

## Child Protection COVID-19 arrangements September 2020

St Matthew's Catholic Primary School recognises that during the Covid 19 period and given the potential for further school closures or partial closures this appendix and the school's safeguarding arrangements will be kept under review.

### Key contact details

* Redact personal contact information when making document available publicly			
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Chair of Governors	Mr Frank Vaudrey	07769 173212	frankvaudrey@gmail.com>
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Add any other key contact details here			

This annex provides guidance to all adults working within the school whether paid or voluntary or directly employed by the school or by a third party.

Keeping Children Safe in Education is statutory safeguarding guidance we will continue to have regard to as per our legislative duty. The government has provided additional guidance to support governing bodies, proprietors, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) in order that they can continue to have appropriate regard to KCSIE and keep their children safe. The additional guidance for the COVID-19 period can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>

***This annex should be read alongside St Matthew's Catholic Primary School Child Protection policy, Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, and in conjunction with Part 1 of the School Improvement Liverpool Schools Safeguarding Handbook which is made available to all staff and volunteers.***

## 1. Context

From the 1<sup>st</sup> September schools re-open for all pupils. Government guidance to support schools to plan and risk assess can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>

Our school's risk assessment will consider what action the school will take should there be any reported cases of Covid 19 within the school community or if there is a further local or national lockdown due to Covid 19.

During this time, St Matthew's Catholic Primary School will do what it reasonably can in order to keep all of our children safe. In most cases, the majority of our children will not physically be attending the 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 will be dealt with in line with our main Child Protection policy and local safeguarding arrangements. Where appropriate, referrals will still be made to children's services and as and when required.

## 2. Provision for children of key workers and those defined by the government as vulnerable.

During any further school closures or partial closures due to COVID-19, the school's plans and risk assessments will consider how provision is made for children of key workers and those defined by the government as vulnerable. The school will contact and inform the school community if further school closure is required.

**The government defines vulnerable children as those who have a social worker and those children and young people up until the age of 25 who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC).**

Further information about vulnerable children can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

Our safeguarding team has identified any child considered vulnerable and has developed strategies to monitor their safety, wellbeing and welfare during any further lockdown or partial school closure if they are not attending school.

Prior to St. Matthew's Catholic Primary School closing, and before receiving official guidance regarding who met the criteria of vulnerable children, our school safeguarding team identified who our most vulnerable children were and formulated a plan to monitor their safety and wellbeing during school closure. As a team, we have agreed the following 'safe and well' activities:

- Initial contact made with identified families on school phone to explain school 'safe and well' procedures
- To contact the identified families twice a week and report all correspondence on the school Cpoms system.
- To report any serious concerns to the safe guarding lead who will refer to the levels of need guidance and report to careline if necessary.
- Social workers working with specific families will be contacted for regular updates
- Safe guarding team members will engage in any planned meeting via agreed telephone calls or conference calls if able.
- All procedures to be reviewed regularly, as directed by head teacher.

Schools have flexibility and are able to offer a place to those children they determine to be vulnerable, particularly those who are on the edge of receiving support or assessment from children's services.

St Matthew's Catholic Primary School will continue to work with and support children's services to help protect vulnerable children. This is especially important during the COVID-19 period.

### 3. Designated Safeguarding Lead

Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs C Sime  
Deputy Safeguarding Lead Mrs J Walsh and Mrs H Grier

The school will make clear its arrangements for contacting the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads in the following circumstances:

1. When the school is open to all or most children
2. When the school is open but to a restricted number of children
3. When the school building is closed to all children

Schools should ensure there is always a trained DSL or deputy available on site and the school's normal procedures for contacting the DSL/deputy DSL should be followed. These procedures are found in the main body of the school's child protection policy.

1. When the school is open but to a restricted number of children

Schools should ensure there is always a trained DSL or deputy available on site. All safeguarding concerns should be reported **without delay** to the St Matthew's Catholic Primary School Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. It is recognised however that this may not be possible and where this is the case, we will consider the following options:

- A trained DSL or deputy is available to be contacted via phone, email or video call when working from home
- Sharing trained DSLs or deputies from other schools, who would be available to contact via phone, email or video call.

If it is not possible to have a trained DSL or deputy on site, St Matthew's Catholic Primary School will ensure that there is a senior leader who takes responsibility for coordinating safeguarding on site. This senior leader can also take advice from School Improvement Liverpool's School Improvement Officers for Safeguarding:

[safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk)

Phil Cooper 07921 942091\*

Nicola Noon 07793 660567\*

It is essential that all staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL or deputy and are made aware of the arrangements on a daily basis regarding who that named person is and how to speak to them.

## 2. When the school building is closed to all children

Staff should follow the procedures set out in the main Child Protection policy for contacting and reporting concerns to the DSL and/or deputy.

During the COVID-19 period while the school is closed the safeguarding team can be contacted in the following ways:

- Via school safeguarding email: [safeguardingteam@stmatthewscps.co.uk](mailto:safeguardingteam@stmatthewscps.co.uk)
- School Emergency phone – 07704364390
- Safe guarding leads email– [c.sime@stmatthewscps.co.uk](mailto:c.sime@stmatthewscps.co.uk)

Throughout the COVID-19 period, the safeguarding team will continue to engage with social workers and attend and contribute to all multi-agency meetings, as determined by the local procedures for remote meetings.

The DSL will ensure that the school is represented at all multi agency meetings in an appropriate way by identifying a secure and confidential space where virtual attendance at meetings can take place, without interruption. School will ensure there is access to appropriate technology to support this.

Safeguarding supervision for the safeguarding team will continue to take place in order to review actions and decisions made, and support emotional wellbeing. We will consider how this is managed should staff be required to work remotely, or on a rotational basis, to ensure all staff are able to participate in and have access to appropriate supervision.

School Improvement Liverpool provides online training for those new to the role of designated safeguarding lead.

## 4. Safeguarding procedures

Where staff in school have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in our main Child Protection policy. This includes making a report via the agreed methods i.e. school concerns sheets and emailing the designated safeguarding lead or a member of the safeguarding team who will action all concerns appropriately and record the incident on CPOMS. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

If the school is closed or partially open then we will continue to follow our child protection, managing allegations policies and staff code of conduct. The school will continue to follow normal [Local Safeguarding Children Board Procedures](#). If the school is partially open with a reduced staffing then everyone will be aware of children with specific safeguarding or health needs or disabilities. Medicines

should be stored and administered safely. Everyone should be clear as to the setting's child protection and fire evacuation procedures. Everyone on site should know how to contact the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputies and First Aiders. If staff are working on a rota basis, there should always be appropriately trained key personnel on site. The names of these staff should be displayed and updated as required.

Where staff in school have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in our main Child Protection policy. This includes making a report via the agreed methods school concerns sheets. Staff are reminded of the need to report any safeguarding concerns to the designated safe guarding lead or a member of the safeguarding team who will action all concerns appropriately and record the incident on CPOMS immediately and **without delay** by the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. The revised statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2020) emphasises the need to report **any safeguarding concerns related to a child's mental health** to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.

If any member of staff believes a child is at risk of harm then the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ring Liverpool Careline on 0151 233 3700 (or the children's services department of the local authority where the child lives), **without delay**. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is *unavailable* then **any** member of staff should ensure Liverpool Careline is contacted without delay.

**If a child is in immediate/imminent danger then staff should ring the police.**

[Safeguarding-mate](#) can provide additional key guidance to all staff regarding key safeguarding procedures.

If school staff or governors need further safeguarding guidance or support then they should email [safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk) providing a mobile number for either Phil Cooper or Nicola Noon to contact them.

Concerns regarding the conduct of any adult working on site (**staff member, volunteer, supply staff, other third-party staff**) should continue to be dealt with in line with the school's managing allegations policy and local safeguarding children partnership procedures.

## **5. Attendance monitoring**

All staff should remain vigilant to poor or erratic attendance being an indicator of safeguarding concerns particularly neglect or child exploitation. School Improvement Liverpool has provided additional guidance and escalation processes for monitoring the attendance of vulnerable students including when children suddenly stop attending and cannot be contacted. In these circumstances the school will act, without delay, to establish the welfare of a child. During the Covid 19 period school staff may visit a child's home without entering it. This will provide opportunity to speak to a child whilst maintaining social distancing. Attendance issues will continue to be discussed during safeguarding supervision meetings.

If the school is only partially open or closed due to Covid 19 it will continue to monitor all vulnerable children by contacting them regularly and making home visits as required

- Initial contact made with identified families on school phone to explain school 'safe and well' procedures
- To contact the identified families twice a week and report all correspondence on the school CPOMS system.
- To report any serious concerns to the safeguarding lead who will refer to the levels of need guidance and report to careline if necessary.
- Social workers working with specific families will be contacted for regular updates
- Safe guarding team members will engage in any planned meeting via agreed telephone calls or conference calls if able.
- If school feel it necessary they will offer a place at hub to identified family/ families

## **6. Transfer of safeguarding information and records**

During the Covid 19 period, some children have attended other schools (HUBs) if their own school had to close. Headteachers and Designated Safeguarding Leads in all settings should ensure that any safeguarding information is transferred so that there is continuity of support. School Improvement Liverpool has provided further guidance for the transfer of safeguarding records and information to new setting.

## **7. Safer Recruitment**

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. Schools should continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, set out in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The government introduced temporary changes to support the ID checking during lockdown:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines>

It is assumed these temporary changes will not be needed as lockdown is lifted and schools reopen. In all cases all the DfE employment checks set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education will need to have been completed including ensuring all original documents have been seen.

Where schools are using volunteers, they should continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education. St Matthew's Catholic Primary School will ensure that there are no circumstances where a volunteer who has not been checked will be left unsupervised with children or allowed to work in regulated activity. If new staff or volunteers are recruited, the usual Safer Recruitment processes will be followed, and they will also be provided with a safeguarding induction.

## **8. Mental Health**

It is acknowledged that the current circumstances surrounding COVID-19 are particularly stressful and may cause increased anxieties and stress for all members of our school community. When children

and staff are away from their usual routine and social contact, this can become a negative and stressful experience. St Matthew's Catholic Primary School will ensure there is appropriate support available for the whole school community at this time. Support can include existing provision in the school, or from specialist staff or support services. Where children of critical workers and vulnerable children continue to attend the setting, appropriate support will be offered to them whilst on site.

All staff should be able to recognise behaviours in children that might suggest they are experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken following the school's child protection policy.

The school community can also be signposted to the government's advice on supporting children and young people's mental health during the COVID-19 outbreak, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Staff should also be aware of the mental health of their pupils and parents when setting expectations regarding pupil's work when they are at home.

## **9. Online safety**

School staff should continue to refer to the guidance for online safety in the main child protection policy.

Where the site remains open, St Matthew's Catholic Primary School will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children when they are online on the school's IT systems or recommended resources. Measures will be put in place to ensure safe IT arrangements and St Matthew's Catholic Primary School will consider what the contingency arrangements are if the named IT staff become unavailable.

The [UK Council for Internet Safety provides information to help governing boards and proprietors assure themselves](#) that any new arrangements continue to effectively safeguard children online.

The [UK Safer Internet Centre's professional online safety helpline](#) also provides support for the children's workforce with any online safety issues they face

In the consideration of online safety the DfE have revised Annex C of Keeping Children safe in Education which now provides guidance in respect of education at home: where children are being asked to learn online at home the department has provided advice to support schools and colleges do so safely: ['Safeguarding in schools colleges and other providers'](#) and ['Safeguarding and remote education'](#)

The school will also take account of the following guidance:

[Teaching Online Safety in Schools](#)

<https://coronavirus.lgfl.net/safeguarding>

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/working-remotely-advice-professionals-parents-posh-rhc>  
<https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/safe-remote-learning/>

[SWGfL guidance for schools re-opening](#)

[Safeguarding and remote education advice for teachers during coronavirus](#)  
[London Grid for Learning](#)

[Covid-19: Support for parents and carers to Keep children safe online](#)

[NSPCC- Netware guidance around Zoom and other Apps](#)

[Advice for teachers and leaders on remote education during Covid-19](#)

[Get help with technology for remote education during coronavirus](#)

[SWGfL – Safeguarding and privacy online](#)

[NSPCC: Online safety during the coronavirus](#)

[NSPCC: Undertaking remote teaching safely](#)

Where children are not physically attending school, St Matthew's Catholic Primary School will consider the safety of our children when they are asked to work online. The starting point for online teaching remains the same as the principles set out in our school's staff code of conduct. This policy includes acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communication including the use of social media. This policy applies equally to any existing or new online and distance learning arrangements which have been introduced. The principles set out in the [guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings published by the Safer Recruitment Consortium](#) alongside with the [COVID addendum](#) to this guidance should be adhered to by all staff.

Any online learning tools or systems recommended for use by St Matthew's Catholic Primary School, are be in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

St. Matthew's Catholic Primary School works closely with Trustnet and High Impact who ensure the appropriate safety measures are followed and auditing processes are in place. Reporting routes are in place to allow children to raise concerns whilst online. Children have been signposted to age appropriate practical support e.g. Childline, UK Safer Internet Centre or CEOP.

Our school will also be in contact with parents and carers during this time. Communication with parents will reinforce the importance of children being safe online. Families will be made aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and who their child is going to be interacting with online, including members of staff from our school.

St Matthew's Catholic Primary School acknowledges that some parents and carers may choose to supplement the school's online offer with support from online companies and in some cases, individual tutors. We will raise awareness of the importance of only accessing online support from a reputable organisation or individual who can provide evidence that they are a safe organisation and can be trusted to have access to children. We will signpost parents to support such as [Internet matters](#), [London Grid for Learning](#), [Net-aware](#), [Parent info](#), [Thinkuknow](#) and the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#).

## **10. Operation Encompass**

If a child, subject to an Operation Encompass notification, is not attending our school and is being cared for at home, we will risk assess the situation taking into consideration the history of the child and family. This information will be used in order to determine our response to each individual case. In all situations we would always aim to speak to the child.

## **11. Peer on peer abuse**

St Matthew's Catholic Primary School recognises that during the Covid 19 period and given the potential for further school closures or partial closures a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims. Where we receive a report of peer on peer abuse, we will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within our main Child Protection policy. We 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 will be recorded using the agreed methods and appropriate referrals made.

## **12. Monitoring**

St Matthew's Catholic Primary School will develop arrangements to ensure all staff and volunteers are aware and have understood any additional safeguarding guidance set out in this addendum.