

# Saint Michael's CE High School

*A Church of England Academy*



**Therefore, choose**

**COVID-19 School Closure Arrangements  
for**

**Safeguarding and Child Protection at St  
Michael's**

**January 2021**

**ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL**

**A BRIEF SUMMARY OF OUR CHRISTIAN VISION**

Our motto is '**Therefore choose [life]**' from Deuteronomy.



We understand this to mean growing in **body, mind and spirit**, so that all who learn and work here may flourish, experiencing the joy and hope of '**Life in all its fullness**'.

**This is further explained in our Mission Statement,**

*'As a vibrant learning community  
we choose to serve God,  
pursue excellence  
and celebrate the uniqueness of each individual.'*

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### Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mr John Chadwick	01257 264740	<a href="mailto:jchadwick@saint-michaels.lancs.sch.uk">jchadwick@saint-michaels.lancs.sch.uk</a>
Deputy DSL	Mr John Kirkpatrick	01257 264740	<a href="mailto:jkirkpatrick@saint-michaels.lancs.sch.uk">jkirkpatrick@saint-michaels.lancs.sch.uk</a>
Deputy DSL	Mrs Joanne Monaghan	01257 264740	<a href="mailto:jmonaghan@saint-michaels.lancs.sch.uk">jmonaghan@saint-michaels.lancs.sch.uk</a>
Headteacher	Mrs Jayne Jenks	01257 264740	<a href="mailto:head@saint-michaels.lancs.sch.uk">head@saint-michaels.lancs.sch.uk</a>
Chair of Governors (and safeguarding link)	Mr Chris Metcalfe	01257 264740	<a href="mailto:admin@saint-michaels.lancs.sch.uk">admin@saint-michaels.lancs.sch.uk</a>

### Other useful contacts

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Lancashire can be contacted on 01772 536694  
[LADO.admin@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:LADO.admin@lancashire.gov.uk)

LCC Schools Safeguarding Officer - Victoria Wallace 01772 531196  
[school.safeguarding@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:school.safeguarding@lancashire.gov.uk)

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Education Officers

Jenny Ashton 01772 531643 [jennifer.ashton@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:jennifer.ashton@lancashire.gov.uk)

Matt Chipchase 01254 220989 [matt.chipchase@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:matt.chipchase@lancashire.gov.uk)

Channel helpline – to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil 020 7340 7264

Whistleblowing - 01772 532500 [WhistleblowingComplaints@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:WhistleblowingComplaints@lancashire.gov.uk)

Where there are immediate safeguarding concerns about a child or young person (level 4 of the CON / child protection), you should make direct contact with MASH on the following number **or** the Police (999 in an emergency) and complete the referral form once the immediate concerns have been addressed.

If the child you are concerned about already has an allocated Social Worker go directly to this person by contacting **0300 123 6720 or out of hours 0300 123 6722 (8pm - 8am)**.

## **2. Scope and definitions**

This addendum applies from the start of the autumn term 2020. It reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners Chorley and South Ribble Clinical Commissioning Group, Lancashire Constabulary and Lancashire County Council.

It sets out changes to our normal safeguarding and child protection policy in light of coronavirus, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal safeguarding and child protection policy continues to apply.

This addendum is subject to change, in response to any new or updated guidance the government may publish. We will keep it under review as set out in section 16 below.

In this addendum, where we refer to measures to protect pupils who are at home, this means those who are learning at home for reasons to do with coronavirus – for example, due to clinical and/or public health advice, such as if there's a local lockdown or if they need to self-isolate.

In this addendum, where we refer to vulnerable children, this means those who:

Are assessed as being in need, including children:

- With a child protection plan
- With a child in need plan
- Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

Have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or LAs, such as:

- On the edge of receiving support from children's social care services
- Adopted
- At risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Young carers
- Considered vulnerable by the school for other reasons

## **3. Core safeguarding principles**

We will follow the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

We will always have regard for these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should act on it immediately

A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times (see section 5 for details of our arrangements)

- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

#### **4. Reporting concerns**

All staff and volunteers will continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children at school and those at home.

All staff must report any wellbeing concerns to the Pupil Manager as a minimum. If the concern is a potential safeguarding concern then a DSL must be informed. All staff should be logging concerns on Synergy but remember that this is not a guarantee that it will be received and read immediately. Continue to verbalise concerns if immediate action may be required.

Remember all staff can report a concern to children's social care and the police if they feel it necessary.

Members of the wellbeing team will continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

#### **5. DSL (and deputy) arrangements**

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be the headteacher in the first instance.

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with our off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure they (the senior leader) can:

- Identify the most vulnerable children in school
- Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary
- Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments

#### **6. Working with other agencies**

We will continue to work with children's social care, with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and with any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners, to help keep children safe.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our 3 local safeguarding partners
- The local authority, about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need

#### **7. Monitoring attendance**

We will resume taking our attendance register. We will also follow [guidance](#) from the Department for Education on how to record attendance and what data to submit.

All pupils of compulsory school age will be expected to attend school/remote learning unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend/participate because of illness, is unable to attend because of clinical and/or public health advice).

Where any child we expect to attend school/remote learning doesn't attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, via telephone
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible.

## **8. Peer-on-peer abuse**

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff will continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – about both children attending school and those at home.

## **9. Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer**

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/supply teachers/volunteers working on site or remotely.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk) for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

## **10. Contact arrangements**

We have contact arrangements for children with a social worker, and other children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where the child is at home.

The arrangement includes

- How often the school will make contact – usually at least once a week
- Which staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well
- How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, video conferencing, doorstep visits, or a combination of each

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them as appropriate.

If we can't make contact, we will contact the social worker in the first instance and if necessary the emergency duty team and/or the police.

## **11. Safeguarding all children**

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in section 4 above.

### **11.1 Children returning to school**

The DSL's, Pupil Managers, tutors and other members of the wellbeing team will do all they reasonably can to find out from parents and carers whether there have been any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before children return.

DSL's, Pupil Managers and other members of the wellbeing team will also liaise with the school nurse to gather relevant information about any support provided by school nursing services while children have not been in school.

The DSL will be given time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) through the current pandemic.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to any wellbeing or safeguarding concerns both when involved in remote learning and when seen in person.

### **11.2 Children at home**

The school will maintain contact with children who are at home. Tutors are currently checking in with their tutorials every morning at 8.50am. Assemblies and Worships are still being done remotely. Staff will try to speak directly to children at home to help identify any concerns. They may use school phones and video conferencing software to contact home. Or, if necessary they will use personal phones but they will withhold their personal number.

Staff and volunteers will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
- No contact from children or families
- Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

There may be occasions where a member of the wellbeing team, with approval from SLT, makes contact with a single child via video conferencing methods. This would only be for children with whom we feel this form of contact might be beneficial for their wellbeing. Where this may be the case, the member of staff will follow strict protocols to keep both themselves and the child safe.

### **11.3 Vulnerable children**

St Michael's 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. The lead person for this will be Mrs J Monaghan.

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 St Michael's will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

St Michael's will encourage our vulnerable children to attend school, including remotely if needed.

## **12. Online safety**

### **12.1 In school**

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

### **12.2 Outside school**

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing behaviour for learning policy, staff code of conduct, digital usage policy and the remote learning policy.

Refer to our 'Remote Learning Policy' for all other aspects of remote learning.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 4 of this addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

### **12.3 Working with parents and carers**

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- Know what our school is asking children to do online, where relevant, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

## **13. Mental health**

### **13.1 Children returning to school**

Staff and volunteers will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have had on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed.

All children were spoken to either by phone or via an 'every child matters' interview either remotely or in school. Pupils who stated that their wellbeing had been affected were targeted first. This will still remain the same as we continue through the current pandemic.

### **13.2 Children at home**

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. This includes contact with members of our wellbeing team and the use of external agencies where appropriate. For children at home this will be done either by phone or by video conferencing software.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents/carers and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time. This has been done and will continue to be done via our website and school Moodle.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to mental health concerns in children who are at home, and act on these immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 4 of this addendum.

## **14. Staff and volunteer recruitment**

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that staff and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

When carrying out DBS checks and right to work checks, we will follow the latest guidance from the DBS, Home Office and Immigration Enforcement as appropriate (for example, with regards to the process for verifying documents). We will inform candidates about the intended process as soon as reasonably practicable.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 183-188 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.



## **15. Safeguarding induction and training**

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive a safeguarding induction in line with the expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

## **16. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum every 4 weeks by the DSL.

## **17. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding and Child protection Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Digital Usage Policy
- Remote Learning Policy

Updated January 2021 J F Chadwick