Safeguarding Guidance during Coronavirus

Annex to Child Protection policy – version 1.0

Key Information

Title	Staff Code of Conduct	
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Version History

Version	Date	Amendments
0.01	02.04.2020	New appendix to Safeguarding Policy

In Christ we Flourish

Context

The way schools and colleges are currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual. Most children are no longer in a school setting and staff numbers have been affected by the outbreak.

Schools have been asked to provide care for children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

Purpose

- To provide guidance on safe ways of applying the Safeguarding Policy and working safely within the KCSIE guidance during these times of school closure.
- To provide guidance on safe ways of working for staff.
- This document supplements the Safeguarding Policy.

Principles

- With regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children must always continue to come first.
- If anyone in a school or college has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- A DSL or deputy should be available.
- It is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce (ie the school staff, both support and teaching) and/or gain access to children.
- children should continue to be protected when they are online.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions will be utilised:

- **Education hub:** a cluster of schools and colleges collaborating and sharing resources, staff and pupils in a local area.
- **Children of keyworkers:** children of parents who work in the following industries:
    - Health and social care, e.g. doctors and nurses
    - Education and childcare, e.g. teachers and DSLs
    - Local and national government, e.g. administrative occupations
    - Food and essential goods retail, e.g. supermarket workers and grocers
    - Public safety and national security, e.g. police and ministry of defence workers
    - Transport, e.g. freight transport workers and train drivers
    - Utilities, communication and financial services, e.g. bankers, oil workers, and telecommunications (999 and 111 critical services)
- **Vulnerable children:** those who have a social worker and those with EHC plans. Those who have a social worker include children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the LA. 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.
- **Volunteer staff:** staff who are working in a school that is not their usual place of work.

Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher

- To have safeguarding as a standing item on all virtual briefings
- To ensure that safeguarding policy is adapted to meet the new environment in which the school is operating

Director of Pastoral Care/DSL

During partial school closure, the DSL and their deputies are responsible for:

- Ensuring they or their deputies are available during school hours (09:00 – 16:00)
- Sharing their time and resources with other schools, if necessary.
- Being responsible for amending Appendix A (this section) in line with the continual changes to education policy released by the DfE and communicating all changes to staff and volunteers.
- Identifying vulnerable children and communicating additional safeguarding provisions to students and their families.
- Working with the LA to protect vulnerable children.
- Ensuring staff are aware of reporting channels for safeguarding concerns.
- Sharing their contact information with the school community.
- Ensuring there is a consistent approach to safeguarding children throughout the coronavirus pandemic.
- Providing students with clear communication channels so they can report any concerns they have, including reports of peer-on-peer abuse.
- Identifying a suitable member of the SLT to assume the role of temporary DSL should both themselves and their deputies become unable to work.
- Adhering to safer recruitment procedures and carrying out risk assessments on volunteers where required.
- Seeking assurances from employers of volunteer staff, to ensure they have up-to-date safeguarding training and are safe to work with children.
- To provide guidance for staff
- To chair safeguarding meetings
- To chair pastoral meetings.
- To ensure that there are no breaches of data protection during these meetings
- To liaise with Children's Social Care
- The DSL will report back to the governing board on all relevant safeguarding concerns experienced during partial school closure.
- The DSL will work with the local safeguarding partners to ensure students remain safe during partial school closure.

Assistant Head Pastoral

- To oversee and maintain the vulnerable student spreadsheet.
- To ensure that all vulnerable students are contacted at least weekly.

Heads of Year

- To have telephone or email contact with vulnerable students in their year groups weekly.
- To contact the DSL if there are serious CP concerns.
- To encourage parents/carers to adopt good routines and working practices.
- To encourage parents/carers to check that their children are safe online; to check social media apps.

- To update the spreadsheet on vulnerable students daily.
- To signpost mental health and well-being resources on the school website .
- To attend virtual pastoral meetings.
- To organise and run tutor team meetings weekly beginning 20.4.20.
- To promote strategies to overcome peer on peer abuse, especially online.

Tutors
- To maintain weekly contact with tutees

Family Support Officer
- To liaise with students who are vulnerable through weekly telephone calls.
- To maintain contact with social workers through email and telephone.
- To promote mental well-being through the school website and parents.
- To attend virtual pastoral meetings.
- To promote strategies to overcome peer on peer abuse, especially online.

Behaviour Support Manager
- To liaise with students who are vulnerable through weekly telephone calls

Vulnerable Students.
All staff should be aware that schools provide a protective factor for students and that there are some young people who are more at risk than others:
- children with disabilities and additional needs, including those with special educational needs;
- young carers;
- children showing early signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gangs and organised crime;
- children who frequently go missing from home, school or care;
- children who are misusing drugs or alcohol;
- children at risk of exploitation through modern slavery and trafficking;
- children whose home circumstances are negatively affected by adult substance misuse or mental ill health or domestic abuse;
- children who have returned home from care;
- children who show early signs of abuse or neglect;
- children at risk of radicalisation;
- privately fostered children.

New procedures
Any updated advice received from the three local safeguarding partners.
- The school will respond to any new guidance or advice, especially with regard to healthcare.
- Any updated advice received from local authorities regarding children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need.
- The school has not received any new briefings or advice.

What staff and volunteers should do if they have any concerns about a child:

- School staff should report concerns in the usual way through My Concern. If the matter is urgent call the DSL on 07847 145164.
- The continued importance of all staff and volunteers acting and acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns.
- School staff are aware of procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns.

DSL (and deputy) arrangements

- The DSL is Mr McDermott - 07847 145164 or mcdermottk@st-gregorys.org.uk.
- Deputy DSL is Mrs Tuke - tukes@st-gregorys.org.uk.
- The continued importance for school and college staff to work with and support children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- DSL, Deputy DSL, Heads of Year and Family Support Officer are in regular contact with Social Workers, School Nurse and Virtual School.

Peer on peer abuse

Given the very different circumstances schools and colleges are operating in, a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

- Reports made regarding peer-on-peer abuse will be risk assessed by the DSL on a case-by-case basis and, where required, investigated immediately and reported to the relevant authority, e.g. the police or CSCS where required.
- Both the alleged perpetrator and victim will be provided with support whilst the report is being investigated.
- Students will be provided with the contact details of relevant bodies who can provide support to them during this time, e.g. ChildLine.
- The DSL will keep the victim, the alleged perpetrator and their families up-to-date where necessary with details of the investigation, including the conclusion and how appeals can be made.
- Communications will be made online or by telephone, unless face-to-face contact is unavoidable.
- All staff to be vigilant to this possibility in interactions with parents and students and reiterate the need for responsible use of social media.

What staff and volunteers should do if they have concerns about a staff member or volunteer who may pose a safeguarding risk to children (the principles in part 4 of KCSIE will continue to support how a school or college responds to any such concerns)

- Should staff members have concerns they should report these to the DSL, or in the case of the DSL the Headteacher.

Online safety and security

Areas of concern are online protocols. Students must use school email accounts. If students are using private email accounts they must be reminded of the need to use official accounts. Work can be submitted through Show My Homework and this minimises risk to both student and staff.

- All online programmes used will be checked by the school's Head of Computing and DSL to ensure they are reputable and GDPR compliant.

- The Network Manager and ICT technician will work to ensure any loaned devices are secure and have the necessary antivirus malware protection downloaded.
- Any online queries which require the Network Manager and ICT technician will be addressed over the phone or online as much as possible – face-to-face contact is kept to a minimum.
- The DSL will report back to the governing board how they are ensuring students remain safe online during partial school closure.
- Students will report any suspicious online activity they encounter to the DSL or Headteacher.
- Staff will adhere to the Staff Code of Conduct at all times when delivering education online.
- Staff will report concerns over a student's safety online to the DSL.
- The school will collaborate with parents and carers to reinforce the importance of online safety.
- Social Media accounts must not be used for communication with young people; eg WhatsApp
- Staff should observe proper boundaries with students that are appropriate to their professional position. To maintain these boundaries staff should:
  o Act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to assume differently.
  o Avoid online contact with students outside of school hours.
  o Not exchange personal contact details with students, including social media profiles.
  o Communication should be restricted to agreed St Gregory's platforms (school accounts, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams).
  o Be clear about the expectations of both student and staff behaviour e.g. a 'classroom standard' of behaviour is expected from all participants.
  o Ensure that privacy settings for anything you post should be set to only St Gregory's.
  o Avoid using personal devices and use school provided equipment wherever possible.

- Private, or 'one to one' conversations via a video link or cam between staff and students, are not permitted.

More guidance will be provided on Google Classrooms once it is installed.

Staff must re-read 'Safer Working Practices', especially Section 11 which deals with Information Technology. (https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Sept%202019.pdf)

Any inappropriate comments from staff either in virtual meetings, emails or social media must be reported.

Any arrangements to support children the school are concerned about who do not meet the 'vulnerable' definition:

- Those students who do not have a social worker and are vulnerable will be contacted weekly by Heads of Year.
- In records, their vulnerability will be colour coded.
- Assistant Head Pastoral will have oversight of this document and ensure actions are taken to safeguard students.
- Safeguarding Team meets virtually each week.
- Sixth Form Safeguarding Team meets virtually weekly.
- Pastoral Team meet twice weekly.
- DSL has weekly contact with School Nurse.

What arrangements are in place to keep children not physically attending the school or college safe, especially online, and how concerns about these children should be progressed:

- Students with SEND have been allocated an LSA who is in regular email contact .

- Students with EHCPs will be supervised by the SEND Manager.
- Tutors will make weekly contact with students not attending school. This must be recorded in SIMS.
- Any CP or welfare concerns should be forwarded to the DSL.

Attendance

- The school will no longer use its regular attendance register to record attendance during partial school closure.
- The school will report to the DfE the number of students in school and whether they remain partially closed using the online form. This form will be submitted by 12:00pm each weekday.
- The school will record and investigate any absences where it expected a child to attend school and did not or where parent/carers have arranged care for their child who subsequently did not attend.
- Measures are in place to ensure students attending a different school are in a safe environment.
- The DSL makes student's temporary school aware of the reason why they are vulnerable (where relevant) and ensures the temporary school has access to the student's EHC plan and other supporting documents – this will be provided before the student is moved or as soon as possible.
- The school will transfer safeguarding data to a student's temporary school, whilst always having due regard for data protection legislation during the transfer of information.

Staff training and safeguarding induction

- The school will ensure that all existing school staff have read part one of 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE) and are suitably trained in this policy and any local safeguarding arrangements.
- The DSL and Headteacher will ensure that in the event of any volunteer staff from other schools working with students from St Gregory's that they are suitably trained in safeguarding and ensure that they have read KCSIE and are aware of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures and any additional local safeguarding arrangements.
- The Headteacher will risk assess any volunteers and volunteer staff working with students and use their professional judgement to assess whether they are suitable to work with students.
- The school will follow safer recruitment processes, in line with the relevant policy, when acquiring new staff.
- Anyone who has not undergone suitable DBS checks will not be left unattended with students.
- The school will report anyone to the TRA who they consider a safeguarding risk by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk – all referrals received by the TRA will continue to be considered.
- The school will have a rotary system which allows the Headteacher to be aware of who will be in school at any one given time.
- The school will keep a record of each record of attendance for staff and students within school and any additional risk assessments made on staff in a secure file, e.g. the SCR.

Mental health

- The school understands how the coronavirus pandemic can cause students and staff to feel anxious and concerned and will offer any essential support required to those in need.

- Students will be provided with different resources they can access to help them cope with their mental health and online services.

- Face-to-face support will only be provided where necessary or unavoidable.

- The school will have due regard for the Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) Policy when identifying early signs of mental health issues in students.

Supporting students at home

- The DSL will ensure every student has their contact information so they know how they can talk to them about any safeguarding concern.

- Students are provided with online safety information through the school website.

- Parents/carers are provided with the contact details of the DSL so they can report any concerns they have.

Monitoring and review

The DSL is responsible for continually monitoring DfE updates and updating this appendix in line with any government changes and guidance from the local safeguarding partners.

Any changes to this appendix will be communicated to all staff, parents, carers and relevant stakeholders.