

Covid-19 Safeguarding Arrangements

Review period:	Termly
Review by:	Vice Principal Pastoral
Date reviewed:	February 2021
Date reviewed Chair of Governors:	22 September 2020
Next Review:	April 2021



Executive summary

From Friday 20 March 2020 parents and carers 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 College returned to a full Tier 1 opening in September 2020 and then switched back to remote learning in January 2021. This addendum comes into effect and will do so for any future closures. The safety measures from this addendum will also be applied to those students who are self-isolating at home due to either having covid symptoms, testing positive, living with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive or after being contacted by Track & Trace. It is important that schools remain safe places for children and this is why St Joseph's College will continue to provide care for a limited number of children – children who are boarders and who cannot safely return home, children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home in the case of a Tier 2, 3 or 4 closure.

This Annex forms part of the College's [Safeguarding Policy](#) and contains the Safeguarding provision for pupils being educated both on and off site during COVID-19.

The Safeguarding Policy remains fundamentally the same and continues to have regard for the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 Statutory guidance.

This Annex sets out the adjustments St Joseph's College is making in line with the changes to operational practice. This Annex has been produced in line with the Government Guidance contained in **Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak** - Published July 2020 and updated in February 2021.

In response to COVID-19 communication is key. To ensure safeguarding is effective we are confirming all emergency contact details and clear communication methods for staff, pupils, parents and carers during this time.

The Annex will continue to be reviewed on a termly basis or as and when further Guidance is updated and issued by the Government.

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1. Designated Safeguarding Leads

St Joseph's College has a Safeguarding Team, which comprises of the following designated safeguarding leads (DSLs)

The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs Georgina Rowlands, this is for staff and student concerns.

Email address: G.Rowlands@stjos.co.uk

Contact Telephone Number: 01473 690 281

Emergency Contact Number: 07501 464 143

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Prep School is Mrs Vanessa Wood

Email address: V.Wood@stjos.co.uk

The Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Prep School is Mr Christopher Branch

Email address: C.Branch@stjos.co.uk

The Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Senior School for Trips & Visits is Mrs Victoria Harvey

Email address: V.Harvey@stjos.co.uk

The Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead for Staff Concerns is Mrs Danielle Clarke

Email address: D.Clarke@stjos.co.uk

The Designated Online Safeguarding Lead is Mrs Mychaela Frost

Email address: M.Frost@stjos.co.uk

The College has put in place a measure to ensure that there is a dedicated and trained Safeguarding Team available to co-ordinate safeguarding matters at all times. The College aims to have the Senior DSL on campus at all times, however, the College recognises that this may not be possible. In the case whereby the Senior DSL is unavailable on campus, the ADSL Staff, ADSL Senior School or DSL Prep School will be available to be contacted via email or online video whilst working from home, using the above contact details.

In the event whereby the Senior DSL is not on campus, Mrs Wood and Mrs Clarke will take responsibility for the co-ordinating of safeguarding on campus. Such responsibilities will include, but not be limited to:

- Managing access to child protection files;
- Liaising with the off-campus DSL;
- As required, liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school;
- Reporting any changes or concerns;
- Ensuring campus safeguarding checks are carried out and recorded.

2. Critical Worker Definition

Children with a parent or carer who are listed on the government's critical worker list should be considered for a school place but parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can.

Many parents working within these sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home and every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading. St Joseph's College will contact each parent or carer who registered themselves with the College as a critical worker to establish whether those who are eligible will require a school place.

The critical worker list can be referred to on the government website [here](#), to ensure an up to date list is referred to.

3. Vulnerable Children Definition

Vulnerable children include children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, or child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with education and health and care (EHC) plans.

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 by St Joseph's College in consultation with the local authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home.

Home support could include, if necessary, carers therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services if applicable. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home. The College will ensure that any decision made will be logged on MyConcern and reviewed regularly and a copy maintained of the child's file. The SENCO is co-ordinating regular contact home, which will be at least weekly.

The College will not treat the eligibility for free school meals alone as the determining factor in assessing pupil vulnerability.

4. Identifying Vulnerable Children COVID19

There is the expectation that children who have a social worker **must** attend school during COVID19 partial closures, unless agreed and recorded otherwise.

We will have special consideration for the following groups of children:

- Children who are subject to a child protection order;
- Children who have, or have previously had, a social worker involvement;
- Looked After Children;
- Previously Looked After Children;
- Children with an EHCP;
- Children in which the school have previously raised concerns;
- Children who are pending social care allocation;
- Children of keyworkers;
- Children in alternative education;
- Children who are being educated off site or at home.

The Senior DSL and DSLs will ensure that any child identified as vulnerable who is being educated off site, will be supported. Support for vulnerable – and, in fact, all pupils – who are not in school during this time will be provided in a number of ways, including:

- contact (eg. via email or telephone) from form tutors and pastoral leads
- contact from DSLs
- contact from the SENDCO or a Learning Support Assistant
- contact from subject teachers in setting distance learning tasks. Subject teachers should raise concerns with Reception@stjos.co.uk if a pupil does not respond to communications regarding work, particularly for pupils on the College's Students of Concern List. The DSLs, SLT and pastoral leads and Heads of Faculties have oversight of this spreadsheet.
- updates provided by SLT/the DSL to families sharing latest guidance from public authorities or the School, including safeguarding strategies

Where a DSL or ADSL places a welfare call to a vulnerable child, this will be recorded on MyConcern and actioned appropriately, and when necessary referred to other agencies.

Children not meeting the 'vulnerable definition'

St Joseph's College will undertake as outlined above the risk rating system for any child they feel is vulnerable even if the child does not fall into the 'vulnerable' definition contained within Government guidance. We will adopt the same procedure and practice for any child identified as vulnerable, that does fall into the statutory vulnerable category. This will include, as outlined above, contact with the child and their family, whereby a member of the safeguarding and/ or pastoral team will speak with the child directly and record and action accordingly. When carrying out welfare calls, it is important that staff speak directly to the child and not through a parent or carer.

5. The Role of the Local Authority

St Joseph's College has received the following information from the Local Authority in response to COVID19:

Here at the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership we are committed to Safeguarding Children, Adults and Young People. Now more than ever we want to make sure that the most vulnerable are safe when they are self-isolating.

As practitioners we need to consider how we can maintain appropriate contact with the children, young people and families we work with, provide support at this difficult time as well as maintain business as usual as much as possible. Please follow your own agency's contingency plans for providing services to children, young people and families, however in what may be challenging circumstances we would remind practitioners to:

- Speak to families regarding any difficulties they may be experiencing due to spending more time together than usual, and signpost to where they can receive additional support. Help them to regulate their stress responses and recognise the emotional impact this is having on society.
- Remain vigilant for the signs and indicators of abuse, including neglect and domestic violence, and raise any safeguarding concerns in line with your agency's procedures.
- If you suspect that a child or young person is being, or is at risk of being significantly harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, you must report this immediately in line with your agency's procedures.
- People rarely live in complete isolation and therefore we need to understand the needs of the wider family when we are working with a child, parent or adult, talking more, continuing to effectively work together and making sure that all the people working with children, young people and adults in a family, plan and coordinate their work. This will need to be adapted using families' social media links as we are in isolation.
- If you are using alternative methods such as social media and technology to keep in contact with children, young people and families, remember to do this in line with your agency's policies and in a safe and appropriate manner.

The Children's Commissioner has produced a useful guide explaining the Corona Virus to children and this can be found [here](#).

The government have also produced a guide to protecting Children and Young People during the Pandemic. [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on vulnerable children and young people](#)

Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership

Email: safeguardingpartnership@suffolk.gov.uk

Phone: 01473 265359

Address: Floor 3, Gold Block, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2BX

6. Keeping Children Safe in Education

This Annex has been drafted to ensure that St Joseph's College continues to have regards to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 in the event of partial or full closure.

The way in which we are currently operating in response to COVID-19 is fundamentally different to how we would normally operate, however, a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- The welfare of children remains our key priority;
- The best interests of children will always continue to come first;

- If anyone in the College has a safeguarding concern about any child, they will continue to act and act immediately;
- A DSL will be available, either onsite or remotely;
- Unsuitable people will not be allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children;
- Children will continue to be protected when they are online.

St Joseph's College has adopted a whole school approach to safeguarding including policy updates in response to COVID-19. The College is not weakening its approach to safeguarding or undermining our Safeguarding Policy, but is tightening procedure to represent current working practice in context to COVID19.

All policies are reviewed regularly by the senior leadership team and governing body and are being updated accordingly. Any updates made are subsequently cascaded to staff by email and posted to our Policies & Procedures area, alongside the website, to shape best safeguarding practice.

7. Attendance

We are following the guidance given under the attendance section of **School attendance – guidance for schools** – updated 7 January 2021.

In the case of social worker involvement, we will liaise where necessary with the child's social worker to agree with the families whether the child in need should be attending the education provision provided. In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school or discontinues the College will notify their social worker immediately where contact has been unsuccessful.

If a child who is expected in school fails to attend, it will be followed up in accordance to our attendance policy and contact will be made with the parent, carer or where appropriate escalated to children's services.

If contact has not been made by 09.30 on that day, this will then be reported to the DSL. The DSL will attempt to make contact via the telephone numbers listed on SIMS. If contact is unsuccessful a home visit will be arranged by the school or other appropriate agency.

In the case of a home visit being required, a risk assessment will be completed and logged. **The risk of COVID19 will not override** the duty of care the school owe in ensuring the child is safe.

8. Reporting and Monitoring a concern

Whether a child is educated at home or in school, every member of staff and or volunteer hold a duty to report any concern they may have. The College continues to adhere to the reporting procedures as outlined in our Safeguarding Policy.

If staff have any concern for a child, they will report it immediately to the DSL. St Joseph's College, in response to COVID19, has a dedicated safeguarding team available to ensure that there is always someone available to record and action a concern. This ensures due diligence and accountability when reporting and referring. The DSLs will continue to monitor MyConcern logs and will also monitor the College safeguarding email address safe@stjos.co.uk.

Increased risk in safeguarding

Families will be under immense pressure at the moment and not every home will be a place of safety for the child. Some children will be living in a confined living space and may be witnessing or be subject to an abusive household situation. Due to an increase strain on families both financially and emotionally, in response to COVID19, there is an increased requirement for safeguarding vigilance, reporting and monitoring. Children's services may be working at a reduced capacity which will mean there is an additional prominence for persistent referring and the following up of any referrals made.

The local children's service contact details are: **Customer First - 0808 800 4005**

The local children's service referral system is by submitting a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) via the Safeguarding Early Help Portal [here](#).

It is important that in response to COVID19 a concern is not disregarded and is followed up and there is evidence of any action that has been taken logged on MyConcern.

The procedure for reporting a concern remotely is the same procedure as reporting in person.

9. Safeguarding Training and Staff induction

All existing staff have undertaken safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). We are monitoring any updates or changes to Government guidance and/or local arrangement and are cascading this to all staff and or volunteers. We have implemented a robust reporting system in place during COVID19 to ensure remote reporting is accessible and the variation in operation is taken into consideration.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter the school, we will provide them with a safeguarding induction. We will make all staff and volunteers aware of this Annex to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

10. Children Moving Schools

The College fully understands that in response to COVID19 full or partial closure that pupils may have to attend another school setting. We will provide, wherever reasonably possible, (in accordance to the Information Sharing Policy) the receiving institution with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

In the case of one of our pupils, who is a looked after child, attends a cluster school offsite, the move will be managed by our Principal who will hold ultimate responsibility and act as the Virtual School Head; her contact details are 07917 117 374.

We will ensure that in a case of one of our pupils is to be educated at a cluster school offsite, we will make the receiving school aware of the reason the child is vulnerable and any arrangements which are currently in place to support them.

If possible, before our pupil moves to a cluster school, the Senior DSL will **securely** give the receiving school access to the vulnerable child's:

- EHC plan;
- Child in need plan;
- Child protection plan;
- For looked-after children, their personal education plan;
- Social worker details;
- Virtual School Headteacher with responsibility details.

In addition to the above, we will ensure that any additional information relevant to the child, including medical condition and allergies, are logged and registered appropriately. Any medication which the child takes will be stored and handled in accordance with the receiving school's first aid policy.

In the case that the information is unable to be transferred before arrival, we will **securely** send the information as soon as is reasonably practicable, in any case no later than 2 days upon arrival. We will ensure, where it is practical, that any exchanges of information will ideally happen at DSL (or deputy) level, and likewise between special educational needs coordinators/named individual with oversight of SEN provision for children with EHC plans.

We will continue to have appropriate regard to data protection and GDPR. We will share information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

Where a student moves educational establishment during school closure, the DSL will contact the receiving school to confirm they have joined and establish the appropriate secure manner to transfer the safeguarding record. These communications will be logged on MyConcern within the child's profile.

11. Safer Recruitment, Volunteers and Movement of Staff

The College continues to follow the Safer Recruitment Policy to ensure that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the school in order to gain access to children. If we recruit new staff or volunteers, we will uphold our Safer Recruitment practice, taking into account Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has implemented COVID19: Changes to DBS ID checking guidelines – 24 March 2020 which minimises the need for face-to-face contact.

With the COVID19 altered provision in place children could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. Any concern will be reported immediately. If we utilise volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education. Under no circumstances will a volunteer, who has not been checked, be left unsupervised or allowed to work in our school especially those in regulated activity.

Any staff or volunteers new to the College will complete a safeguarding induction.

12. Allegations or concerns about staff

St Joseph's College will continue to adhere to the whistle blowing policy. We understand the importance of maintaining the view that 'it can happen here'.

If necessary, the College will make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Teacher Regulatory Agency **Teacher Misconduct: referring a case – updated 28 March 2014**

During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing:

Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk.

13. Mental Wellbeing

At this unprecedented time staff, pupils, parents and carers may be experiencing severe stress and anxiety. Everyone reacts differently to events and changes in the way that we think, feel and behave vary between different people and over time.

Teachers should be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home and/or on site. Equally taking into consideration their own working arrangements and workload.

Mental health issues can bring about changes in a young people's behaviour or emotional state which can be manifested in a range of different ways, and that can be an indication of an underlying problem. Staff will have special consideration for:

- Emotional state (fearful, withdrawn, low self-esteem);
- Behaviour (aggressive or oppositional; habitual body rocking);
- Interpersonal behaviours (indiscriminate contact or affection seeking, overfriendliness or excessive clinginess; demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent disapproval; failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort or affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed; coercive controlling behaviour; or lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions).

To support parents and carers, pupils and staff, St Joseph's College will take into consideration the below factors:

- The importance on how to connect with and support others;
- The importance of voicing concerns;
- How to handle worries and concerns and coping strategies;
- The importance of physical wellbeing;
- The importance of sleep;
- Managing media and information;
- Understanding the facts;

- Focusing on positives and goal setting;
- Keeping an active mind;
- Worries about health and finance;
- Routine.

In response to COVID19, during closures, we have a range of pastoral support in place and promote positive mental wellbeing through 'mindful movement', 'oenoemia for girls' and a wealth of information being shared through Heads of School. We have a dedicated school counsellor Mrs McCahon who can be contacted via email at S.McCahon@stjos.co.uk. She will offer appointments to students who she was already seeing before the school closure. The College Nurse, Mrs Debenham, is also available to support students and families with medical and wellbeing worries and can be contacted via email at J.Debenham@stjos.co.uk.

The form tutors and heads of school can be contacted on their respective email addresses, Mrs Rowlands the Vice Principal Pastoral can be contacted on G.Rowlands@stjos.co.uk and furthermore the safeguarding email address safe@stjos.co.uk is being monitored by the DSLs.

14. Peer on peer abuse

In response to COVID19 closure or partial closure, St Joseph's recognises that there is an increased opportunity for peer-on-peer abuse to take place. We will continue to remain vigilant to signs and symptoms of such abuse taking place.

Special consideration has been given to, but not limited to:

- Children educated off site;
- The use of the internet;
- Children being educated in mixed age groups;
- Increased vulnerabilities during this time.

All pupils at the College are aware who to speak to if they have a concern using the contact details contained in section 19 of this Annex.

15. Online Safety in Schools

Many pupils will have an increased use of the internet in response to COVID19 which may put them at an increased risk. St Joseph's College will continue to provide a safe online working environment for our pupils.

We continue to operate an appropriate firewall, filtration and monitoring system maintained by our IT Department and OSL. Staff are trained and are aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and other online risks.

The College has an appointed IT support officer Mr Orris whose contact details are ITSupport@stjos.co.uk.

16. Online Safety away from School

When asking our pupils to work online we place the child's safety at the highest priority.

The College recognises that in response to COVID19 there may be times when pupils will not physically be attending school. This increases their vulnerability and online safeguarding risk factors. Staff will be extra vigilant during remote interactions with pupils and report any concerns they may have in accordance with our reporting system and Safeguarding Policy. Where necessary, concerns will be referred to social services and if required the police. Staff and volunteers will be made aware of the importance of keeping themselves safe online.

The College ensures that any use of online learning tools and systems are in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Staff should use their school google account to connect with students for Home Learning through Google Classroom. Where Google Meet is used, staff must warn students that the contact will be recorded and stored and that should

they not give consent they should leave the group meet. Students should have their videos switched on but ensure those in the property are aware and sit in an appropriate space at all times. Microphones must be muted when not engaged in dialogue in the meet. At the end of the Google Meet the teacher should be the last person to leave the meet and the code should then be deleted from the Google Classroom. For staff, the College adopts the same principals for online learning as is set out in our staff code of conduct and our Covid-19 addendum to the Behaviour Policy.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Acceptable use of technologies;
- Staff pupil/student online relationships;
- Communication, including the use of social media;
- Minimum expectations;
- Online safety;
- Essential rules for remote teaching;
- SENDCO and pastoral care team;
- Subject leaders and tutors;

Pupils, Parents and Carers

For pupils, parents or carers, the College adopts the same principals for online learning as set out in the pupil behaviour policy and highlighted in the Covid-19 addendum to the Behaviour Policy. In response to COVID19 we have implemented:

- Online home learning responsible user agreement – students
- Parent consent form for online face-to-face session use – parents

We understand that not every parent will feel comfortable allowing their child to use the internet for Google Meet contact and for some parents or carers they may feel this is an invasion of their privacy and parents can choose for their child to engage with work on Google Classroom without the extra element of Google Meet.

We will maintain continued communication with parents and carers during this time to reinforce the importance of safe online learning. Advice will be given such as, but not limited to:

- Confirmation of online tools and or sites that the school will be using/if using;
- Allowing the parent or carer the opportunity to voice any concerns;
- Monitoring the search history;
- Maintaining open communication with the child about online safety;
- How to report a concern;

Parents and Carers at the College will be provided with links to lists of support services including:

- **Internet matters** - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- **London Grid for Learning** - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- **Net-aware** - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- **Parent info** - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- **Thinkuknow** - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- **UK Safer Internet Centre** - advice for parents and carers

We appreciate that not every child will have access to computer or internet facilities in the home. St Joseph's College will support with a Chromebook where a device is needed and will ensure that age appropriate resources are sent to any child who cannot access an online provision. In the case whereby a child is unable to access online facilities and in accordance with the risk rating system, the child will be contacted daily with a welfare call.

Children are able to report any concerns they have online back to the school using the details contained in section 19 of this Annex.

17. Help and Support

St Joseph's College emergency contact details:

Tel: 01473 690 281

Reception@stjos.co.uk

These are both manned throughout term time and holidays and parents will receive a response in good time.

For parents, carers and pupils

The College has ensured that both parents and pupils have an open line of communication with the school. The College's main school telephone number of 01473 690 281 will be re-routed to a member of staff with responsibility of manning this during school hours in the event of a closure.

All children have been made aware how to report a concern remotely via safe@stjos.co.uk and have also been issued with the ChildLine contact details.

ChildLine: 0800 1111 who are operating a 9am – Midnight service in response to COVID19.

UK Safer Internet Centre: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/report/>

CEOP: <https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>

Police: 999 if the child is in immediate danger.

Staff

The College has ensured that there is an open communication line for all staff. This takes place via Reception@stjos.co.uk.

General

The Department for Education COVID-19 helpline:

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Telephone: 0800 046 8687

Lines are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm and weekends 10am to 4pm.

Young Minds Crisis Messenger: 85258 – free text service for 24/7 support

NSPCC Helpline:

Phone: 0808 800 5000

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Mind: www.mind.org.uk

18. References

- Guidance for full opening: schools – January 2021
- Guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic – August 2020
- Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19) – May 2020
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on vulnerable children and young people - Updated 27 March 2020
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers - Published 27 March 2020
- COVID-19: Changes to DBS ID checking guidelines – 24 March 2020
- Questions from the Governing Board – updated 2 November 2016.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2020
- Working Together to Keep Children Safe – updated December 2020

- Teacher Misconduct: referring a case – updated 28 March 2014
- NSPCC Lone Working Guidance – Published 30 September 2019
- CEOP
- UK Safer Internet Centre
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Pupil Behaviour Policy