

# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY DURING SCHOOL CLOSURE



## ST JOHN PAYNE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Date Of Issue	Review Date	Nominated Lead Member of Staff	Nominated Committee
March 2021		Designated Leader for Child Protection  Governor for Safeguarding	Welfare committee

**DURING SCHOOL CLOSURE FOR ST JOHN PAYNE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**APPROVED BY GOVERNORS March 2021  
(This may be done as a Chair action)**

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St John Payne Catholic School remains committed to providing high quality pastoral care during all periods of school closure. Measures implemented ensure that Safeguarding & Child Protection remain of paramount concern. Authority, accountability and responsibility are assigned to key leaders, with clearly defined channels of communication to maintain high quality care.



During this period of closure there will always be access to a Designated Lead (DSL) or Deputy (DDSL Level 3 trained). In the exceptionally rare instance of a DSL or DDSL from St John Payne not being available, this would be from another school or the Local Authority.

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## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR **ST JOHN PAYNE SCHOOL**, DURING SCHOOL CLOSURE DUE TO COVID-19

### 1. Introduction

Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children and, in conjunction with other agencies, they play a vital role in safeguarding children during the current emergency arrangements. This policy is an addition to our existing Child Protection Policy and has been produced to cover arrangements in place during school closure due to Covid-19.

This Child Protection policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school and should be read in conjunction with the following:

- the current Child Protection Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020)
- the school Behaviour policy;
- the school Staff Code of Conduct;
- the safeguarding response to children missing from education
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead (Annex B of KCSIE)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (*everyone under the age of 18*) is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

### 2. Current context / statutory framework

Schools have been instructed to close, although are required to offer a place to [vulnerable children](#) and children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response. 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.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend provision, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at severe risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want their child to attend, and their child is considered vulnerable, we will explore (with the social worker) the reasons for this and to agree an appropriate plan for that child.

We obviously want to support all our children during this time and will consider making a place available to other children with vulnerabilities, although this will be in discussion with other professionals involved and based on a risk assessment process.

### **3. Safeguarding procedures during the closure period**

Clearly, we are working very differently during this period of closure. However, the principles within our existing Child Protection Policy still apply, as does the duty on all staff to safeguard children.

We have assessed the needs of all our pupils and put in place plans to support them and their families during this period of closure. These plans include an education offer (details of which have been shared separately with parents for their child) and arrangements to support pupils with their safety and wellbeing. These plans may include actions and interventions from other agencies, as we continue to work with partners to provide an appropriate level of support.

## **SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR ST JOHN PAYNE CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**See below the arrangements that have been put in place to ensure that our most vulnerable children are being monitored during this time.**

### **ST JOHN PAYNE CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

#### **SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT**

**St John Payne Catholic School views the safeguarding of every child at school to be of paramount importance. Parents send their children to our school each day with the expectation that our school provides an environment in which their children can flourish. In order to do this a wide range of measures are put in place. The policies and practices of our school reflect the priority of safeguarding and the delegated responsibilities of key personnel.**



## **SJP Procedures for supporting students**

Students will be placed into one of three categories-

**Category 1** – EHCP, FSM, CP, CIN, LAC and priority vulnerable.

**Category 2** – Other vulnerable

**Category 3** – All other students

Lists of contact details will be produced and supplied to –

**Category 1 & 2**– SLT, Pastoral, HOY, SENDCO

**Category 3** – Form tutors (in addition to above named)

Contact will be made on a regular basis dependent on category-

**Category 1** – Twice a week

**Category 2** – Once a week

**Category 3** – Every three weeks

For Category 1 and 2 student's staff contacts will be allocated dependant on relationships using – SLT, pastoral, SENDCO and HOY.

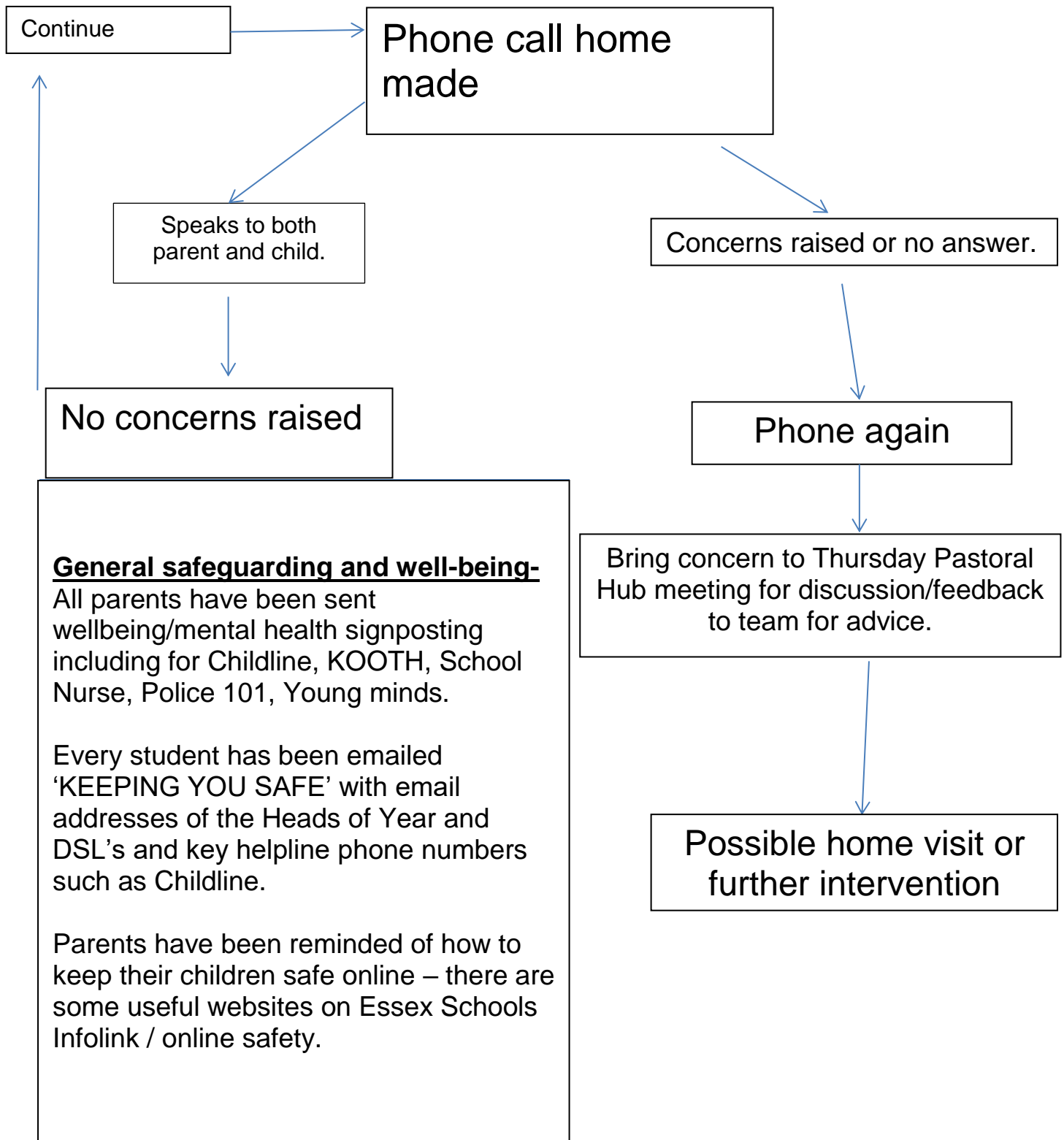
**Pastoral Hub Meetings** will be held weekly for any discussion around students of concern and should further action be needed such as home visits.

**Procedure for contacting home (Category 1 and 2)**- Staff member should make contact by phone based on the frequency of that category. If not using phones in school 141 MUST be used so not to give your own personal details.

Upon phoning the household they should aim to speak to both a parent and the student. This can be an informal checking in, offering any advice or support and signposting to appropriate services.

These conversations will be recorded on a spread sheet. All staff concerned have access to this spread sheet.

**What if I can't get through or the student is not at home?**



### **Procedure for contacting home (Category 3)-**

Form tutors should contact home for students not in Category 1 or 2 every three weeks. This is an informal checking in type courtesy call or email to the parent to offer support and signpost if necessary. If not using phones in school 141 MUST be used so not to give your own personal details.

\*NOTE- There should be no sharing of personal information – phone numbers, personal email addresses etc. If you email the parents do not share other parents email addresses as this would be a breach of GDPR.

If a concern is raised during a routine call you MUST pass this on to the Head of Year and DSL'S.

Form tutors may also wish to email their form group directly in a pastoral way. Email groups are set up but there is a caveat. They are called for example-

7a [2016]

9f [2016] etc

They are all there and right but they are formatted like this and always say [2016] instead of all the other groups that are logically [2019].

### **Safeguarding Reminders:**

Where possible contact children and parents at school from school devices but where this is not possible you MUST use your work email address or put 141 before the number when phoning. When setting work online do not use any platform to communicate with a student other than that set out in school guidelines.

If you have a concern about a child when in school please refer to the member of SLT responsible who will alert the DSL's.

### **Designated Safeguarding Leads:**

Miss Squires: c.squires@sjp.essex.sch.uk

Mrs Martin: CMa@sjp.essex.sch.uk



For vulnerable children, (including those with a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan), existing plans will be reviewed in conjunction with other relevant agencies and updated to ensure they reflect the current situation and meet need. Vulnerable children will be risk assessed with other professionals to decide whether children will be safer at home or in school and decisions will be made on individual cases. The school will work with the Virtual School Headteacher to support our children in care.

Children with an EHC plan will be assessed in consultation with the local authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. If it is felt they should remain at home, a plan will be agreed and this could include carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. It is recognised that many children with EHC plans can safely remain at home. During the closure period we will work with the local authority and parents / carers to produce a personalised plan that includes:

- Short term interim targets that have been agreed with the child and parent / carers
- Any agreed support to be provided by the team supporting the child (school, LA Education or SEND staff, Social Worker, Health professional)
- Regular reviews with the child and parent / carers

As always, all staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected / actual abuse or disclosures of abuse. Any member of staff who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the designated safeguarding lead (or, in their absence, the deputy designated safeguarding lead).

All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance;

- Essex Safeguarding Children Board guidelines - the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Child Protection Procedures (ESCB, 2019)
- [Essex Effective Support](#)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2018)
- 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex' (ESCB, 2017)
- PREVENT Duty - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)

Where there is risk of immediate harm, concerns will be referred by telephone to the Children and Families Hub and / or the Police. Less urgent concerns or requests for support will be sent to the Children and Families Hub via the [Essex Effective Support](#) portal. The school may also seek advice from Social Care or another appropriate agency about a concern, if we are unsure how to respond to it. Wherever possible, we will share any safeguarding concerns, or an intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care, with parents or carers. However, we will not do so where it is felt that to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On occasions, it

may be necessary to consult with the Children and Families Hub and / or Essex Police for advice on when to share information with parents / carers.

#### **4. Records and information sharing**

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing information where there are real safeguarding concerns. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect. Generic data flows related to child protection are recorded in our Records of Processing Activity and regularly reviewed; and our online school privacy notices accurately reflect our use of data for child protection purposes.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, will record it as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken. This is then presented to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), who will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly.

Any records related to child protection are kept on an individual child protection file for that child (which is separate to the pupil file). All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained for 25 years after the pupil's date of birth, or until they transfer to another school / educational setting.

During this period, there may be occasions where we have children from another school attending our site, or where our pupils may have to attend another school. In these circumstances, relevant information will be shared between schools to ensure there is knowledge and an understanding of any safeguarding issues so that appropriate measures can be put in place to keep children safe. Information will be shared with relevant staff on a 'need to know' basis.

#### **5. Interagency working**

As before, it is the responsibility of the designated safeguarding lead to ensure that the school is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any statutory meeting called for children on the school roll or previously known to them. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) / carer(s). The member of staff attending the meeting will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions.

During this closure period, there are temporary arrangements in place and meetings will take place virtually (online).

## 6. Staff conduct

All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct and the principles in our Staff Code of Conduct still apply during this emergency period. We have recently added an addendum to our policy to reflect the current arrangements to ensure they cover remote learning. The usual processes for reporting concerns about a member of staff apply.

## 7. Mental health and wellbeing

The mental health and wellbeing of all our pupils is always a priority and it is recognised that, without the protective factor of attending school, some of our children may be more vulnerable. This is a worrying and challenging time for everyone and we understand that families will be placed under additional pressures and may be coping with issues such as increased anxiety, financial difficulties, caring for children at home all the time and bereavement.

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our pupils. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

In our effort to support students at St John Payne Catholic School we have considered all children who are currently experiencing mental health concerns and these are included in our telephone network procedures at this time.

## 8. Online safety (for children away from school)

We recognise that the majority of children will not be physically attending school and that it is likely they will be spending longer periods of time online, which may increase their vulnerability.

The breadth of issues within online safety is considerable. It can be categorised into three main areas of risk:

- **Content** - exposure to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material. For example, pornography, fake news, racist or radical extremist views;
- **Contact** - subjection to harmful online interaction with other users. For example, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults;
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes harm. For example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

It is important for parents to be vigilant about their child's online activity and to inform the school of any concerns they may have about their child in this respect. We have provided parents with information on how to keep their children safe online and resources to support them to do this. Particularly useful websites are:

- [CEOP](#) (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)
- [Childnet](#)
- [Internet Matters](#)
- [Net Aware](#)
- [NSPCC](#)
- [Parent Info](#)
- [Safer Internet](#)

Parents have been directed to Essex Info link for further advice.

Staff are aware that children are vulnerable to being bullied or groomed for abuse or radicalisation online. Staff will be vigilant to any signs that that this may be occurring and report any concerns in the usual way.