



## St Philomena's Catholic School

### Child Protection and Safeguarding: COVID-19 Addendum

<b>Written by:</b>	Philippa Mathews	20 April 2020
<b>Approved by:</b>	Board of Governors	30 April 2020
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## Important Contacts

Role	Name	Telephone	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Philippa Mathews	01255 674492	headteacher@stphilomenas.com
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Kathryn Oxley	01255 674492	koxley@stphilomenas.com
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Bethan Venables	01255 674492	bvenables@stphilomenas.com
Chair of Governors	Mrs J Geldard		geldard01@btinternet.com
Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding	Mrs A O'Sullivan	01255 429778	avrilosullivan@summitservices.org.uk
Deputy Chair of Governors	Mrs M Fuller		marcifuller@hotmail.com

The telephone numbers for children's social care for the authority near to the School:

Role	Name	Telephone	Email/Online
Call for Advice and Guidance	Children & Families Hub	0345 603 7627	<a href="http://www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk/">www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk/</a>
Online request for <b>non urgent</b> support	Children & Families Hub	Complete a Request for Support Form	<a href="http://www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk/">www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk/</a>
Child Protection Immediate Risk	The Essex Safeguarding Children's Board (ESCB)	03330 135371	<a href="http://www.escb.co.uk">www.escb.co.uk</a>
Duty Line for NEW referrals	Children's Workforce Allegations Team	03330 139797	Room C228, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH. Email: <a href="mailto:escb@essex.gov.uk">escb@essex.gov.uk</a>
Out of Hours If a concern is raised outside of office hours, and you think a referral to Social Care is required you should contact Essex Social care	Essex Social care	0345 606 1212	<a href="mailto:childrens.safeguarding@essex.gov.uk">childrens.safeguarding@essex.gov.uk</a> <i>(please note this is not a secure address so any information sent must be password protected)</i>
Local authority Designated Officer for child protection (LADO)	Jacque Wilkes	01245 436635	<a href="mailto:jacque.wilkes@essex.gov.uk">jacque.wilkes@essex.gov.uk</a>

## 1. Scope and Definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from the Essex Safeguarding Children's Board and the Children and Families Hub.

It sets out changes to our normal Safeguarding Policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers, and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, our normal Safeguarding Policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Have a social worker, including children: with a child protection plan; assessed as being in need; looked after by the local authority.
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

## 2. Core Safeguarding Principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first.
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately.
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements).
- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children.
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online.

## 3. Reporting Concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children still attending school and those at home.

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

## 4. DSL (and deputy) Arrangements

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely by:

[headteacher@stphilomenas.com](mailto:headteacher@stphilomenas.com)      [koxley@stphilomenas.com](mailto:koxley@stphilomenas.com)      [bvenables@stphilomenas.com](mailto:bvenables@stphilomenas.com)

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email if there is a change to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them.

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies) know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be the Deputy Head, Mr N Whitfield. You can contact him by: [nwhitfield@stphilomenas.com](mailto:nwhitfield@stphilomenas.com).

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure they (the senior leader) can:

- Identify the most vulnerable children in school.
- Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary.
- Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments.

### **5. Working With Other Agencies**

We will continue to work with children's social care, and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our local safeguarding partners.
- The local authority about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need.

### **6. Monitoring Attendance**

As most children will not be attending school during this period of school closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend school during the closure doesn't attend, or stops attending. In these cases we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by telephone and email.
- Notify their social worker, where they have one.

We are using the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible.

### **7. Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse**

We will continue to follow the principles set out in Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer on peer/child on child abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – about both children attending school and those at home.

### **8. Concerns About a Staff Member or Volunteer**

We will continue to follow the principles set out in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site or remotely.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk) for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

### **9. Support for Children Who Aren't 'Vulnerable' But Where We Have Concerns**

We have the option to offer places in school to children who don't meet the Department for Education's definition of 'vulnerable', but who we have safeguarding concerns about. We will work with parents/carers to do this.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10 below.

### **10. Contact Plans**

If applicable, we will put in place contact plans for children with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

- They won't be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or
- They would usually attend but have to self-isolate.

Each child will have an individual plan which sets out:

- How often the school will make contact; this will be at least once a week.
- Which staff member(s) will make contact; as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well.
- How staff will make contact; this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both.

We will agree these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them every 3-4 weeks. If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care or the Police.

### **11. Safeguarding All Children**

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in Section 3 above.

For children at home, they will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems.
- No contact from children or families.
- Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls.

Children are likely to be spending more time online during this period – see Section 12 below for our approach to online safety both in and outside school.

See Section 13 below for information on how we will support pupils' mental health.

## **12. Online Safety**

### **In School**

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

### **Outside School**

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing policies:

- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Digital Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Devices
- Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children

All parents will be informed in writing about the use of online technology to provide remote learning. This written information will include detail about the software involved, the safety measures in place at school and advice for them to follow at home.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in Section 3 of this addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

### **Working with Parents**

We will communicate with parents in writing, making sure they:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online.
- Know what our school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school.
- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides.
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online.

## **13. Mental Health**

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

## **14. Staff Recruitment, Training and Induction**

### **Recruiting new staff and volunteers**

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

### **Safeguarding Induction and Training**

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction.
- A copy of our Safeguarding Policy (and this addendum).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1.

### **Keeping Records of People on Site**

We will keep a record of which staff and volunteers are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

We will use the single central record to log everyone working or volunteering in our school each day.

### **15. Monitoring Arrangements**

As guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, this policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher who is also the DSL. At every review, it will be approved by the Link Governor for safeguarding, Mrs A O'Sullivan.

### **16. Links with Other Policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Devices
- Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Confidentiality of Pupils
- Digital Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children
- Visiting Speaker Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy