

COVID-19 arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at St Francis' Catholic Primary School

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1. Context

As at 1st September Step 4 of the Government's Covid-19 Roadmap is being followed.

As far as is reasonably possible St Francis' Catholic Primary School, take a whole institution approach to safeguarding. This allows us to satisfy ourselves that any new policies and processes in response to COVID-19 are not weakening our approach to safeguarding or undermining their child protection policy.

The School will follow its Outbreak Management Plan and follow advice given by the Local Authority, NHS and the local Public Health Team.

This section contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

2. 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 are subject to a Child Protection Plan, a Child in Need Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the School's Inclusion Manager Mrs Lorna Dommett, the Local Authority and parents, to decide in the event of a further National or Local Lockdown, or temporary 'Outbreak' closure, 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.

The Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy DSLs) know who our most vulnerable children are. In the event of any future National/Local Lockdowns or temporary 'Outbreak' closures, they have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support. St Francis' Catholic Primary 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. The DSL and Deputy DSLs will manage this, liaising with Parents, Social Workers and the Local Authority services as appropriate.

The school will ensure that all professionals involved with these vulnerable children, (e.g. social workers, SEND case workers, Early Help worker etc) are fully informed around the current attendance of the child (attending school or not) and if not attending school the arrangements that we have put in place around safeguarding this child.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, St Francis' 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.

St Francis' Catholic Primary School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

3.Attendance monitoring

All Children including SEND/Vulnerable pupils: Expectations of an Education Setting to track, identify and action non- attendance of vulnerable children and Automated Tracking Mechanism

We know that some families need more support than others and that attending education settings is an important protective factor for children receiving support. We also know that some families may over estimate their ability to cope in these extraordinary times.

All professionals need to be mindful that there will be some examples where the current Covid 19 pandemic could be used by families as a reason to avoid contact from professionals when the family may not be symptomatic and to prevent identification of safeguarding issues.

To ensure that appropriate action is taken to keep children safe and protected, the school will follow any Government Guidance and automated tracking for monitoring attendance both in school and remotely as necessary.

We will work with the Local Authority and any Professionals (eg social workers, early help team) in monitoring attendance.

Where any professional continues to have concerns about the safety of a child they should email a Children's Services Request for Support Form to cspa@surreycc.gov.uk or contact the C-SPA on 0300 470 9100.

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead

A member of the DSL team will always be available during school hours. The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case, in the event of further lockdowns or temporary closures due to a Covid outbreak at the school, a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a designated senior member of staff will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include 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 our staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of that person is and how to speak to them.

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

5. 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 making a report via C-SPA.

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 continue to follow our normal procedures and alert the headteacher immediately.

In dealing with allegations or concerns against an adult, staff must:

Report any concerns about the conduct of any member of staff or volunteer to the Headteacher immediately.

If an allegation is made against the Headteacher, the concerns need to be raised with the Chair of Governor as soon as possible. If the Chair of Governors is not available, then the LADO should be contacted directly.

There may be situations when the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will want to involve the police immediately if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence.

Once an allegation has been received by the Headteacher or Chair of Governors they will contact the LADO on 0300123 1650 option 3 LADO Email: LADO@surreycc.gov.uk immediately and before taking any action or investigation.

Following consultation and advice from the LADO inform the parents of the allegation unless there is a good reason not to

In liaison with the LADO, the school will determine how to proceed and if necessary, the LADO will refer the matter to Children's Social Care and/or the police.

If the matter is investigated internally, the LADO will advise the school to seek guidance from local authority colleagues in following procedures set out in part 4 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2019) and the SSCP procedures.

6. Safeguarding Training and Induction

The School will continue to access DSL training offered by Surrey County Council Education Safeguarding Team. This may include virtual training in line with Covid Guidance.

However, 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 (2019).

In the event of a national, local or temporary lockdown, the DSL will 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 our School, 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 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

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy (which will be similar to their current setting if a Surrey school), confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

7. 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 Francis' Catholic Primary School 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 (2021) (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.

Where our 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 Francis' 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, in line with advice from the LADO where appropriate.

St Francis' 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

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, 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 Francis' Catholic Primary School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE. The SCR can also, be used to log details of any risk assessments carried out on volunteers and staff on loan from elsewhere.

8. Online safety in schools and colleges

St Francis' Catholic Primary School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of appropriate filters and online monitoring systems.

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

9. Children and online safety away from school and college

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.

St Francis' 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 areas we consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- 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 provided by St Francis' Catholic Primary School to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

All staff at St Francis' Catholic Primary School will be reminded of the following policies:

- Staff code of conduct
- Acceptable Users' Policy

10. Supporting children not in school

St Francis' 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.

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

St Francis' Catholic Primary 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.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

St Francis' Catholic Primary School 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.

Staff at our school will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

St Francis' 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.

11. Supporting children in school

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

St Francis' 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 Francis' 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 Francis' 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.

12. Peer on Peer Abuse

St Francis' Catholic Primary School recognises that during any national, local or temporary closures 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 of the Child Protection 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, and appropriate referrals made.

All Staff have been given this Covid Safeguarding Guidance