

## **Annex 1**

### **COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at:**

**School/College Name: St Benedict's Catholic Primary School**

**Date addendum agreed: 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020**

**Date shared with staff: 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020**

#### **1. Context**

From 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open to provide child care for a limited number of children. These children being those of workers critical to the COVID-19 response who cannot be cared for at home and for children who are vulnerable; these being children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and children who are subject to Child in Need (CIN) plans, Child Protection (CP) plans and those who are Cared for Children who cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum of the St Benedict's Catholic Primary School Safeguarding and Child Protection policy outlines our practice during the current crisis; should this change over time it will be updated to reflect those changes. This addendum contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

- Vulnerable Children
- Attendance monitoring
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Reporting a concern
- Safeguarding Training and induction
- Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff
- Online safety
- Supporting children not in school
- Peer on Peer Abuse

## Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Hannah McGuire	School mobile: 07549344269	headteacher@stbenedicts.cheshire.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Catherine McBride		cmcbride@stbenedicts.cheshire.sch.uk
Headteacher	Hannah McGuire	School mobile: 07549344269	headteacher@stbenedicts.cheshire.sch.uk
Trust Safeguarding Manager			
Chair of Governors	Lucy Maudsley		lmaudsley@stbenedicts.cheshire.sch.uk
Safeguarding Governor / Trustee	Lisa Jones		ljones@stbenedicts.cheshire.sch.uk

## 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 and 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 or college 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 Head Teacher and SENDCo 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 Benedict's Catholic Primary School will continue to work with others to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority Virtual School Head (VSH) for Cared For and previously Cared For children. The lead person for this will be: Hannah McGuire

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 Benedict's Catholic Primary School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, St Benedict's Catholic Primary School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

### **Attendance monitoring**

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

If St Benedict's Catholic Primary School has any children in attendance (e.g. because they are vulnerable or their parent(s) / carers are critical workers) we will submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE by 12 noon -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

If the school has closed, we will complete the return once, as requested by the DfE.

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

Hannah McGuire will contact vulnerable children who are not attending school, via telephone twice a week and a record kept of this contact on CPOMS.

To support the above, St Benedict's Catholic Primary School 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 Benedict's Catholic Primary School will notify their social worker and school will continue to carry out the usual checks e.g. phone calls etc.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Hannah McGuire

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Catherine McBride

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 via phone or online video link - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. All staff working on that day will be made aware of the senior leader who is assuming responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to safeguarding records on CPOMS , 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 or college.

It is important that all St Benedict's Catholic Primary School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day, the staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

Hannah McGuire 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 Safeguarding Policy, this includes verbally recording and making a written record of the concern.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access the Record of Concern Form or CPOMS from home, they should email the Head Teacher. This will ensure that the concern is received.

All 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 concerns to the Hannah McGuire. If there is a requirement to make a notification to Hannah McGuire whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to Hannah.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Lucy Maudsley [Imaudsley@stbenedicts.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:Imaudsley@stbenedicts.cheshire.sch.uk)

Communications which include sensitive data should be sent in a secure means e.g. Egress

### **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).

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019).

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 Benedict's Catholic Primary School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

Where staff are moved/offer support to another school, the school should seek assurance from their home school that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training and a record will be kept of this.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 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.

When recruiting new staff, St Benedict's Catholic Primary School will 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 (2019) (KCSIE).

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

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

Where St Benedict's Catholic Primary School 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.

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School 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 Benedict's Catholic Primary School 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. During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk)

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency it is essential, from a safeguarding perspective, that we as a school are aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in St Benedict's Catholic Primary School and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, St Benedict's Catholic Primary School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

### **Online safety in schools and colleges and for those children working at home**

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

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

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

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the St Benedict's Catholic Primary School code of conduct.

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

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only
- Two members of staff should be involved in group chats online (eg zoom)
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should 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 and overview of content. Staff should also record whether any safeguarding issues were noted. If concerns were reported/observed record detail and the date/time these were shared with the DSL as per normal safeguarding reporting processes.

### **Supporting children not in school**

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children.

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, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this communication plan will be recorded in the safeguarding file/CPOMS, and a record of contact will be made.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

This plan will be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and, where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The St Benedict's Catholic Primary School will share safeguarding messages on its website, social media pages and send out communication to parents.

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

### **Supporting children in school**

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

St Benedict's Catholic Primary 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.

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School 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 Benedict's Catholic Primary School 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.

Where St Benedict's Catholic Primary School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the Headteacher and the local Authority.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

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

Where a 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 our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School will listen and work with the child, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns must be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead as per normal safeguarding reporting processes and actions recorded.

### **Acknowledgement**

The Addendum has been adapted from the Stowe Valley Multi Academy Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding Team.