



# SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

## COVID-19 School closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

### Addendum to Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

(Source Linda Sheehan, Education Safeguarding Adviser, Achieving for Children)

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021

To be reviewed as necessary

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## SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### Context

At various stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of key workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were 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 cannot be safely cared for at home.

### Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact Number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Claire Copeland	020 8942 0729	<a href="mailto:Claire.copeland@holycrossprep.com">Claire.copeland@holycrossprep.com</a>
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Sarah Hair & Catherine Green	020 8942 0729	<a href="mailto:Sarah.hair@holycrossprep.com">Sarah.hair@holycrossprep.com</a> <a href="mailto:Catherine.green@holycrossprep.com">Catherine.green@holycrossprep.com</a>
Headteacher	Sarah Hair	020 8942 0729	<a href="mailto:Sarah.hair@holycrossprep.com">Sarah.hair@holycrossprep.com</a>
Safeguarding Advisory Body	Kath Hayes	020 8942 0729	Via Clerk to the Advisory Body <a href="mailto:Russell.hanna@holycrossprep.com">Russell.hanna@holycrossprep.com</a>
Chair of Advisory Body	Sr. Margaret Donovan	020 8942 0729	Via Clerk to the Advisory Body <a href="mailto:Russell.hanna@holycrossprep.com">Russell.hanna@holycrossprep.com</a>

**SPA:** 020 8547 5008      **Out of Hours:** 020 8770 5000

**LADO:** 020 8891 7370

07774332675



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[lado@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:lado@achievingforchildren.org.uk)

### **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.

Holy Cross Prep 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 Headteacher (VSH) for children looked-after and previously looked-after. The lead person for this will be: Sarah Hair (Headteacher)

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 Holy Cross Prep will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

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

### **Attendance monitoring**

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

Holy Cross Prep and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – Holy Cross Prep will then follow up on any pupil that they were



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expecting to attend, who does not. Holy Cross Prep will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

To support the above, Holy Cross Prep will, when communicating with parents/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 discontinues, Holy Cross Prep will notify their social worker.

Holy Cross Prep will complete the Government's [daily online attendance form](#) and supply any information regarding attendance requested by Achieving for Children.

### Designated Safeguarding Lead

Holy Cross Prep has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Claire Copeland

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Sarah Hair & Catherine Green

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when 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 might include updating and managing access to child protection files, liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and, 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.

It is important that all school name staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of that person is and how to speak to them.

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

### Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. 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. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Headteacher.

Concerns regarding the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Sr. Margaret Donovan



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### Safeguarding training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID19 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 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 enter Holy Cross Prep, 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
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of Holy Cross Prep's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

### 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, Holy Cross Prep will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes, including relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).

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 Holy Cross Prep are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Holy Cross Prep 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 Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).

Holy Cross Prep will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) 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](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk)



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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, Holy Cross Prep will continue to ensure that all staff, volunteers and essential visitors sign in and out of the premises and will continue to keep the Single Central Record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).

### Online safety

Holy Cross Prep Online Safety Lead is: Magdalena Fernandes. If the Online Safety Lead is unavailable, advice can be sought from the Head, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy.

Holy Cross Prep will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect pupils when they are online on the school's IT systems or recommended resources.

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

Holy Cross Prep 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:

- The majority of online teaching should be in groups. Where a 1:1 session is necessary, a parent must be present.
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas under supervision of parents, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred where possible.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held (the school uses Microsoft Teams which automatically records this).

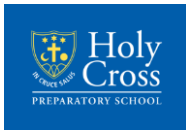
This is general guidance, although further detailed instructions to staff will be issued as required.

### Supporting children not in school

Holy Cross Prep is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils.

Where the DSL has identified a pupil to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, we will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that pupil. All contacts with the pupil must be recorded.

The communication plans can include: remote contact; phone contact; door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded. Holy Cross Prep and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.



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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 any communications to families.

Holy Cross Prep 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 at Holy Cross Prep will take this into consideration when setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

### **Supporting children in school**

Holy Cross Prep is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils. Holy Cross Prep 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.

Holy Cross Prep 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.

Holy Cross Prep 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 pupil.

Where Holy Cross Prep has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with our School Improvement Partner (SIP)/Link Adviser

### **Children moving schools**

If any pupils are temporarily attending other schools or transfer to another school, Holy Cross Prep will ensure that they provide the receiving school will all relevant welfare and child protection information.

Any change of school for children looked after will be led and managed by the Virtual School Headteacher with responsibility for the child.

Holy Cross Prep continues to have appropriate regard to data protection and GDPR and are aware that they do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

### **Mental health**

Holy Cross Prep is aware that negative experiences and distressing life events such as the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents.

Holy Cross Prep ensure that appropriate support is in place for the children of critical workers and vulnerable children whilst on site.



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Holy Cross Prep will continue to offer support to pupils who are not on site, this will be done remotely or by phone.

Holy Cross Prep will ensure that all pupils have contact details for appropriate support services. Eg. <https://www.kooth.com/>

### **Peer on peer abuse**

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

Holy Cross Prep will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) and our Safeguarding and Child Protection 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 using the school's procedure and appropriate referrals made.