



SACRED HEART

Safeguarding Policy Addendum
(Remote Learning and within school)



SACRED HEART

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Key Staff

ROLE	NAME
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Larry Clarke
Deputy DSL (DDSL)	Michael Donnelly
Designated member of Senior Leadership Team if DSL (and Deputy DSL) cannot be on site	Dave Douglass
Headteacher	Suzanne Howell
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Melanie Scott
Chair of governors	Denise Kendall
Nominated Safeguarding Governor	Brid Fitzpatrick

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies from the start of the spring term 2021. It reflects the latest advice (regarding for example 'Children with Education, Health and Care Plans' (EHCP's), from the Local Authority Designated Officer, Children's Social Care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and Children in Need), from our 3 local safeguarding partners, (Newcastle Children's Social Care, LEA and the LADO).

It sets out changes to our normal Safeguarding policy in light of Covid-19 and the national lockdown currently in place, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal Safeguarding policy continues to apply.

This addendum is subject to change, in response to any new or updated guidance the government or our local safeguarding partners may publish. We will keep it under review as set out in section 15.

In this addendum, where we refer to measures to protect students who are at home, this means those who are learning at home for reasons due to Covid-19 – for example, due to the attendance restrictions during national lockdown, or if they need to self-isolate when they would otherwise still be attending.

In this addendum, where we refer to vulnerable children, this means those who are assessed as being in need, including children:

- With a Child Protection plan
- With a Child in Need plan
- Looked after by the Local Authority (LAC)
- Have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- On the edge of receiving support from children's Social Care Services or in the process of being referred
- Adopted or on a special guardianship order
- At risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Young Carers (YC)
- Care Leavers
- Facing difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example, due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
- In need of support for their mental health

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will follow the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

We will always have regard for these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy will 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 must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children at school and those at home.

All safeguarding concerns by staff should be reported in the usual manner (see our Safeguarding Policy), by contacting the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and always ensuring confirmation that a DSL or 'Deputy DSL' has received it and is acting on it immediately (see Sec 5.5 -5.16 of current Safeguarding Policy).

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 the important contacts are listed in the 'Key people' section at the start of this addendum. Staff are aware of who the Lead DSL and Deputy DSL are. If either of these are unavailable staff are aware that any member of the SLT team can be contacted.

The Lead DSL will continue to:

- 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

Advice from our Local Safeguarding Partners

We will continue to respond and act upon the guidance and advice provided by our 3 Local Safeguarding Partners during the period that new arrangements are in place. We will review any updated advice, share with appropriate staff and ensure school / academy practice reflects new guidance.

Advice from the Local Authority

Where the Local Authority issues further advice and guidance regarding the following areas of our activity, we will review our practice, share with appropriate staff and ensure school / academy practice reflects this new advice.

Areas to consider:

- Students with EHC plans
- Advice from the LADO / Children's Social Care
- Reporting concerns where issues are identified
- Changes in referral thresholds
- Response to those identified as Children in Need

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from our 3 local safeguarding partners.

6. Monitoring attendance

We will follow guidance from the Department for Education on how to record attendance (including for Students learning remotely) and what data to submit.

During the national lockdown, only vulnerable children and children of Key workers will attend school in person. Where any child we expect to attend school doesn't attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, via the attendance manager and attendance officer, in liaison with the relevant pastoral team
- Notify their Social Worker, where they have one

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, through the pastoral team, and attendance team.

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 children attending both school and those at home.

8. Concerns about a staff member or supply teacher

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/supply teachers 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 for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

9. Contact plans

We have contact plans for children with a Social Worker, and other children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where the child is at home.

Each child has 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 (Head of Progress, SENDCO, Looked After Children (LAC) Lead)
- How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both

We have agreed these plans with Children’s Social Care where relevant, and will review them. The LAC Lead in school will continue to liaise with social care on a weekly basis and update these plans where required.

If we can’t make contact, we will (after using our attendance officer to visit) follow our usual policy and request that police to do a ‘safe and well check’ and inform Children’s Social Care.

10. Safeguarding all children

10.1 All children

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

All Staff will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on students’ mental health that are also safeguarding concerns. They will act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in section 3 above.

10.2 Children at home

The school will maintain contact with children who are at home. Staff will continue to contact all children at home (via email, telephone and through online lessons and tutor time) to help identify any concerns. They will use school phones and devices to make calls home.

Staff 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

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

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

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is to contact and get support from other schools in our Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust.

11.2 Outside school

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

11.3 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, where relevant, 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 teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

This information and guidance will be delivered through our Heads of Progress during PSHCE time, assemblies, regular emails and also by tutors during 'remote' tutor time. Information will also be on our website, and will be shared when required in the weekly letter from the Headteacher.

12. Mental health

If any student, parent or carer has concerns about mental health and wellbeing, they should contact the relevant Head of Progress, Deputy Head of Progress or our counsellor Mrs Caroline Williamson. The school will make sure students, parents and carers are aware of this.

12.1 Children in school

Staff will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have on students' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including students being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed. Our full-time counsellor will be available to support all children in need, either in person or remotely (depending on circumstances).

12.2 Children at home

Where possible, we will continue to offer all our current support for student mental health for all students at home. Our full-time counsellor will also be available to support ('remotely') all children in need, who are not in school.

We will also signpost all students, parents/carers 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.

Staff will be alert to mental health concerns in children who are at home, and act on these immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum.

13. Staff recruitment

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that staff 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.

When carrying out DBS checks and right to work checks, we will follow the latest guidance from the DBS, Home Office and Immigration Enforcement as appropriate (for example, with regards to the process for verifying documents). We will inform candidates about the intended process as soon as reasonably practicable. All new staff will also receive the appropriate training and online protocols in relation to online teaching.

14. Safeguarding induction and training

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

New staff will continue to receive a safeguarding induction in line with the expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance (from our 3 local safeguarding partners or the Department for Education) is updated, and as a minimum 4 weeks by the Senior Leadership Team.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding policy
- Staff Code of Conduct policy
- IT Acceptable Use policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Virtual Learning Policy