



**St Cuthbert's  
Catholic High School**

*Live life in all its fullness*

# **Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum**

**Approved by:**

Father P Swanson,  
Chair of Governors

**Date: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

**Last reviewed on:**

29/04/2020

**Next review due by:**

As required

## Contents

Important contacts .....	2
1. Scope and definitions .....	3
2. Core safeguarding principles .....	3
3. Reporting concerns.....	3
4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements .....	3
5. Working with other agencies .....	4
6. Monitoring attendance .....	4
7. Peer-on-peer abuse.....	5
8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer .....	5
9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns .....	5
10. Contact plans .....	5
11. Safeguarding all children .....	6
12. Online safety .....	6
13. Mental health .....	7
14. Staff recruitment, training and induction .....	7
15. Children attending other settings .....	8
16. Monitoring arrangements.....	9
17. Links with other policies.....	9

## Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Justin McAuley	Justin.mcauley@stcuthberts.com
Deputy DSL	Danielle Anderson	Danielle.anderson@stcuthberts.com
Temporary Deputy DSL/ Safeguarding Governor Other contactable DSL	Joanne Grimes	Joanne.grimes@stcuthberts.com
Headteacher	Catherine Twist	Catherine.twist@stcuthberts.com
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Timba Kangoli	timbakangoli@sthelens.gov.uk
Chair of governors	Father Phillip Swanson	stbartsttheresasthelens@rcaol.org.uk

## 1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from the DfE and local authority (LA) Joanne Davies.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection 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 child protection 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 Sep 19](#).

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.

All non-urgent concerns should be uploaded onto CPOMs - anything urgent should be reported to DSL or Deputy without delay, face to face is possible (social distancing) or by phone or email and then written up on Behaviour Watch.

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, whenever required and wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed in the ['Important contacts'](#) section at the start of this addendum.

There will be a DSL or Deputy DSL on site at all times whilst school is open.

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by emails containing the rota as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them.

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, 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 Headteacher Catherine Twist or Deputy Headteacher Joanne Grimes. You can contact them by email on [catherine.twist@stcuthberts.com](mailto:catherine.twist@stcuthberts.com) and [joanne.grimes@stcuthberts.com](mailto:joanne.grimes@stcuthberts.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 and at home.
- 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
- Ensure Attendance of relevant staff at virtual Strategy, FAM and CP conferences on behalf of DSL

## 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:

- DFE
- 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 contacting them directly or through our EWO Joy Sheridan
- 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.

We liaise with Heather Addison the LA SKIE Officer to report on the attendance and well-being of all vulnerable students.

## 7. Peer-on-peer 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 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. This will include children where cases have recently closed, where there has been an Operation Encompass Notification and Post LAC children. This will be done by risk assessing the benefits of staying at home or being in school.

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

We have 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 has an individual plan which sets out the nature and frequency of the contact:

- **How often the school will make contact** – this will be bespoke to the student/family with some being every day and some once a week. All details of conversations will be written up and saved on Behaviour Watch. Any concerns will be reported to DSL straight away.

- **Which staff member(s) will make contact?** – as far as possible, this will be the relevant Pastoral Year Team member/Learning Mentor/SEND or staff who know the family best - in liaison with the DSL and Deputy if required.
- **How staff will make contact?** – this will be over the phone, email and doorstep visits, or a combination of both - if telephone contact can't be made a doorstep visit will be made to check on welfare.
- Where there is a Family Intervention Worker they will be contacted to offer help. If no contact made, Social Worker will be informed.

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them on a fortnightly basis.

If we can't make contact and we have concerns for their welfare, we will consider a referral to Social Care and/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 students' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in section 3 above. Teachers are making calls to all children in the class and have been trained to listen for any warning signs. They are also speaking to the children too and report any concerns.

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 students' mental health.

## 12. Online safety

### 12.1 In school

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

Our IT Team are still in work and can investigate any inappropriate use of the internet in school through our notifications.

### 12.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing Staff code of conduct/IT acceptable use policy.

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.

### **12.3 Working with parents and carers**

We will make sure parents and carers:

- 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

We will include any advice in our MY Ed communications as well as on our school website and social media platforms.

## **13. Mental health**

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for student mental health for all students. This will be through our Farne Mentoring Team via Farne Talk. Our school Mentors and Pastoral Staff offer telephone consultations if needed and regularly give positive messages about how to keep mentally healthy.

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

When setting expectations for students 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**

### **14.1 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. We are not planning on having any volunteers in school at present.

## 14.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

We currently have no staff on loan from other schools but if we were to be part of a Hub Model we would be going to the identified 'School Hub High School' so our staff would be the ones 'on loan.'

The identified school as well as ourselves will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working from our school, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

## 14.3 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 Child Protection policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of our Child Protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

## 14.4 Keeping records of who's 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. This is outlined on the rota and then a sheet is highlighted each day to show which staff are on site.

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, including staff 'on loan'
- Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers on loan from elsewhere

## 15. Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan

- Details of the child's social worker
- Details of the virtual school head

Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO can't share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in section 4 will do this.

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

## **16. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 3-4 weeks by Justin McAuley. At every review, it will only be approved by the full governing board, if there are any significant changes. If there are minor changes they will be agreed with the Chair of Governors, Father Phillip Swanson.

## **17. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Anti- Bullying Policy