

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

## Covid-19 Amendment

### St James Infant and Pre School

March 2021



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<b>Head of the Virtual School</b>	Gail Gynn
<b>Date policy addendum reviewed remotely and agreed by governors</b>	19.1.21

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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This addendum should be read alongside the school’s main Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.
- 1.2 Further information about the government’s approach to COVID-19 can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>.
- 1.3 The school is currently operating under the latest Covid-19 guidance from the Department from Education, ‘Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance (February 2021)’ and ‘Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak (February 2021)’.

## 2 Context

- 2.1 This appendix has been added to the school safeguarding policy following the period of partial closure between January 5th 2021 and March 8th 2021. From the 8th March 2021 all children, except those who are clinically extremely vulnerable and have been directed to shield at home, are expected to attend school.

This appendix has been added to provide all stakeholders with additional information about the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements from the 8th March 2021.

2.2 Safeguarding and child protection remains an essential part of our duty of care to all students and we have a responsibility to safeguard children, whether they are on-site or staying at home. We understand that safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of all children is everyone's responsibility and everyone has a role to play in protecting children. We continue to promote a culture of vigilance, where staff and volunteers act immediately if they have safeguarding concerns about a child. We recognise that our school is part of a wider safeguarding system for children and work closely with other agencies to promote the welfare of children. We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and will consider the wishes of, and at all times, what is in the best interests of each child.

2.3 The purpose of this addendum is to;

- Ensure that children are protected from maltreatment or harm;
- Promote safeguarding and child protection;
- Demonstrate the school's commitment to keeping children safe whilst operating under emergency measures related to COVID-19;
- Provide all members of staff with the information required to meet their safeguarding duty and protect children from harm during this time; and
- Provide stakeholders with clear information relating to the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures during the COVID-19 outbreak.

2.4 All staff will be made aware of this addendum and updated regularly on further developments.

2.5 This addendum is reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that the school is compliant with;

- All relevant legislation and statutory guidance; Government guidance relating to the COVID-19 outbreak<sup>1</sup>; and
- Guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.

## 2.6 Scope

2.6.1 This policy applies to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf St James School and Pre-School. References in this document to 'staff' or 'members of staff' should be interpreted as relating to the aforementioned unless otherwise stated.

2.6.2 This policy applies to all staff, whether working on-site or at home.

2.6.3 The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

2.6.4 St James School and Pre-School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: **Gail Gynn**
- The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: **Clare Cousins**

## 3 DSL

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak> for further details.

3.1 A trained Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will be available at all times during school hours (including during breakfast club and after school provision). Wherever possible, a trained DSL (or deputy DSL) will be available on site. Where this is not possible due to staff self-isolation, a trained DSL (or deputy DSL) will be available to be contacted via phone or video-conferencing (email, Dojo or phone). In this instance an appropriate senior leader will take responsibility for safeguarding on site.

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

3.3 Arrangements for contacting the DSL/DDSLs will be shared with staff before 9am each day, as well as any relevant safeguarding and child protection updates and training.

3.5 All DSLs and DDSLs will keep up to date with the latest safeguarding information and guidance via e-bulletins, Local Authority e-bulletins and taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments.

#### **4 Vulnerable Children**

4.1 If pupils who are self-isolating or shielding are within the government definition of 'Vulnerable', we will keep in regular contact with them by phone, Dojo, email and newsletter.

4.2 When a vulnerable pupil is required to self-isolate, we will:

- notify their social worker (if they have one);
- agree with the social worker the best way to maintain contact and offer support;
- check if a vulnerable pupil is able to access remote education support;
- support them to access it (as far as possible); and
- Regularly check if they are accessing remote education.

4.3 The government considers children to be vulnerable if they

- 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

4.4 We recognise that provision for pupils who have SEND may have been disrupted during the period of restrictions on attendance. We will work with local services (such as health and the local authority) to ensure the services and support are in place for a smooth return to schools for pupils.

4.5 Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) children

4.6 Children who have been confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable and have received a shielding letter should not attend school until they have been removed from the shielding patient list. We will support these children by continuing with online learning support and regular contact from school staff.

4.7 The school may request to see a copy of the child's shielding letter.

## **5 Attendance**

5.1 In line with government guidance, we expect all children to attend school unless they are self-isolating or shielding. The school is responsible for recording attendance, following up absence and reporting children missing education to the local authority.

5.2 Parents or carers should contact the school on the first day of absence and inform the school of the reason why the child is not in attendance. Parents should inform the school of any COVID-19 tests that have been carried out and continue to keep the school informed of reasons for absence, as appropriate.

5.3 From 8th March 2021, we will record attendance in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) for all pupils.

5.4 In accordance with the 'Remote Education Temporary Continuity Direction', the school will provide remote education to pupils who are unable to attend school because they are complying with government COVID-19 guidance or legislation. We will keep a record of remote education delivered.

5.5 Absence information will be recorded in the register using the appropriate codes.

Information about school attendance codes can be found in:

- School attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (August 2020)
- Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance

5.6 Where pupils are not able to attend school, as they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), the absence will not be penalised.

5.7 We understand that some parents, carers and children may be anxious about children returning to school. We will work closely with families who are finding the transition more challenging to ensure that children are attending regularly.

5.8 We will work with other agencies (e.g. health and other education professionals) to support school attendance if this is required.

## **6 Children attending Alternative Provision**

6.1. In the event of a child attending alternative provision they will be monitored in line with school polices.

## **7. Reporting a concern**

- 7.1 All staff will continue to look out for any signs that indicate a child may be at risk, both on and off site, including online.
- 7.2 If a member of staff/volunteer has any safeguarding concerns about a child, this will be reported to the DSL as soon as possible.
- 7.3 If the concern is urgent, the member of staff/volunteer will speak to a DSL in person or via phone/video call if they are not on site, immediately.
- 7.4 In the event a member of staff or volunteer cannot make contact with a DSL, this will not delay them taking immediate action to safeguard a child in line with school procedures.
- 7.5 Concerns will be recorded using existing school/college safeguarding processes as outlined in our Child Protection Policy.
- 7.6 Children are encouraged to report concerns via existing school systems, or to a trusted adult at home.
- 7.7 Parents/carers are encouraged to report concerns via existing school/college systems.

## **8 Allegations against staff**

- 8.1 St James School and Pre-School takes all allegations against staff seriously and will manage them in line with this policy, Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) and guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- 8.2 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Chair of Governors (Sally Perkins) without delay. In the event that the Chair of Governors is unavailable due to illness or other circumstance, concern must be reported to Gaynor Crute (InMat CEO)
- 8.3 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against any member of staff other than the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Headteacher without delay. In the event that the Headteacher not being available it must be reported to Gaynor Crute (CEO InMat)
- 8.4 Allegations of abuse against staff should be not discussed directly with the person involved.
- 8.5 The Headteacher or Chair of Governors should consider if the allegation meets the threshold for Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) intervention.
- 8.6 Concerns relating to a position of trust issue will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer within 24 hours.
- 8.7 If a child has suffered abuse or harm, a referral for statutory intervention will also be made.
- 8.8 In the instances where an allegation is dealt with internally, the Local Authority Designated Officer will provide information and support in managing the allegation.
- 8.9 The procedure for whistleblowing is outlined in St James School and Pre-School Whistleblowing Policy.

## **9 Safeguarding training and staff induction**

- 9.1 All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). The DSL will communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so all staff know what to do if they are worried about a child.
- 9.2 Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter St James Infant and Pre-School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.
- 9.3 Staff will be made aware if any processes have changed with the sharing of this addendum and the DSL will communicate any changes to local processes directly.
- 9.4 All new staff and volunteers will have an induction provided via the DSL and will be provided with a copy of the St James Infant and Pre-School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Covid-19 Addendum in addition to other documents outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).
- 9.5 Staff may move between St James School and Pre-School on a temporary basis and consideration will be given by the DSL as to what induction they need on a case-by-case basis, dependent on existing skills and knowledge.

## **10 Safer recruitment, volunteers and movement of staff**

- 10.1 It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children.
- 10.2 When recruiting new staff, we will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).
- 10.3 The school will adhere to all government guidance in relation to checking identification for the purposes of obtaining Disclosure and Barring Service checks and when conducting interviews.
- 10.4 When utilising St James School and Pre-School volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 183 to 188 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.
- 10.5 If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will adhere to all government guidance in checking their suitability to work in the school.
- 10.6 St James School and Pre-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 in paragraph 179 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).
- 10.7 St James School and Pre-School will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral'.
- 10.8 During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk)
- 10.9 St James School and Pre-School will continue to update the single central record and will log details of any risk assessment carried out on volunteers and temporary staff from other educational institutions.
- 10.10 Members of staff are completing twice weekly lateral flow tests. All staff members are aware of what to do in the instance of a positive result (stay home and book a PCR to confirm

result). These results both negative and positive are logged with the NHS/Gov within 24 hours of the LFT being taken.

All staff including volunteers are required to evidence a negative Lateral Flow test before coming on site. Volunteers to be provided with Lateral Flow tests. All staff to adhere to Covid Risk Assessment.

## **11 Supporting children in school**

11.1 The school understands that some children will find the transition back into school challenging and each class will begin the day with Kaleidoscope, vulnerable children will have regular welfare checks and extra 1:1 sessions will be provided.

11.2 The DSL has regular contact with the school nurse.

11.3 St James School and Pre-School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

11.4 St James School and Pre-School will 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.

11.5 St James School and Pre-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 COVID-19.

11.6 St James School and Pre-School will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on Arbor.

## **12 Record keeping**

12.1 As detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020), all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy).

12.2 We will review open cases regularly particularly during the duration of the partial school closure.

12.3 During school closure, staff at St James School and Pre-School, will continue to use My Concern.

12.4 If using an electronic system to record concerns, discussions etc. remember to ensure that the screen **is not visible in non-secure areas**, for example, at home where other family members may be able to see it.

12.5 In the event of the DSL/DDSLs are offsite, or in the event that the safeguarding team are unable to work DSL/DDSL can access 'My Concern' on their phone/laptop or any electronic device.

13 In the event that children are attending a different Hub, regular contact between DSL's will be maintained and daily attendance data will be shared to enable close monitoring.



#### **14 Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse**

- 14.1 St James School and Pre-School continues to recognise and respond to cases of peer on peer (child on child) abuse by considering each incident on a case-by-case basis and basing any intervention on usual processes outlined within Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).
- 14.2 St James School and Pre-School recognises that the current circumstances and the changeable nature of current Government guidance may mean that the school/college may need to adapt elements of the process in some cases to ensure that they are able to respond in line with Government advice when required.
- 14.3 The DSL will continue to consult as appropriate with multi-agency professionals to ensure that children's safety and wellbeing is not compromised when incidents of peer on peer abuse are brought to their attention.
- 14.4 During this time, staff will continue to be vigilant in reporting any concerns relating to peer on peer abuse to the DSL.
- 14.5 Every effort has been made to ensure children are grouped in their usual year groups. On the occasion, children are in different age groups working together (Brambles) Staff have been reminded about peer on peer abuse in recent whole-staff emails, briefings to those on site etc.
- 14.6 The school's revised approach to peer on peer abuse is informed by the principles set out in Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).

#### **15. Online safety and remote learning**

- 15.1 The school recognises that continuing high quality pastoral support is vital to ensure that children are safe and supported. The school will provide remote pastoral support and education via:

The 'Class Dojo' platform will be used to communicate with parents and pupils via, written, photographic and video formats. Teachers and wider school staff will also communicate and give feedback on remote learning via this medium. The school website and school app will further enhance communication channels.

- 15.2 The school recognises that children both on-site and off-site are vulnerable to abuse and radicalisation online. Children who are at home may be spending more time online and this increases their vulnerability.
- 15.3 St James Infant and preschool recognises that additional safeguarding arrangements are required to ensure that children are safe online at this time.
- 15.4 All staff will continue to look out for any signs that indicate a child may be at risk online and will report and respond to concerns in line with the Child Protection Policy addendum.

15.5 Where necessary, referrals will be made to LADO, children's social care and as required, the police.

15.6 Governors will review arrangements to ensure that they continue to be appropriate.

15.7 Online activity in school will continued to be monitored through our usual IT monitoring systems. Anything of concern will be reported to the online safety officer (Steven Morris).

15.8 Children who are not attending school are given regular online safety learning tasks which include links to useful sources of further information.

15.9 The school is legally required to provide suitable remote learning for children whilst they are out of school. We are using technology to deliver learning to pupils who are at home. In order to ensure that children are safe when learning online, the school have;

- Ensured that platforms to be used are already familiar with the parents and pupils (e.g. school website / Class Dojo / School App / School Jam / Oxford Reading Buddy).
- Ensured that staff receive updates regarding skills and knowledge to use these platforms with confidence.
- Ensured that all staff, pupils and parents are aware of their responsibilities through our acceptable use and online safety policies and procedures.
- Advised parents on suitable websites for extra home learning opportunities.

15.10 All communication with learners and parents/carers will take place using school approved communication channels; for example through Class Dojo for the vast majority of communications, through the school website and app and through home telephone calls (for weekly a 'hello').

15.11 Any pre-existing relationship relationships or situations which mean this cannot be complied with, will be discussed with the DSL.

15.12 St James Infant and Pre-School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

15.13 Staff and learners will engage with remote teaching and learning in line with existing behaviour principles as set out in our Code of Conduct Policy.

15.14 When delivering remote learning, staff at St James Infant and Preschool will:

- Only use online tools that have been evaluated and agreed by leadership.

- Ensure remote learning activities are planned in accordance with our curriculum policies, taking learner needs and technology access into account.
  - Where possible, pre-record content.
- 15.15 Learners are encouraged to report concerns to a member of staff or a trusted adult at home. Where this is not possible, additional support can be accessed online via:
- Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
  - UK Safer Internet Centre’s ‘Report Harmful Content’: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com>
  - National Crime Agency Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (NCA-CEOP): [www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre](http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre)
- 15.16 Staff have received updated safeguarding training to ensure that they are equipped with the skills to keep children safe when using technology for remote learning.
- 15.17 Use of staff and learner personal devices, including mobile phones, will be managed in line with our existing mobile technology policy.
- 15.18 A list of useful sources of information relating to online safety is including in Appendix B of this addendum.

## **16 Contingency Planning**

16.1 In the event that restrictions in schools are needed to help contain the spread of the virus, we will refer to the contingency framework<sup>2</sup>, which has been updated and outlines how schools should operate in the event of any restrictions. We will always ensure that safeguarding children is our priority and work within restrictions to keep children safe.

## **17. Review**

17.1 This appendix will be reviewed, updated and re-issued as necessary, to reflect government guidance. All staff will be made aware of any changes.

## **Appendix A – Online Safety Resources**

### **Support for schools implementing remote learning**

- <https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/safe-remote-learning/>

### **Support for professionals when using videos and/or live streaming**

- <https://static.lgfl.net/LgflNet/downloads/digisafe/Safe-Lessons-by-Video-and-Livestream.pdf>

### **Support for children and parents**

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- Childline – [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- UK Safer Internet Centre to report and remove harmful online content – [www.reportharmfulcontent.com](http://www.reportharmfulcontent.com)
- CEOP (to make a report about online abuse) – [www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre](http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre)
- Internet Matters (for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online – [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)
- London Grid for Learning (for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online) – [www.lgfl.net/online-safety/](http://www.lgfl.net/online-safety/)
- Net-aware (support for parents and carers from the NSPCC) – [www.net-aware.org.uk](http://www.net-aware.org.uk)
- Parent info (for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online) – [www.parentinfo.org](http://www.parentinfo.org)
- Thinkuknow (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online) – [www.thinkyouknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkyouknow.co.uk)
- UK Safer Internet Centre (advice for parents and carers) - <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers>