

Appendix to Safeguarding Policy January 2021

Appendix R

Closure of school with reference to Covid 19

Context

To support public health efforts during the return to school in January, secondary schools will invoke a phased return to face-to-face provision at the start of term.

From 4th January 2021 Secondary age 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.

During this time, it is imperative that all staff adhere to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy with specific regards to the principles in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance. NB: It is imperative that 'new' staff joining after the annual training, have read the full policy and completed the Safeguarding Quiz as provided by S.Hutton.

We will continue to have as a priority the well-being of our pupils both in school and at home. The 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' remains the overarching statutory guidance as detailed at our Annual Training (Sept) and the Part One and Annex A booklet you were given to read.

Our key principles remain the same:

- Best interests of our pupils continue to come first.
- Anyone in our school with a safeguarding concern, acts immediately.
- DSL/Deputy DSLs will be available for advice and support.
- No unsuitable people will be allowed to gain access to our children.
- Pupils continue to be protected when they are on-line.

If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child they must act immediately – contact with DSL/member of Safeguarding Team via phone/email and, if in school, use a standard purple form. In an emergency situation, the contact numbers displayed (purple) in school (offices/SRNB) should be used. All staff have copies of key tips and advice (distributed following annual September training).

This addendum of the St Gregory's Safeguarding policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements.

Key contacts

Remain as per the School Safeguarding Policy.

Health & Safety

Specific Health and Safety information/advice will be communicated by I Baracscai (email, posters on doors, displayed instructions-staffroom) which all staff must read and adhere to. Further guidance regarding movement around the school has been shared with staff and pupils (Appendix S)

C. McKenna and IB will continue to work together to ensure all Government advice is communicated in relation to safeguarding all our staff and pupils.

Vulnerable children

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 local authorities (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.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself is not a determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead, know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

St Gregory's 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. The lead person for this will be: Mr McLeod

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 increased 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 St Gregory's will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, St Gregory's or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

St Gregory's will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed. They will be invited to attend school during their welfare telephone call which takes place at least weekly.

Critical workers

Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in the following sections. [Critical Worker Definition 8th Jan 2021](#)

Attendance monitoring

Pupils who are not expected to be in school are to be recorded as 'code X'.

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

St Gregory's and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school –St Gregory's will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

St Gregory's will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

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

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

Designated Safeguarding Lead

St Gregory's school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a two Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mrs C McKenna

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Mr N McLeod & Miss E Lavin

There will always be a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site and as such St Gregory's staff and volunteers will have access to a trained DSL (or deputy).

Conference calls, information requests by Agencies and Social Workers continue during this time. There is regular communication by Mr McGlinchey and Mrs McKenna, as DSL, will continue to update Mr McGlinchey and Roger Harrison (Chair of Governors) on all matters

relating to the safeguarding of our children, their families and staff. All measures have been shared with the LA Safeguarding Partnership Board.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, this includes completing a 'purple' safeguarding form. If a member of staff working from home has a concern, they should email the DSL and copy in both Deputy DSLs. Any concerns must be logged by 3pm on the day the concern is raised.

If a concern is raised out of hours, the staff member should report the concern to the DSL, copying in both Deputy DSLs. If a response is not received, you must continue contact any member of the Safeguarding Team as shown in the Safeguarding Policy.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern **immediately and without delay**.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to Mr McGlinchey.

If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Mr McGlinchey whilst away from school, this should be done verbally over the phone and followed up with an email to Mr McGlinchey to confirm the discussion.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors.

Safeguarding Training and induction

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

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter St Gregory's, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

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:

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- 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

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

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

All regulations, in line with our policy, remain in relation to safer recruitment processes (including interviews), DBS checks, visitors/ deliveries to the school.

Reception is manned every day, including during the 'holiday' periods with a full site of gate entrance. Electronic signing-in system remains in force for all staff and visitors, so we are aware, on any given day, which staff are on our school site.

When recruiting new staff, St Gregory's will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (KCSIE).

Should St Gregory's utilise 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.

St Gregory's will 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.

St Gregory's will 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.

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, St Gregory's will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Volunteers

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.

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).

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.

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

Online safety in schools and colleges

St Gregory's will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system which enable us to monitor sites that pupils are searching.

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

Information regarding keeping children safe online will be shared with both pupils and parents/carers alongside how they can report any issues.

Children and online safety away from school and college

Additional e-safety information and advice, especially as needed in relation to on-line access/learning by staff and pupils at this time, must be adhered to and any concerns reported immediately. Information to staff will continue to be updated; at this stage we have looked at our existing policies to ensure they reflect the new reality of children and staff working remotely on-line.

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

Online teaching should follow the principles as set out in the Pupil Remote Learning Policy.

St Gregory's will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Below are key points from the Pupil Remote Learning Policy for virtual lessons; all staff and pupils MUST:

- Communicate in groups – one-to-one sessions are not permitted
- Wear suitable clothing – this includes others in their household
- Be situated in a suitable 'public' living area within the home with an appropriate background – 'private' living areas within the home, such as bedrooms and bathrooms, are not permitted during video communication
- Use appropriate language – this includes others in their household
- Maintain the standard of behaviour expected in school
- Use the necessary equipment and computer programs as intended
- Not record, store, or distribute video material without permission
- Ensure they have a stable connection to avoid disruption to lessons
- Always remain aware that they are visible
- Pupils must keep their cameras turned off
- Staff should set their TEAMS so that pupils must be admitted from the 'lobby'; they must check who they are admitting

Staff will record the lesson and upload it to a shared area.

Supporting children not in school

St Gregory's is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people. Ensuring our vulnerable children remain protected is our top priority. These include

CIC/CIN/CP/EHCP/ones on 'cusp' of having a social worker attached/ Think Twice/Medical/Young Carers/ Off site registered/FSM and PP pupils who have not been included in the listed categories. These pupils have been assigned key workers from the Safeguarding/Pastoral Teams.

All pupils are expected to attend form time each morning which is held on TEAMS. In addition to this, all lessons are live and attendance is monitored through SIMS lesson monitor. The pastoral team and support staff monitor attendance and telephone calls are made to pupils who are not engaging with lessons.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, there is robust communication plan in place for that child or young person which includes at least a weekly telephone call with their Key Worker as identified on our Think Twice list.

If telephone contact cannot be made and there are concerns for the welfare of the child, there are a range of actions which will take place:

- School Comms
- Email
- Letter from DSL requesting contact with school is made
- Home visit (be agreed staff who have read and signed risk assessment)
- 'Called but you were out' Attendance Slip
- Social Worker liaison (CIC/CIN/CP)
- LA contact – MASH TEAM/Safeguarding Members of the Safeguarding Team also discuss concerns and review actions as they would in normal circumstances.

St Gregory's 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.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and through communication with parents.

St Gregory's recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. With this in mind TEAMS meetings have been planned for pupils struggling with their mental health in order to offer support.

Supporting children in school

St Gregory's is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

St Gregory's will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. Mr McGlinchey will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

St Gregory'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 risk of spread of COVID19.

St Gregory'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 bespoke to each child and recorded on CPOMS as appropriate.

Peer on Peer Abuse

St Gregory's recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of the Safeguarding Policy.

St Gregory's 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 on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

Educational Visits:

Currently the DfE advises against overnight visits both in the UK and overseas (see [coronavirus: travel guidance for educational settings](#).) With this in mind there will be no overnight visits with students from St Gregory's until this advice changes.