



St. Philomena's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Miss V Maher

COVID-19
School Closure Arrangements
For Child Protection and Safeguarding

	Name	Date
Written by	V Maher	April 2020
Agreed by FGB	Remote FGB Meeting	June 2020

CONTEXT

From 20th March 2020, parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response – who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were 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 to the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our safeguarding arrangements in the following areas :-

- Context
- Key contacts
- Vulnerable children
- Attendance monitoring
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Reporting a concern
- Safeguarding Training and Induction
- Online safety in school
- Children and online safety away from school
- Supporting children not in school
- Peer on peer abuse

KEY CONTACTS

The following individuals have specific responsibility for safeguarding matters

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Miss Veronica Maher
(vmaher2.305@lgflmail.org)

Deputy DSL: Mrs Rachel Williams
Miss Gemma Parry

VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health 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.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability. Senior leaders, especially the DSL (and Deputies) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those already in receipt of intervention from external agencies or on the cusp of receiving support from children's social care.

St Philomena's will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

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 DSL will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent/carer.

Where the parent/carer is concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, the DSL or social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent following the advice set out by Public Health England.

St Philomena's will encourage vulnerable children to attend school.

ATTENDANCE MONITORING

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day- to- day attendance processes to follow up non-attendance.

The DSL and social workers (where applicable) will agree with the parent/carer whether children in need should be attending school and then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

In line with the DfE and Bromley Local Authority, St Philomena's will complete the required attendance information and send to the appropriate email addresses. This currently includes a daily register of the children who are currently supported by a Child Protection Plan. St Philomena's will follow all directives issued from the DfE and Local Authority regarding school attendance.

To support the above, St Philomena's will, when communicating with parents 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, or discontinues, their social worker will be notified.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

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 by phone or email – for example when working from home.

It is important that all staff have access to a trained DSL (or Deputy) and on each day, staff on site will be made aware of who that person is.

The DSL (or deputies) will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

REPORTING A CONCERN

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

In the event of a member of staff not being able to complete the necessary form, they should email the DSL. This will ensure the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay. There is no change currently to reporting concerns to the MASH team of the borough in which the child lives. See Child Protection and Safeguarding policy for information about what to do if you are concerned about a child.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern by email or verbally to the Headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done by email to the Headteacher.

Concerns about the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors, Mags Fairhall.

mfairhall4.305@lgflmail.org

There is no change to procedures currently when informing the LADO of any allegations. Please see the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy for details.

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING AND INDUCTION

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID-19 virus.

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 (KCSIE) (2019). The DSL should communicate with any staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

ONLINE SAFETY

St Philomena's will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where children are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

CHILDREN AND ONLINE SAFETY AWAY FROM SCHOOL

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 and Safeguarding policy and where appropriate, referrals should still be made to children's social care and, as required, the police.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL

St Philomena's is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the cusp of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure a robust communication plan is in place for that child. Details of this communication will be recorded in the schools' Vulnerable Children file.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, or doorstep visits.

Information must be shared regularly with the DSL (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

St Philomena's will share safeguarding information on its website, via email and the school newsletter.

St Philomena's recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of children and their parents/carers. Teachers at St Philomena's need to be aware of this in setting expectations of children's work when they are at home.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

St Philomena's is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children.

St Philomena's will continue to be a safe place for children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher/SLT will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

St Philomena's 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 spread of COVID-19.

St Philomena's 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. This will be recorded in the Vulnerable Children's file.

PEER ON PEER ABUSE

St Philomena's recognises that during the closure 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 will follow the principles set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the Child Protection and Safeguarding 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 using the appropriate safeguarding form and appropriate referrals made.

March 2020
