



## COVID-19 school closure arrangements and Isolation arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at St Winefride’s Catholic Primary School

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### 1. Context

In the event that school has to close or a class bubble is asked to isolate based upon advice from Public Health England, this is the addendum to the SCIE and Child Protection Policy for St Winefride’s.

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.

This addendum of the St. Winefride’s Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the areas listed above.

### 2. Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jennifer Davies	07973146326	<a href="mailto:head@stwinefrides.cheshire.sch.uk">head@stwinefrides.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sarah Bannister	07732179162	<a href="mailto:s.bannister@stwinefrides.cheshire.sch.uk">s.bannister@stwinefrides.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
Chair of Governors	Mark Branch		<a href="mailto:chairofgovernors@stwinefrides.cheshire.sch.uk">chairofgovernors@stwinefrides.cheshire.sch.uk</a>

Safeguarding Governor	Simon Etty		<a href="mailto:Foundation1governor@stwinefrides.cheshire.sch.uk">Foundation1governor@stwinefrides.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
Learning Mentor	Kathleen Roberts	07749481527	<a href="mailto:k.roberts@stwinefrides.cheshire.sch.uk">k.roberts@stwinefrides.cheshire.sch.uk</a>

### 3. 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.

Many children and young people with EHC plans are safer remaining at home. However, children with an EHC plan may be risk-assessed 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. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. **Please note - that, at the current time, under the Government Guidance, St Winefride's is allowing visitors to come into the school building.**

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability. Senior leaders know who their vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

St. Winefride'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: Jennifer Davies  
The Deputy lead person will be: Sarah Bannister

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 increased risk or a member of their family is in the 'at risk' category. 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. Winefride's will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent/carers. **Schools needs to ascertain that the risk of the child remaining at home outweighs the potential risk of being infected by Coronavirus in school.**

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

### 4. Attendance monitoring

Attendance is closely monitored at St Winefride's. Non-attendance due to COVID 19 (set out under the new operation guidance for schools) will be monitored by the attendance officer and Headteacher and measures will be in place to make contact with the families of the child who is isolating (under the new guidance). Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

Attendance records, in relation to COVID 1, continue to be kept by St Winefride's.

If St. Winefride's has any children in attendance (e.g. because they are vulnerable or their parent(s) / carers are critical workers) we will submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE based upon the expectations and requirements from the DfE. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

If the school has closed, we will complete the return once as requested by the DfE.

If a child, who is considered vulnerable, is isolating (under the new guidance – Sept 2021) due to having Covid 19, school will make contact (Learning Mentor/ Attendance Officer) three times per week.

St. Winefride's and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school. We will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. We 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.

### **How will this look in St Winefride's**

To support the above, prior to the school closing down, the school's learning mentor will contact all parents/carers and confirmed that their contact numbers were correct and, if appropriate, the Learning Mentor will check for any additional emergency contact numbers.

In all circumstances, where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, we will notify their social worker.

School will have a list of parents that will be contacted weekly by the Learning Mentor, Class teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead. The class teacher will have contact through Class Dojo and with the child, through Google Classroom. They will raise any concerns with the DSL and this will be documented on CPOMS.

## **5. Designated Safeguarding Lead**

St. Winefride's has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Jennifer Davies

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Sarah Bannister

When the DSL or DDSL are not available on school site, they will be available to be contacted via mobile phone.

Where the DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a member of the teaching staff will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system (CPOMS) and 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 or college.

On the days that they are working from home, self-isolating or ill, all staff members on site have the contact numbers of DSL and DDSL.

In the unlikely event that the DSL/DDSL cannot respond to calls, the Safeguarding Children in Education (SCiE) team can be contacted for advice and support on the following details:

**Vicki Thomason**    **Mob:** 07785 542018  
**Email:** [Victoria.thomason@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:Victoria.thomason@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

**Pam Beech**    **Mob:** 07917587559  
**Email:** [Pam.beech@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:Pam.beech@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

**Susie Sheasby**    **Mob:** 07554 773926  
**Email:** [Susie.sheasby@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:Susie.sheasby@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

**Kerry Gray**    **Mob:** 07789484743  
**Email:** [Kerry.gray@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:Kerry.gray@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

**If you have immediate concerns about a child or situation, please call I-ART on 0300 123 7047**

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

## **6. Reporting a concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, (i.e. making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely.)

In the event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the DSL/DDSL or school Learning Mentor. This will ensure that the concern is received (if applicable).

**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 around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Mark Branch – [chairofgovernors@stwinefrides.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:chairofgovernors@stwinefrides.cheshire.sch.uk)

## **7. Safeguarding Training and induction**

At St Winefride's, as both the DSL/DDSL have attended recent refresher training (Spring 2019) and all staff have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) and attended Safeguarding Basic training in January 2020 (ECT in September 2021), for the period COVID-19 measures are in place, all staff fully aware of the Safeguarding process.

If any supply or cover staff need to be taken on by St Winefride's during the period that COVID-19 measures are in place, or new volunteers enter the school, the DSL/DDSL will provide with a safeguarding induction and ensure that they are fully aware of the school's safeguarding procedures.

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.

## **8. 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. Winefride's will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) (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 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

Where St. Winefride's are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. 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 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)

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, St. Winefride's will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

## **9. Online safety in school**

St. Winefride's will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where children are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

## **10. Children and online safety away from school**

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

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the code of conduct.

St. Winefride's will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

If staff decide to provide virtual lessons, below are some things to be considered, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1 sessions with children – group chat only.
- 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 live class sessions are used, these should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, 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 must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils
- Staff are advised that they should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Please note – Although St Winefride's does have a robust Remote Policy in place which outlines the provision provided including virtual lessons, staff are not expected to provide virtual lessons. There is no statutory requirement for any teacher to provide distance learning in a particular format. This good practice guide for remote education focuses on approaches to the delivery of the curriculum. This presupposes clarity about what is to be taught in a carefully sequenced curriculum. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/remote-education-good-practice/remote-education-good-practice>

## **11. Supporting children not in school**

St. Winefride's is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

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. This will be through regular communication with the school's Learning Mentor (or headteacher). The school mobile phone number has been shared with identified vulnerable children and parents/carers or the child can phone and speak to the member of staff during school hours. If appropriate and/or safe for the child to do so, they should attend school; if not every day, one a few occasions each week.

All contact is recorded in CPOMS.

Due to current message of social isolation, communication is through remote or phone contact.

St. Winefride's will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

This plan for communicating with vulnerable families will be reviewed regularly and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider adapting the plan or making any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

St. Winefride's recognises that school is a protective factor for our children, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers are aware of this when setting expectations of children's work where they are at home. Although, homework may be shared when children return to school, no work will be checked.

## **12. Supporting children in school**

St. Winefride's is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Where possible, St. Winefride's will continue to be a safe space for vulnerable children. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and, to maximise safety, there will be at least 2 members of staff with the children. In the latest Lockdown, all of the teaching assistants supported the children in school accessing Google Classroom which was led by the child's class teacher. If the numbers of children attending increases, barring illness or self-isolation, the number of staff will also increase.

St. Winefride's will refer to the Government guidance – operational guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement measures and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/schools-covid-19-operational-guidance>

We will aim to ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, that appropriate support is in place for them.

If the headteacher (or in her absence, the Deputy Headteacher) has concerns about the impact of staff absence, she will discuss them immediately with Governors. Otherwise:

- Absence of both DSL/DDSL – contact SCiE
- Absence of First Aider - All staff are emergency first aid trained, so in the absence of a first aider/paediatric first aider, they are able to provide first aid and, if they can't, advice can be obtained by mobile phone to appropriate member of staff, 111 or, in case of real emergency, 999.
- Absence of member of SLT – contact Governing Body

## **13. Peer on Peer Abuse**

St. Winefride's recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the Safeguarding Policy.

Through external communication – by telephone, email or any other electronic method, the school will 'listen' to the child and will aim to work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person. This will all be carried out remotely.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on school CPOMS system and, if appropriate, referrals made.

**Date: 01/04/2020 - Updated 01/09/2021**

**Date shared with staff: 01/11/2021**

**Date shared with governors:**