan to welcome back more children, as part of the response to coronavirus (COVID-19). Secondary schools and colleges are expected to begin some face to face contact with Year 10 and 12 pupils.

The way St John's Catholic Comprehensive school is currently operating in response to coronavirus continues to be different, however, as more children return, our safeguarding principles in accordance with '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)' (KCSIE) 2019, remain the same:

- the best interests of children will always come first
- if anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy DSL is available
- unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online

Any wider opening risk assessments ([as set out in action or education and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June](#)) and related Health and Safety risk assessments will be appropriately linked into our safeguarding approach and child protection policy.

This addendum of St John's Catholic Comprehensive school Child Protection policy contains details of any amendments to our existing safeguarding arrangements and should be read alongside our current policies and procedures: which can be found on our website: www.stjohnscs.com

All staff and volunteers will be aware of the policy addendum and any revisions; the addendum will be made available publicly.

Schools and all childcare providers are still being 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 Child Protection 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: 1st June

Date shared with staff: 9th June

Key Contacts:

Role	Name	Contact Number	Email
Designated Safeguarding lead	Mrs Odette Kelham	01474 534718 ex3753	okelham@stj.kent.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Mr Matthew Barron	01474 534718	mbarron@stj.kent.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Mr Dan Walton	01474 534718	dwalton@stj.kent.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Mr Mike O'Shea	01474 534718	moshea@stj.kent.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Mrs Liz Brooker	01474 534718 ex3753	ebrooker@stj.kent.sch.uk
Headteacher	Mr Matthew Barron	01474 534718	mbarron@stj.kent.sch.uk
Chair of governors	Mr Tony Thomas	N/A	

1. Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children for the purpose of continued attendance during the coronavirus outbreak are those across all year groups who:

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 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.

Those who have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities, and who could therefore benefit from continued attendance. This might include children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training'), those living in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers and others at the provider and local authority's discretion.

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.

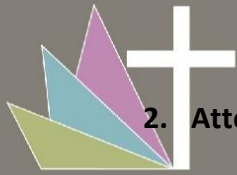
The lead people for this will be: Mrs Kelham, Mrs Brooker and Mrs Butler (CiC).

Vulnerable children attendance is expected, where it is appropriate for them (that is, where there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household, and/or following a risk assessment for children with an EHC plan), so that they can gain the educational and wellbeing benefits of attending. Vulnerable children – regardless of year group – that have not been attending in the recent period are expected to return to school where this would now be appropriate for them to do so. St John's will work with and support the relevant families and pupils to return to school, where attendance is appropriate.

- 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.
- For vulnerable children who have an education health and care (EHC) plan, attendance is expected where it is determined, following [risk assessment](#), that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment
- For vulnerable children who are deemed otherwise vulnerable, at the school or local authority discretion, attendance is expected unless the child/household is shielding or clinically vulnerable.

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/carers 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

From the 1st June, children in specified year groups and vulnerable children will be returning to school as agreed.

- No one with symptoms should attend school for any reason.
- Vulnerable children's attendance is expected, where there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household, and/or following a risk assessment for children with an EHC plan.
- Parents and carers will not be penalised if their child does not attend educational provision whilst current Covid-19 restrictions are in place.

For learners agreed to be in school, we will resume our usual day-to-day attendance registers and processes in accordance with existing policies.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school will continue to complete the [Educational Setting Status](#) form to keep a record which gives the DfE daily updates on how many children and staff are attending.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school will:

- continue to notify social workers where children with a social worker do not attend and will also follow up directly with their parent/carer.
- continue to follow up with any parent/carer whose child has been expected to attend and doesn't.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school will ensure that regular contact is maintained with children (and their families) who are not yet returning to school.

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.

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.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school will ensure that the DSLs (and deputies) have time (*where resources allow*) to support staff and children regarding new concerns, and making referrals as appropriate, as more children return.

4. Reporting a concern

Where any concerns are raised about learners or staff, St John's Catholic Comprehensive school will follow existing and updated local arrangements as set out by [Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership](#) (KSCMP) and as outlined in our existing child protection policy.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school recognises that new safeguarding concerns may arise regarding individual children as we see them for the first time in person following partial school closures.

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.

Prevent is a vital part of our work to safeguard children from radicalising influences; the school will continue to follow local processes where we have concerns during this challenging time.

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. Formal DSL refresher training will be undertaken as soon as possible; the DSLs (and deputies) will continue to do what they reasonably can to keep up to date with safeguarding developments.

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. During the return to school period, 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. The Home Office and Immigration Enforcement have also temporarily adjusted the [right to work checks](#) due to the coronavirus outbreak.



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. Supporting Wellbeing

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school recognises that staff, parents/carers and learners may experience some degree of emotional wellbeing or anxiety challenges as more children return to school.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school recognises that many children consider school to be a safe place and the current situation may impact on learners', staff and parent/carers mental health.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school will plan to ensure everyone feels supported through an inclusive culture and that everyone returns to a positive working environment to help relieve any anxiety or fear.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school will ensure the whole community are welcomed. Staff and learners and will be given the opportunity for wellbeing check ins within trusted relationships.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school will ensure that all children who are categorised as vulnerable or children of critical workers, as well as those children returning to school from 1st June onwards, are appropriately supported.

Staff will address the wellbeing of learners through a range of approaches including age/ability appropriate activities.

Pastoral staff will be available for learners and will be given the time to provide support as required.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school is conscious of the wellbeing of all staff and the need to implement flexible working practices in a way that supports staff and promotes good work-life balance.

Senior leaders and the DSL (or deputy) will be available to provide support to staff as required.

Teachers will be aware of the impact the current circumstances can have on the mental health of learners (and their parents) who are continuing to work from home, including when setting expectations of children's work.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school will continue to signpost staff, learners and parents/carers, on or off site, to a range of appropriate sources of support, internally and externally.

8. Online safety in school

As more pupils return to school, St John's Catholic Comprehensive School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online to those pupils both in school and at home. This includes the use of an appropriate filters and monitoring systems (filtering system). Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place. St John's Catholic Comprehensive will ensure that the Technical department continue to work throughout this pandemic. There is a contingency arrangement if the Technical staff become unavailable.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school will continue to use a variety of resources to support them to effectively safeguard pupils online. These include but are not limited to:

The [UK Council for Internet Safety](#), Internet Matters [vulnerable children in a digital world-report](#), the [NSPCC Learning website](#) and the [UK Safer Internet Centre's professional online safety helpline](#), email helpline@saferinternet.org.uk or telephone 0344 381 4772 which provides support for the children's workforce with any online safety issues they face.

9. Children and online safety away from school

Staff at St John's Catholic Comprehensive should be doing what they reasonably can to keep all their children safe. Whilst more children return to school, others will continue to stay at home and, in many cases, will be continuing to engage with their school online.

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 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), the relevant Subject Leader and Year Leader have all been informed of the lesson details (timing, students invited to attend) 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 more than one student attends the virtual lesson (no 1-1s)
- The staff member running the virtual lesson keeps a record of the date, time, duration and attendance at the lesson.
- The staff member running the virtual lesson records the entire audio and associated chat/messaging of the virtual lesson using the recording software incorporated to the platform being used. (The software settings adopted by the school ensures recordings are automatically uploaded and saved to Microsoft Stream)
- The staff member running the virtual 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 TEAMS 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.

10. Supporting children not in school

The Government has strongly encouraged children in eligible year groups to return to school unless they are self-isolating or shielding, however there may be a significant number of children still not attending 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.

11. 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 needs to be confident we have up to date information on learners returning to site which reflects any changes in circumstances which could impact on their welfare.

St John's Catholic Comprehensive school led by DSL or deputy, will do all we reasonably can to ask parents and carers to advise us of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that we should be aware of before a child returns to school.

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.

12. 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.

Government guidance has recommended smaller class sizes, staggered lunch breaks, social distancing and several adaptations to the school day that will require a range of strategies to help manage children's interactions with one another and their own understanding of what is appropriate behaviour at this time.



13. 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/



- o 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
 - o 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