

Islington Safeguarding Children Board

Covid 19 School Closure Arrangements

Model Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for Schools

3rd April 2020

based on *Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers, 27th March 2020.*

N.B. This addendum aims to reflect the new safeguarding arrangements for schools and colleges in relation to Covid-19. As such, it is a framework and should be seen as a starting point for development to fit your setting's individual context.

Throughout this document any red or yellow highlighted sections require action or confirmation by the school.

ISCB wishes to acknowledge the work of Stowe Valley Multi Academy Trust in the development of this policy.



St Paul's Steiner School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Key Safeguarding Contacts:

The Designated Trustee for Safeguarding and Child Protection is Kate Jeffrey.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection is Simone Freeman.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Anna Retsler, Tamara Allan, Elena Oliver-Andres.

The Designated Teacher for children looked after/previously looked after (CLA) is Elena Oliver Andres.

The Designated Manager for Allegations against Staff and Volunteers is Anna Retsler.

This policy was reviewed and adopted by the Governing Body on: 02/05/2020. It will be reviewed following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures.

This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff and it is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy. This policy was shared with all staff on 11/05/2020.

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This addendum of the St Paul's Steiner School Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

1. Context

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the UK government has asked parents to keep their children at home wherever possible. Schools, and all childcare providers, are, however, being asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and who cannot be safely cared for at home.

The key principles of our existing Safeguarding and Child Protection policy still apply as follows.

- with regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- a DSL or deputy will be available at all times the school is open
- if anyone in a school or college has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act immediately and inform the DSL/deputy DSL
- unsuitable people will not be allowed to enter our workforce and/or gain access to children
- children will continue to be protected when they are online

We will ensure that any new policies and processes in response to COVID-19 will not weaken our approach to safeguarding or undermine this policy.

2. Vulnerable Children

Current guidance¹ defines vulnerable children as *“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.*

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

Those who have a social worker include children who have a child protection plan (CP) 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.

In line with the current guidance, we will risk assess those children/young people with an EHC plan in consultation with the local authority (LA) 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.

Our Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and especially our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and their deputies know who our most vulnerable children are.

Our school will continue 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. Our Designated Teacher for this is Elena Oliver Andres.

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

In circumstances where parents do not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and St Paul's Steiner school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parents. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, St Paul's Steiner school or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

3. Designated Safeguarding Leads

St Paul's Steiner School aims to have our DSL (or at least one deputy) available on site as far as is possible in current COVID-19 circumstances in line with statutory guidance². Where this is not possible the DSL (or deputy) will be available via phone, Skype or online video - for example when working from home. Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, another member of the SLT will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to CPOMS, and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college. All staff on-site will be notified whether the DSL, deputy DSL [or which member of the SLT] is on site each day and the process for speaking to them.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and co-ordinate remote attendance of case holding staff at all multi-agency meetings.

4. Reporting a Concern

Where staff have a concern about a child/young person, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, this includes making a report using our usual process. Staff will be able to log into CPOMS remotely and report their concerns to the Safeguarding Team.

² Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2019.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access CPOMS from home, they should email the DSL and deputies at safeguarding@stpaulssteinerschool.org . This will ensure that the concern is received.

All 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 headteacher/principal as soon as possible. This should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the headteacher within 24 hours. Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Trustees: Isabelle Benson at Trustee5@stpaulssteinerschool.org and if the concern is in relation to the Chair of Trustees or anyone on the governing body, the LADO should be informed directly at lado@islington.gov.uk

Advice may also be sought from the Principal Officer Safeguarding in Education on 0207 527 5595.

5. Attendance Monitoring

Current guidance states that local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. However, we will continue to be aware of all children and young people's visibility through our virtual and online teaching and learning processes. In relation to vulnerable children, we will liaise with social workers and family support workers to agree with parents/carers whether children subject to child protection plans or child-in-need (CIN) plans should be attending school and will follow up on any pupil who is expected to attend and does not using our usual first day absence processes. We will also follow up with parents/carers who have arranged care for their child/ren, but the children do not then attend.

St Paul's Steiner school will, when communicating with parents and carers, 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 stops attending without prior agreement and notification, St Paul's Steiner School will notify their social worker.

6. Safeguarding Training and Induction

During the period that COVID-19 measures are in place, our DSL (and deputies) who are all 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 (2019). The DSL will 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 join St Paul's Steiner 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 their current employer confirms in writing that the member of staff/volunteer:

- has been subject to Safer Recruitment checks including an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- has received appropriate safeguarding training
- is not currently subject to an ongoing disciplinary investigation,
- and

- that there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children.

Upon arrival at St Paul's Steiner School they will be given a copy of our safeguarding and child protection policy, including this addendum and our local processes and including confirmation of DSL arrangements for that day and subsequent days.

7. 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, St Paul's Steiner School will continue to follow safer recruitment processes, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (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. If we are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE, 2019. Under **no circumstances** will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

We 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 163 of KCSIE). We will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE, 2019 and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral 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. We will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE, 2019.

8. Online Safety in Schools and Colleges

St Paul's Steiner School will continue to provide a safe environment for all our pupils, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system. Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

9. 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 of harm or neglect. Any such concerns should be dealt with in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and if required, the police. You can view our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy here:

<http://www.stpaulssteinerschool.org/wpcontent/uploads/2020/03/Child-Protection-and-Safeguarding-Policy-2020-V6.pdf>

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the school's code of conduct. You can view the school's code of conduct here:

<http://www.stpaulssteinerschool.org/wpcontent/uploads/2019/10/Staff Code of Conduct 2019 04102019.pdf>

Use of Internet Platforms:

We will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. Staff must only use platforms provided by St Paul's Steiner School to communicate with pupils.

Using Zoom:

All staff are made aware of the following considerations when delivering virtual lessons and class meetings via Zoom, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1 sessions, groups only (a minimum of 2 students).
- Teaching to take place within normal school hours.
- Exceptions will be agreed by DSL and the Headteacher.
- Teachers will inform parents via email of up and coming Zoom sessions.
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred if possible.
- Students must be aware of the code of conduct when in a Zoom session (i.e. appropriate language and conversations, and no personal messaging).
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, no longer than 40 minutes, 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 should record the length, time, date and student attendance of any sessions held.
- Teacher is responsible for the settings, the parents are not to change any settings.
- We use "waiting room" setting to control who is attending.
- We will take care using shared screens for not unwittingly share content unrelated to the lessons.
- We are not recording the lessons routinely, as we would not record lessons in the classrooms.
- Recording can only be done by the teacher when everyone is aware. For example to record a scene in a play. Parents will be informed in advanced by the teacher who will seek agreement.

Google Classroom:

Teachers must only use the Google Classroom set up for them by St Paul's Steiner School. Teachers are aware of the guidelines below:

- Your St Paul's Steiner School email must be used when sending an invitation to students to join Google Classroom.
- Invite a parent/carer as a guardian for each student in the classroom.
- Students must be aware of the code of conduct when using Google Classroom, (e.g. appropriate language and conversations).
- Teachers will communicate with parents via Google classroom when necessary.

Emailing:

If a teacher is using email to provide educational material, they must follow the guidelines below.

- All lesson plans and work set for students must be emailed to parents through the teacher's St Paul's Steiner School email or class account only.
- Educational material should be sent out in good time (before the day of the lesson), and where possible within school hours.
- Educational material must include clear instructions and goals.
- If a student emails the teacher with a basic study related questions, the teacher may email them back directly, and must copy their parents into the response.
- If a student emails a teacher directly and are indicating signs of feeling swamped, unhappy or are struggling, the teacher may email them back directly, and must copy their parents into the response. This must be followed up by a telephone call to the parents as soon as possible.

10. Ongoing Communication with Parents and Students

The Head Teacher of the school will communicate with the parent body regularly. Class Teachers, Kindergarten Teachers will ideally have a weekly telephone conversation with each of their students and/or families. This is to ensure that the student and their family are well, and that they are managing and feel supported by you and the school. If any issues of concern arise out of the call, you must share your concern with a member of the Safeguarding team.

Telephone Guidelines

- Calls must be made by the teacher to the parent/carer telephone number.
- Teachers must always dial 141 before making a call to hide caller ID, when not using the School telephone.
- Calls need be no longer than 5 minutes.
- Telephone calls must take place within school hours (08.30-15.30).
- Teachers will keep a record of telephone calls on CPOMS including, date, time, and outcome.

11. Supporting children not in school

St Paul's Steiner School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all pupils. 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 on CPOMS, as well as a record of any contact made with the child and/or their family.

The communication plans can include remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded. St Paul's Steiner School and our DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan which will be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight). Where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website. This will include identifying how children can talk to the DSL or their deputies if they need to.

We recognise 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. Our teaching staff are aware of this and will take this into account when setting work for pupils and also in relation to their expectations of the quantity and quality of pupils' work whilst they are at home.

12. Supporting Children in School

St Paul's Steiner School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students and we will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

We 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 COVID-19.

We 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 in line with our normal procedures.

Where St Paul's Steiner School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the local authority.

13. Peer on Peer Abuse

St Paul's Steiner School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of peer on peer abuse and supporting victims. Where we receive a report of peer on peer abuse, we will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE, 2019 and of those outlined within our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. We will listen and work with children and young people, parents/carers and multi-agency partners to ensure the safety and security of the child/young person concerned. All concerns and actions will be recorded in line with our normal safeguarding processes and appropriate referrals made.

14. Children Temporarily Transferring from a Nursery/School

During this period, St Paul's Steiner school recognises that there may occasionally be times when we may be asked to take vulnerable children and the children of key workers on a temporary basis as their usual setting is not open. In these circumstances, we will require the child's original setting to complete the Pupil Transfer Information form to a School with Capacity to ensure that we receive key information about the child.

For all cases open to CSC and targeted family support services, we will not require Safeguarding and Child Protection files to be transferred, however, we will ensure that there is direct contact (via phone or Skype or video conference) between DSL's from both settings to discuss risks and vulnerabilities. Parents will need to be told that this information is being shared.

Any concerns about vulnerable children or the children of key workers should follow normal host agency procedures (i.e. reported to the DSL at the new setting to take the appropriate action) and the DSL at the main setting should be informed, so that safeguarding records can be updated. The new setting should keep a record of any action they take in line with their normal procedures.

In addition, if there are any concerns or allegations about staff who are accompanying children in these circumstances, they should be reported to the LADO in line with usual procedures.

15. Support from Islington Council

In Islington, the following services will continue to provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively:

- Children's Services Contact Team: 0207 527 7400 for urgent child protection referrals and csct@islington.gov.uk for all other queries and CIN and Targeted Family Support Referrals
- LADO: 0207 527 8102 or lado@islington.gov.uk
- Head of the Virtual School: 0207 527 3993 or matthew.blood@islington.gov.uk
- Principal Officer Safeguarding in Education: 0207 527 5595 or michelle.virdi@islington.gov.uk
- Pupil Services: pupilservices@islington.gov.uk

16. Contact Details if you are concerned about a child

- If a child needs immediate assistance from the Police or Ambulance Services call 999.
- **Islington:** Children's Services Contact Team: 0207 527 7400 for urgent child protection referrals and csct@islington.gov.uk for all other queries and CIN and Targeted Family Support Referrals
- **Hackney:** Children's Service's Contact FAST directly: 020 8356 5500 for urgent child protection referrals (9am to 5pm, Monday – Friday) and fast@hackney.gov.uk for all other queries. Outside of the above hours, the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) can be contacted on 020 8356 2710.
- **Camden:** Children's Services Contact team: 020 7974 3317 (out of hours: 020 7974 4444).
- **Haringey:** Children's Services Contact team: 020 8489 4470 (08.45 to 5 pm Monday – Thursday, 08.45-4.45 pm Friday). Outside of above hours including weekends call the Emergency Duty Team 020 8489 0000.
- **NSPCC:** Help for adults concerned about a child call 0808 800 5000.

17. Other Helpful Resources

- Childline: 0800 1111 (9 am – midnight). <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/>
- Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families: 020 7794 2313. <https://www.annafreud.org/media/11260/option-3-covid-advice-families2.pdf>
- YoungMinds Children and Young Peoples Mental Health: Parent Help Line: 0808 802 5544 (0930-4 pm Monday – Friday). <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/looking-after-yourself/coronavirus-and-mental-health/>