

St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary School

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Updated January 4th 2021

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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Anne Harper	02086543006 admin@thomasbecket.croydon.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Tanya Lorimer Lynda Earl (online safety)	02086543006 admin@thomasbecket.croydon.sch.uk
Headteacher	Noel Campbell	02086543006 admin@thomasbecket.croydon.sch.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Steve Hall	steve.hall@croydon.gov.uk Tel: 0208 255 2889 Mob: 07825 830328
Chair of governors	Mark Humphreys	02086543006 admin@thomasbecket.croydon.sch.uk

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners and local authority (LA).

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Have a social worker, including children:
 - With a child protection plan
 - Assessed as being in need
 - Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements)
- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online
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3. Reporting concerns

Staff should be aware that they may identify new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person following partial school closures.

All staff must continue to act on and report any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this.

All staff now have access to CPOMS and should report any concerns using this system.

If for any reason cpoms is unavailable staff should report concerns in person to one of the DSLs at school. If this is not possible staff should email any concerns to the DSL - admin@thomasbecket.croydon.sch.uk or report concerns by phone

As a reminder, all staff must continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely by email and phone 02086543006 (non staff - message will be passed on). Staff members have personal phone and email contact details.

5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our 3 local safeguarding partners
- The local authority about 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

6. Monitoring attendance

As most children will not be attending school during this period of school closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend school that day doesn't attend, or stops attending. In these cases we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by phone and email
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

We are using the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible.

7. Peer-on-peer abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately by raising a concern with DSL.

8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately by raising a concern with DSL.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns

We have the option to offer places in school to children who don't meet the Department for Education's definition of 'vulnerable', but who we have safeguarding concerns about. We will work with parents/carers to do this.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10.1 below.

10. Safeguarding for children not attending school

10.1 Contact plans

We have contact plans for children with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

- They won't be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or
- They would usually attend but have to self-isolate

These plans set out:

- How often the school will make contact
- Which staff member(s) will make contact
- How they will make contact

If we can't make contact, we will attempt to speak to the relevant social services and then if necessary to police.

10.2 Safeguarding all children

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately. In particular, children are likely to be spending more time online (see section 11 below).

Phone calls to families

Maintaining contact with our families is important so teaching assistants will be making a pastoral phone call to families of children not currently attending school every 2 weeks from the week beginning 11th January 2021. We will offer this support as long as we have capacity.

The purpose of the phone calls is to keep in touch so that families know we are still there for them, to find out how they are (wellbeing) and identify any problems children are facing with their learning.

Teaching assistant will feedback any issues identified to the class teacher who will follow up.

If there are any safeguarding concerns teaching assistants should tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Anne Harper) as soon as they can – this can be done via email, phone or Cpoms if not possible in person . If the DSL is not available they should tell Tanya Lorimer or Noel Campbell (or Lynda Earl if related to online safety).

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is to seek support from our online safety leader (LE) and IT providers (Openair)

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour code of conduct and IT acceptable use policy.

We have taken a school decision that all videos shared with pupils on our website or g-suite will be pre-recorded and will not involve live streams.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum.

We will make sure children are signposted to other sources of support such as Child Line (see information in G-suite well-bring pages).

11.3 Working with parents and carers

Our online safety lead has signposted parents to safety resources through our school website to ensure they :

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils.

(see Speech and Language support programme and School counsellor Support programme)

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time through our G-suite well-being pages.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

13. Staff recruitment, training and induction

13.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

13.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools N/A

13.3 Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children protection policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1

13.4 Keeping records of who's on site

We will keep a record of which staff and volunteers are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

14. Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- Details of the child's social worker
- Details of the virtual school head

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff code of conduct policy
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy