



ST MARY'S SCHOOL HAMPSTEAD

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at St Mary's School, Hampstead

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1. CONTEXT

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response who absolutely need to attend.

The School building partially re-opened during the Summer Term 2020 and in accordance with Government guidance, the School building will reopen to all pupils in the Autumn Term (commencing 3rd September 2020).

On 1st January 2021 parents have again been asked to keep their children children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response who absolutely need to attend.

This addendum to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which will apply should the School need to fully or partially close as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and recommence Distance Learning and remote working, contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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2. KEY CONTACTS

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Headmistress Designated Safeguarding Lead	Harriet Connor	07341 732 556	Harriet.Connor-Earl@stmh.co.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Philippa d'Aquino	07584 474 436	Philippa.d'Aquino@stmh.co.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Designated	Martin Otter	07769 548	472	Martin.Otter@stmh.co.uk
EYFS Safeguarding Lead		Amanda Jennings	0207 1868	435	Amanda.Jennings@stmh.co.uk
Chair of Governors		Sean Muphy	0207 1868	435	Sean.Murphy@stmaryshampstead.org.uk
Safeguarding Trustee		Robert Carlysle	0207 1868	435	robert.carlysle@stmaryshampstead.org.uk

3. 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 have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. 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.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college 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.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

St Mary's School, Hampstead continues 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 lead person for this will be Philippa d'Aquino.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and the School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, the School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

The School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

4. ATTENDANCE MONITORING

During a fully or partial closure, depending on the circumstances, local authorities and education settings may not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance, however, the School continues to register children who access the school curriculum or otherwise contact a teacher in order to ensure that the School can monitor its contact with children and follow up “absences” appropriately.

The School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school and the School will follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

The School will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child in School if the child subsequently does not attend.

To support the above, the School, when communicating with parents/carers and carers, will confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues attendance, the School will notify their social worker.

During normal school term-time, the School will log, via the registers, pupils’ “attendance” at Distance Learning sessions. This will be assessed via their interaction with teachers and/or uploading of work. Where no interaction has been had directly with a child for two days, the School will follow up with the family to ensure that there is no reason for concerns.

5. DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

The School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL. During a period of partial closure, the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Philippa d’Aquino.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Martin Otter.

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

In the event of the absence of the onsite Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, the named member of staff in charge will become DSL.

6. REPORTING A CONCERN

Ideally the DSL (or deputy) will be present on-site, however if this is not possible, a DSL will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example working from home. Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This will include updating safeguarding files and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory

assessments at the School. The DSL/Deputy DSL's will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Staff and children who are on site or working remotely should report concerns to the Designated safeguarding Lead in line with the safeguarding policy. In the event of the absence of the onsite Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, the named member of staff in charge will become DSL.

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their Designated Safeguarding Lead, they should email the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Headmistress. This will ensure that the concern is received.

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 report the concern to the Headmistress and follow the usual protocols set out in the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headmistress whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Headmistress.

Concerns around the Headmistress should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Sean Murphy (Sean.Murphy@stmaryshampstead.org.uk)

7. SAFEGUARDING TRAINING AND INDUCTION

DSL training may be harder to undertake whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus.

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 (2020). The DSL should 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 enters the 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; and
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

8. 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, the School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (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 the School is utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 183 to 187 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

The 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 132 of KCSIE.

The School will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 143 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, the School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 164 to 173 in KCSIE.

9. ONLINE SAFETY IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

St Mary's will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

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

10. 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 in accordance with the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the code of conduct.

The School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only unless with specific written permission from the Headmistress and in accordance with the guidance. Where 1:1 sessions are permitted these should be recorded.

- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas and the background should be appropriate.
- 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 the School to communicate with pupils.
- The School platform records, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

11. SUPPORTING CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL

The School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

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.

Details of this plan must be recorded and stored with the safeguarding records, as should a record of contact have made.

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

The 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.

The 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. Teachers need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

The 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. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded.

12. SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

St Mary's is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

St Mary's will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headmistress and Deputy will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The 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.

The 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. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded as necessary.

Where the School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – will discuss them immediately with Headmistress, SLT and the Board of Governors/Trustees.

13. PEER ON PEER ABUSE

The School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where the 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 the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

The School will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded and appropriate referrals made.