

St Joseph's Catholic High School

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES – COVID 19 ADDENDUM September 2020



<i>At the time of publishing the following roles were held:</i>	
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Wendy Lightfoot
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Laura Cross
Designated Teacher for looked-after or previously looked-after children	Anna Dove
Designated Mental Health Lead	Denise Richardson
Governor with Safeguarding responsibility	Deborah Naylor

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1. Introduction

This addendum has been created following the publication of DfE [Guidance for full opening: schools](#) and applies to all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent (including academies, academy trusts, free schools and alternative provision academies), maintained nursery schools and pupil referral units. It is an addendum to the School's Child Protection Policy and procedures which in turn complies with statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) and must be read in conjunction with that Policy and procedures. The Child Protection Policy and procedures is available on the school website or in hard copy on request, as is this addendum.

Although all children are back in school full-time, we need to plan for those who might need to self-isolate; the possibility of a local or national lockdown and how we will ensure the ongoing safeguarding of children particularly those with a Social Worker or who are otherwise vulnerable. During periods of lockdown in a pandemic, whether experienced by the whole community or by individuals who become ill or receive a positive test result for Covid-19 or must self-isolate because they have come into close contact with someone who has, children may be at home for long periods of time and therefore we will turn to, and work in line with this addendum.

2. Context

Following what was an extremely turbulent spring and summer term 2020, the Government's plan was that all pupils, in all year groups, would return to school full-time from the beginning of the autumn term 2020.

In many respects, the school's existing comprehensive Child Protection Policy and procedures will revert to being in force throughout as was the case prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Policy and procedures have been updated to take account of the revised statutory guidance '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)'.

This addendum sets out some of the adjustments which may need to be put in place in the event of a national or local lockdown, periods of self-isolation or where pupils are still shielding because of their medical conditions.

3. The current school position and local advice

At XXXX School (hereinafter referred to as 'the school') the current position is that the school will be open to all pupils in all year groups, unless national lockdown guidance dictates otherwise.

We have a comprehensive risk assessment in place which will enable the school to fulfil its obligations to pupils, staff and parents in a Covid-secure manner. This risk assessment is a dynamic document and subject to change as the pandemic situation changes and particularly in the event of a national or local lockdown scenario.

4. Vulnerable children/groups

Vulnerable children include those who have an allocated social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after or have in the past been 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.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputy know who most vulnerable children are and are also aware of those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

The School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

There may also be situations where a child is shielding or clinically extremely vulnerable although shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1 August 2020. This means that even the small number of pupils

who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. Guidance on shielding is set out in Gov UK guidance on [shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable](#). If rates of the disease rise in local areas, children (or family members) from that areas and that area only, will be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and therefore they may be temporarily absent. 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 the school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, we will offer them access to remote education and will monitor engagement with this activity.

Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, absence will not be penalised.

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

5. Attendance and monitoring

Department for Education (DfE) advice is that education settings will monitor attendance as normal from September 2020.

To support the above, the school will, when communicating with parents/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 at school, or discontinues, the school will notify the child's social worker.

6. Safeguarding Arrangements

The school has both a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL as outlined on the first page of our Child Protection Policy and procedures and replicated on the first page of this addendum. If, for any reason, the DSL or deputy DSL is not available to be in school, they will be contactable by telephone or online video.

Once pupils have returned to school, it is conceivable that staff and other adults may identify new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person following the school's closure period **or in the event of a bubble/group isolation period**. Should this situation arise, staff and other adults **must** alert the DSL or deputy DSL of their concerns at the earliest possible opportunity. In the absence of the DSL or deputy DSL, the member of staff or other adult must alert the Head teacher or other senior manager immediately. Any concerns must be recorded in writing in the usual way for recording using the school's normal recording system. Resources in the form of additional support for the DSL will be made available should there be an increase in safeguarding concerns with pupils returning to school.

It is important that all our school staff and other adults have access to a trained DSL (or deputy).

In line with our Child Protection Policy and procedures, DSLs (and deputies) will continue to do what they reasonably can to keep up to date with safeguarding developments, such as via safeguarding partners, newsletters and professional advice groups.

Where, during a period of lockdown, either local or national, a trained DSL or deputy is not on site and not contactable by telephone or online video, the Head teacher (or appropriately trained SLT member) will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system (e.g. CPOMS) or the normal school recording system and liaising with the offsite DSL or deputy and, as required, liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school.

We will ensure that we have necessary, appropriate and up-to-date child protection information on all our pupils, paying particular regard to those who have are or have been learning at home but have subsequently returned to school. Our records will be updated accordingly as soon as possible so that they remain accurate. This may involve asking parents/carers to make the school aware of any changes regarding their

child's welfare, health and wellbeing that the school should be aware of prior to the child returning to school. Parents/carers should inform the school of any new issues which arise once their child has returned to school.

Following a local or national lockdown/period of self-isolation it is conceivable that staff and other adults may identify new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person following the school's closure period. Should this situation arise, staff and other adults **must** alert the DSL or deputy DSL of their concerns at the earliest possible opportunity. In the absence of the DSL or deputy DSL, the member of staff or other adult must alert the Head teacher or other senior manager immediately. Any concerns must be recorded in writing in the usual way for recording using the school's normal recording system. Resources in the form of additional support for the DSL will be made available should there be an increase in safeguarding concerns with pupils returning to school.

7. Reporting a concern

Where staff or other adults have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the procedures outlined in the School's Child Protection procedures. Staff and other adults are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay to the DSL or deputy DSL. In the absence of an onsite DSL or deputy DSL, all concerns must be directed to the Head teacher.

Any concerns or allegations made against staff or other adults in the school must be directed to the Head teacher. Concerns or allegations made against the Head teacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors in accordance with our existing Child Protection Policy and procedures. Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) have procedures for [reporting and dealing with allegations against adults](#) and details of the Designated Officer (DO) appointed by the Local Authority.

If at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral will be made Cumbria Safeguarding Hub immediately – **anybody can make a referral**. If a referral is made by a member of staff or other adult, they should inform the DSL or deputy DSL as soon as possible.

Cumbria Safeguarding Hub - 0333 240 1727

E mail: safeguardinghub.fax@cumbria.gov.uk

8. Peer on peer/child on child abuse

We recognise that a revised process may be required for managing any report of peer on peer or child on child abuse and supporting victims.

Where, during a local lockdown or periods of self-isolation, school staff receive a report of peer on peer/child on child abuse either online or in the wider school community, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)' and those outlined within our Child Protection Policy procedures.

The school will listen to 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 will be recorded on the normal school recording system and appropriate referrals made.

9. Child Protection Training and Induction

Statutory DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus. For the period of national lockdown where 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, have read part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education, the Child Protection Policy and procedures, the school staff Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing procedures and the school Whole School Behaviour Policy and procedures. Regular volunteers have also read part 1 and Annex A of KCSiE in relation to their role in school. We will ensure that all staff and other adults who require updated or additional training have access to Level 1 Child Protection training which can be undertaken online via the [Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership website](#).

The DSL will communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child or have concerns about the behaviour of another adult in school. Where new staff or volunteers are recruited they will be given a safeguarding induction (as amended in line with the new COVID-19 arrangements) and be provided with a copy of the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures and this Addendum, the School staff Code of Conduct and Addendum, the school's Behaviour Policy and Addendum and other appropriate school Policies.

10. Online Safety

Refer also to Section 11. The school will continue to provide a safe environment, including online.

This includes the use of the **SONIC WALL** online filtering system. Where children and young people are using computers and other IT media in the school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

Any online learning will be delivered in accordance with our Online Safety Policy and procedures **(including any addendum to that Policy and procedures)** and staff/pupil acceptable use agreements.

11. Mental health and wellbeing

We understand that negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their parents. We will ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

We will make reference to the DfE guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) in order to identify children who might need additional support, and put this support in place. The guidance sets out how mental health issues can bring about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, all of which could be an indication of an underlying problem. This can include for example being fearful or withdrawn; aggressive or oppositional; or displaying excessive clinginess. Support for pupils in the current circumstances will include existing provision in the school (although this may be delivered in different ways, for example over the phone for those children still not attending provision) or from specialist staff or support services.

All our staff and other adults will be made aware of the impact the current circumstances can have on the mental health of those pupils (and their parents) who are continuing to work from home, including when setting expectations of children's' work. The DfE has provided separate [guidance on remote education practices](#) during the coronavirus outbreak.

12. Safety of children using online systems remote from school

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with in accordance with our Child Protection Policy and procedures and where appropriate, referrals will be made to children's social care and as required, the Police. Any member of staff who has concerns about a child must report this to the DSL in the first instance and failing the availability of the DSL, the Head teacher. Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the school staff Code of Conduct **and associated Covid-19 addendum**.

The school will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection (GDPR) requirements. The delivery of any live lessons must be agreed with the Head teacher or other senior leader in advance. Consent must be sought from both parents and pupils.

We will ensure that children who are being asked to work online have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns with the school whilst online e.g. incidents of cyberbullying and we will apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as if children were learning at school.

The school has taken on board guidance from the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) on safe remote learning. We have reviewed the code of conduct and information sharing policy accordingly. Staff have discussed the risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and been reminded of the school's code of conduct and importance of using school systems to communicate with children and their families.

Staff have read the [20 safeguarding considerations for livestreaming](#) prior to delivering any livestreamed sessions.

Children and young people accessing remote learning receive guidance on keeping safe online and know how to raise concerns with the school.

We also recommend the following to pupils:

- Childline (www.childline.org.uk) – for support
- UK Safer Internet Centre (<https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>) - to report and remove harmful online content
- CEOP (<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>) - for advice on making a report about online abuse

Parents and carers have received information about keeping children safe online with peers, the school, other education sites they may access and the wider internet community. We have set out the school's approach, including the sites children will be asked to access and set out who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. Parents have been offered the following links:

- [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers
- [Childnet](#) - offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support
- [Let's Talk About It](#) - advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation

In addition, the Government has also provided:

- [support for parents and carers to keep children safe from online harms](#), includes advice about specific harms such as online child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying
- [support to stay safe online](#) includes security and privacy settings, blocking unsuitable content, and parental controls

Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the [Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre](#).

13. Supporting children not in school

The school is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support, they will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child.

Details of this plan must be recorded on the school normal recording system as should a record of any contact made. The communication plans can include: remote contact; phone contact; or socially distant 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 (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

We will share safeguarding and child protection messages on the school website and social media pages.

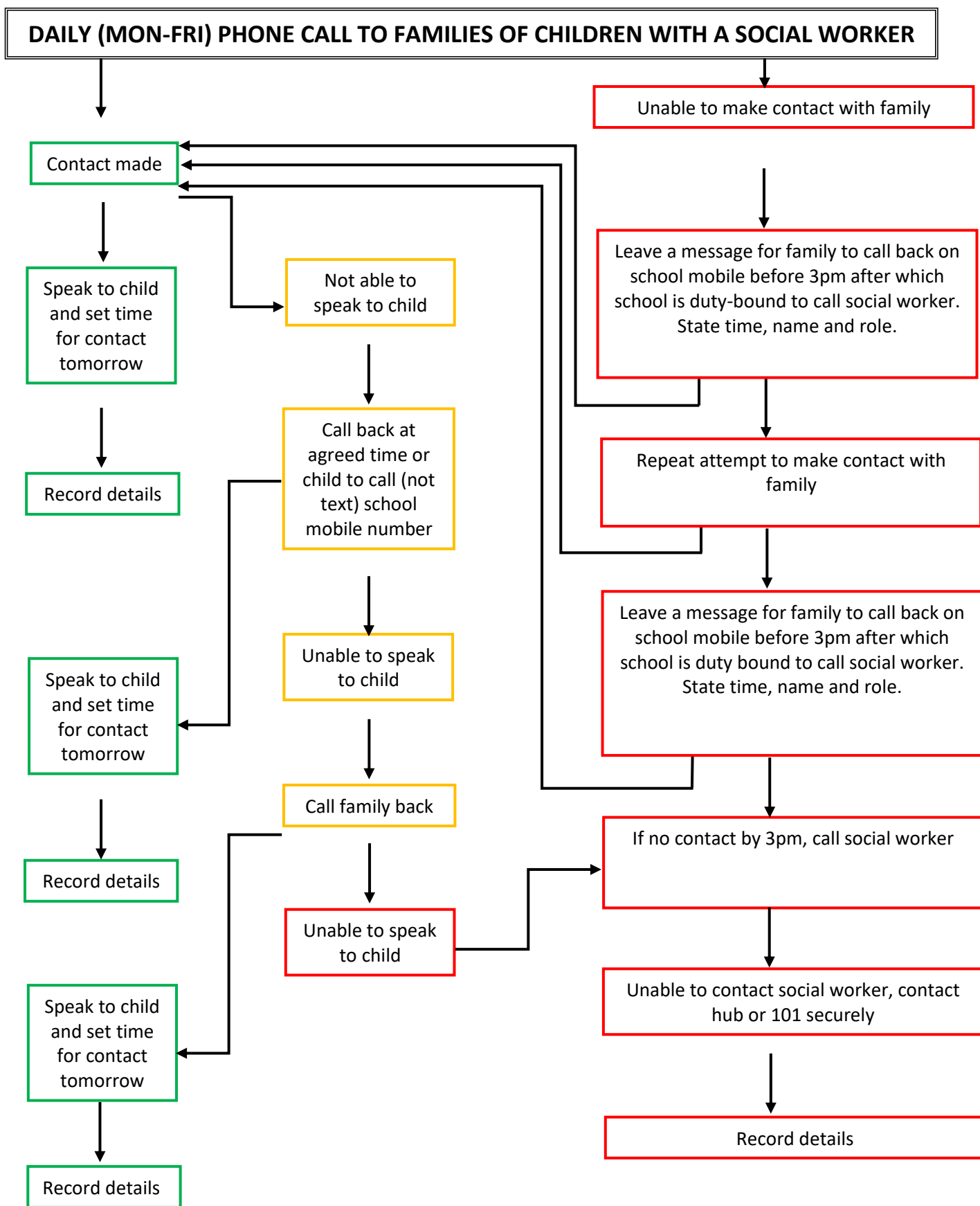
We recognise that school is a protective factor for children and young people and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils, their parents/carers and immediate family. To this end, we will do everything we can to minimise the effects in relation to any online resources made available to pupils' home learning.

Teachers at our school will be made aware of the above in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

We will endeavour to support our pupils and their families in the current circumstances using the existing school systems and processes. We will also make reference to DfE guidance [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) 2018.

The DfE have also issued advice for parents/carers on [supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#).

Welfare checks will be made on all pupils not in school. The frequency and method of communication will be decided by the Head teacher working with the DSL and SENCO.



Many families have multiple agencies working with them and will be inundated by welfare calls, so it may be prudent to schedule a timetable with other agencies e.g. siblings' schools, AP providers including HHTS, Young Carers etc. These students may be subject to Critical Absence Plans. Please ensure that the other organisation informs the school of contact/concerns so the information can still be logged using CPOMS or similar recording system.

SJCHS School - Critical Absence Plan

Date Plan agreed: _____

CRITICAL ABSENCE PLAN			
Name(s) of child(ren):			
Year Group(s):	CP, CIN, CLA or OTHER (circle one)	Key Worker in school:	
Parent's/Carer's name(s)			Contact Number:
Social Worker:			Contact Number
Other agencies/organisations known to be working with the family:			
Reason given for absence:			Authorised absence? YES/NO (circle one)
Reason for plan:			

	Plan to ensure contact is made with family & child daily	Follow up procedure if no contact is made	Plan to ensure key worker is informed of successful contact and can log on school recording system
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRIDAY			

Next scheduled meeting e.g. .Core Group, TAF, Review Meeting:		
Date	Time	Location

Plan Review Date: _____

Signed by DSL: _____