

Temporary Addendum to
SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR
St Bernard's High School
during restricted school attendance

APPROVED BY GOVERNORS 9 March 2021
(This may be done as a Chair action)

DATE SHARED WITH STAFF 10 March 2021

POLICY TO BE REVIEWED September 2021

KEY CONTACTS

	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD:	Helen Barnes	01703 343583
DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD:	<i>Laura Whittle</i>	01702 343583
DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR:	Pat Blight	
HEAD TEACHER	Anthony Sharpe	

During this period of restricted school attendance, if it is not possible to have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) on school site, there will always be access to a trained Designated Lead or Deputy, either from our school, or another school.

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**Addendum to
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1. INTRODUCTION

1. Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children and, in conjunction with other agencies, they play a vital role in safeguarding children during the current emergency arrangements. This is an addendum to our existing Child Protection Policy and has been produced to cover arrangements in place during restricted school attendance due to COVID-19.

1.2 This addendum to the Child Protection Policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. All staff will be made aware of the addendum and that it forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school and should be read in conjunction with the following:

- The current Child Protection Policy;
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, 2020\)](#)- Part one of which is provided to all staff, including Annex A to staff who work directly with children;
- The school Behaviour Policy;
- The school Staff Behaviour Policy (sometimes called a Staff Code of Conduct);
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' \(HMG, 2015\)](#);
- the safeguarding response to children missing from education;
- the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Annex B of KCSIE); and
- [Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools Guidance for all schools in England January 2021.](#)

2. CURRENT CONTEXT

2.1 From 4th January 2021, Schools have been instructed to remain open only for a limited number of children; vulnerable children and children of workers who are critical to the coronavirus COVID-19 response, including those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors.

2.2 Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child;
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan;
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or the Local Authority (including Children's Social Care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:

- children and young people on the edge of receiving support from Children’s Social Care services or in the process of being referred to Children’s Services
- adopted children or children on a Special Guardianship Order
- those at risk of becoming NEET (‘not in employment, education or training’)
- those living in temporary accommodation
- those who are young carers
- those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
- care leavers
- others at the provider and Local Authority’s discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health.

2.3 We shall continue to work with and support children’s social workers and the Local Authority Virtual School Head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be **Helen Barnes**

2.4 There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend the education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at severe risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want their child to attend, and their child is considered vulnerable, we will explore (with the social worker) the reasons for this and agree an appropriate plan for that child. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, the school and/or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. We shall encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

2.5 Social workers will be notified about vulnerable children who need to self-isolate to agree the best way to maintain contact and offer support to the vulnerable child or young person.

2.6 We shall check if vulnerable children are able to access remote education support, to support them to access it (as far as possible) and to regularly check if they are doing so.

2.7 We want to support all our children during this time and will consider making a place available to other children with vulnerabilities, in discussion with other professionals involved and based on a risk assessment process.

3. ADDITIONAL SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 Although we are working very differently during this period of closure, the principles within our existing Child Protection Policy still apply, as does the duty on all staff to safeguard children.

3.2 We have a robust risk assessment in place and will continue to regularly review this and update it as required. This review process will consider whether our current plans and protective measures are:

- Effective;
- working as planned;
- updated appropriately considering any issues identified and changes in public health advice.

3.3 We have assessed the needs of all our pupils and put in place plans to support them and their families during this period of closure. These plans include an education offer (details of which have been shared separately with parents for their child) and arrangements to support pupils with their safety and wellbeing. These plans may include actions and interventions from other agencies, as we continue to work with partners to provide an appropriate level of support. These plans will be

regularly reviewed to ensure they reflect current need and updated accordingly to ensure appropriate support is in place.

3.4 For vulnerable children (including those with a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan), existing plans will be reviewed in conjunction with other relevant agencies and updated to ensure they reflect the current situation and meet need. The school will work with the Virtual School Headteacher to support our children in care. Children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will be assessed in consultation with the Local Authority, other involved agencies and parents.

3.5 During this period, there are temporary arrangements in place and Child Protection Conferences, Core Group and Child in Need meetings will take place virtually (online).

3.6 It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that the school is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any statutory meeting called for children on the school roll, or previously known to them. Where possible, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) / carer(s). The member of staff attending the meeting will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions and, in the case of a Conference, to express a view, at the end of the meeting, as to whether the child(ren) should be made subject to a Child Protection Plan.

3.7 OTHER SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR St Bernard's High School

Our school site remains open for vulnerable children and children of key workers, the Designated Safeguarding Leads/Deputy are Mrs Barnes and Mrs Whittle. A member of the Senior Leadership Team will be physically on site each day and will liaise directly with the Designated Safeguarding Leads/Deputy if any incidents of a child protection nature occur.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will be available at all times by phone for all members of staff who have any concerns in relation to any child. The Senior Leadership Team and Reception have the phone numbers of both the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Welfare Checks (method and frequency)

While our school site is closed to the majority of students during these circumstances, our Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy and the Heads of Year will continue to remain in contact with those children who we deem are vulnerable or have a multi-agency statutory plan in place to safeguard them.

Our Pastoral Team (Heads of Year, Form tutors, Learning Mentors) will continue to remain in touch with parents and students either through email or phone calls.

Selected staff have access to a spreadsheet that lists all the students in the vulnerable groups and is 'ragged' using a green, amber and red scheme; this indicates the amount of welfare calls the family would receive in a week.

Green – once a week

Amber – twice a week

Red – three times a week.

If there are any issues raised during this time regarding their care, safety or ability to be contacted then the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will follow our local safeguarding procedures and contact MASH.

During these unprecedented circumstances the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will be available to be contacted by children, families and other services and agencies to ensure the safety and well-being of all our vulnerable children. They can be contacted via the school telephone number in the first instance and whether they are on or off site they will gain contact with any family or professional as soon as possible.

Contact with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy should be within the hours of the school day. The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy cannot be responsible for not receiving calls and messages outside of these times.

In the event that children or families need support immediately please contact the Mash Team immediately or contact the Police.

Plans and Response to safeguarding or child protection concerns

As always our duty of care is to keep children safe and while the arrangements of the physical care of students and physical presence of our Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy may be different during this time our response remains the same.

We will continue to follow the principles set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education when for example:

- managing disclosures and acting on any concerns staff have about a child immediately.
- Concerns about a staff member or volunteer
- Refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Working with parents and carers (Risks)

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 students to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- We will continue to offer our current support for mental health for all students via our school counsellor.
- 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.
- The Head of Inclusion has completed a Risk Assessment for all EHCP students.

3.8 Supporting children in school

3.8.1 Our 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.

3.8.2 We shall 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 COVID19.

3.8.3 Where we have concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the Governing Body.

3.9 Supporting children not in school

3.9.1 Where a vulnerable child is not in school, or a child has been identified to be on the edge of Social Care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, we shall ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan must be recorded on the safeguarding record, and a recording of contacts made.

3.9.2 The communication plans can include remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded. The school and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan. This plan must be reviewed regularly and, where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

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

4. PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

4.1 The mental health and wellbeing of all our pupils is always a priority. Understandably, this is a worrying and challenging time for everyone, and we understand that families may be placed under considerable additional pressures, potentially coping with issues such as increased anxiety, financial difficulties, caring for children at home full time and illness or bereavement.

4.2 We want to continue to do all we can to support our pupils and it is vital, therefore, that we work in partnership with parents / carers to do so. Parents / carers should share any concerns about the wellbeing of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented. Staff and pupils are also aware of how to spot potential wellbeing or mental health issues and how to respond.

4.3 We shall catch up/check in regularly with pupils, whether on site or remotely and via assemblies.

4.4 We shall ensure that, where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, appropriate support will be place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded appropriately.

4.5 We recognise that, without the protective factor of attending school, some of our children may be more vulnerable and that not attending school can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers are very aware of this and will raise concerns with the DSL.

4.6 Teachers will adjust their expectations of pupils' work where they are at home accordingly.

5. MONITORING ATTENDANCE

5.1 Children for whom on-site provision is being provided will be recorded in line with the normal school attendance requirements.

5.2 We shall follow up any pupil that we were expecting to attend school, who does not do so, in line with our risk assessment.

Telephone calls will be made to the parents/carers in these circumstances.

To support this, when communicating with parents/carers, we shall confirm that emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

5.3 In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, we shall notify their social worker.

5.4 If there is an unexplained absence of, or injury to, a child subject to a Child Protection Plan, the child's Key Worker must be notified **immediately**.

6. ONLINE SAFETY FOR CHILDREN AWAY FROM SCHOOL

6.1 We recognise that most children will not be physically attending school and that it is likely they will be spending longer periods of time online. We know that children and young people use the internet to access information and support, but that they are also vulnerable online in terms of:

- **Content** - exposure to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful material. For example, pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- **Contact** - subjection to harmful online interaction with other users. For example, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults;
- **Conduct** - personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm. For example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

6.2 It is important for parents to be vigilant about their child's online activity and to inform the school of any concerns they may have about their child in this respect.

6.3 We have provided parents and students with information about online safety and websites to support them to keep safe. Particularly useful websites are:

- [CEOP](#) (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)
- [Childnet](#)
- [Internet Matters](#)
- [Net Aware](#)
- [NSPCC](#)
- [Parent Info](#)
- [Safer Internet](#)

6.4 It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for any 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.

6.5 Staff are aware that children are vulnerable to being bullied or groomed for abuse or radicalisation online. Staff will be vigilant to any signs that this may be occurring and report any concerns in the usual way.

6.6 Teachers understand how to keep children safe online during remote learning.

6.7 Online teaching follows the same principles as set out in the staff code of conduct.

6.8 There are clear rules for behaviour during remote lessons which pupils and teachers know and teachers monitor and enforce, including:

- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household;
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, preferably not in bedrooms and the background should always be blurred;
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed;
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day;

- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background;
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils;
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

6.9 Children, parents and staff to raise any concerns about remote lessons via the school surveys we undertake, or by emailing senior staff directly.

6.10 We will ensure that the use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

6.11 We shall review our remote education provision in accordance with government guidelines and feedback from children, parents and staff, paying particular attention to pupil safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

7. REPORTING A CONCERN

7.1 As always, all staff members who have a concern about a child, should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Any member of staff who has a concern, receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or, in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead). Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

7.2 During this period of restricted school attendance, if it is not possible to have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) on school site, there will always be access, via phone or online video, to a trained Designated Lead or Deputy, either from our school, or another school.

7.3 Where a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to one of the above options, a senior leader should take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to the child protection online management system and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and liaising with children's social workers, where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college.

7.4 If a concern is raised out of hours, the staff member should record the concern and alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Head using the contact details outlined in this policy.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot contact a DSL or the Head, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headteacher and, if there is risk of immediate harm, refer directly to **Children's Social Care (01702 215007(option 1 - option 3) MASH+ (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub))** or **(Emergency Duty Service (after 5.30 (4.30 on Fridays) and weekends) 0345 606 1212 and/or the Police (999/111))**.

7.5 Peer on Peer Abuse

7.5.1 We recognise that, during the restricted attendance period, a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where we receive a report of peer on peer abuse, we shall follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and those outlined within our 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 and appropriate referrals made.

8. STAFF CONDUCT

8.1 All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct and the principles in our Staff Code of Conduct still apply during this emergency period. We have adapted our policies to reflect the current arrangements to ensure they cover remote learning.

8.2 The usual processes for reporting concerns about a member of staff apply. Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should notify the headteacher. Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors.

9. SAFER RECRUITMENT, VOLUNTEERS & MOVEMENT OF STAFF

9.1 It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children.

9.2 When recruiting new staff, we shall continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for our setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (KCSIE).

9.3 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.

9.4 Where we 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.

9.5 We shall 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.

We shall 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.

9.6 Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the pandemic, 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, we shall continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

9.7 Volunteers

9.7.1 In appointing volunteers, the school will follow safer recruitment processes.

9.7.2 We may use volunteers to assist in handing out and securing COVID-19 test kits to students and staff members. Other duties may be required such as building test kits, cleaning down areas and directing people.

9.7.3 Under no circumstances will a volunteer, in respect of whom no checks have been obtained, be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

9.7.4 Supervision must be:

- by a person who is in regulated activity,
- regular and day to day; and
- reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children.

9.7.5 Volunteers who, on an unsupervised basis provide personal care on a one-off basis will be in regulated activity. This means that if a volunteer is administering a COVID-19 test whilst unsupervised, they will be in regulated activity and therefore require an Enhanced DBS with Barred List check.

9.7.6 Existing volunteers in regulated activity do not have to be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check (which includes barred list information).

9.8 Safeguarding Training and induction

9.8.1 All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). The Designated Safeguarding Lead should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

9.8.2 Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter school, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

9.8.3 If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will consider 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; and
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual.

9.8.4 For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the Multi-Academy Trust HR Manager that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

9.8.5 Upon arrival, new staff will be given a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of Designated Safeguarding Lead arrangements.

Acknowledgement:

We acknowledge the Essex County Council model 'Child Protection Policy During School Closure' and the Stowe Valley MAT both of which contributed to the development of this model policy.

Model Addendum: January 2021

Allison Francis

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