Annex to Child Protection Policy
COVID-19 changes to our Child Protection Policy

Response to COVID-19

There have been significant changes within our setting in response to the outbreak and the uncertainty of Education Restart

Despite the changes, the school's Child Protection Policy is fundamentally the same: **children and young people always come first, staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and contact the DT in line with our established safeguarding procedure**.

This annex sets out some of the adjustments we are making in line with the changed arrangements in the school and following advice from government and local agencies.

Reporting arrangements remain unchanged

The school arrangements continue in line with our child protection policy.
The Designated Teacher (DT) is: Mrs Lesley Cochrane
The Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) is: Mrs Helen Turley

The school's approach ensures the DT or a deputy is always on site while the school is open. In the unusual circumstance this is not possible the DT or Deputy DSL will be contactable and the Headteacher will email all staff by 9am to advise they are acting in an on-site safeguarding role together with contact details for the DT or Deputy DT.

Staff will continue to follow the Child Protection procedure and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child, whether in school or not. COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.
Children's services may be affected by the impact of the virus on staff and an increased demand for services. Where a child is at risk of significant harm there may be a need to be persistent in referring concerns to the local authority. The arrangements for contacting gateway are: The Gateway Service can be directly contacted for help in the Lisburn, Dunmurry, Moira, Hillsborough, Ballynahinch Downpatrick, Newcastle, Bangor, Newtownards and Comber

areas in one of the following ways: Telephone: 0300 100 0300 during office hours (9.00am – 5:00pm) Monday to Friday excluding public and bank holidays For all other times contact should be made with the Emergency Duty Service. Telephone: 028 9504 9999 Or in person by calling into any of the three Gateway Teams based at: Greater Lisburn Gateway Team Stewartstown Road Health Centre 212 Stewartstown Road Dunmurry Belfast

Should a child in the school's view be at risk of significant harm and local agencies are not able to respond, the school will immediately follow the safeguarding children partnership escalation procedure

Identifying vulnerability
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/news/new-vulnerable-children-guidance-published-schools-and-parents

During Lockdown many families were assisted by the school or local community and this will continue for as long as required.

Staff will be aware of increased risk
The pressures on children and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, poverty, and financial or health anxiety. These areas should be considered in the setting of any work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below). Staff will be aware of the mental health of both children and their parents and carers, informing the DSL about any concerns.

Peer on peer abuse
We recognise the potential for abuse to go on between young people, especially in the context of a school closure or partial closure. Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of peer-on-peer abuse, including those between young people who are not currently attending our provision. Extra care should be taken where groups have mixed age, developmental stages, are attending other schools as an interim measure and similar. When making contact with these families our staff will ask about relationships between learners.

Risk online
Young people will be using the internet more during this period. The school may also use online approaches to deliver training or support. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and other risks online and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when children were learning at the school.

- The school continues to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place
- Our governing body will review arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate
- The school has taken on board guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning and guidance for safer working practice from the Safer Recruitment Consortium. We have reviewed the code of conduct and information sharing policy accordingly.
- Staff have discussed the risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and been reminded of the school's code of conduct and importance of using school systems to communicate with children and their families.

- Children and young people accessing remote learning receive guidance on keeping safe online and know how to raise concerns with the school, Childline, the UK Safer Internet Centre and CEOP.
- Parents and carers have received information about keeping children safe online with peers, the school, other education offers they may access and the wider internet community. We have set out the school's approach, including the sites children will asked to access and set out who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. Parents have been offered the following links:
    - Internet matters - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
    - Net-aware - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
    - Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
    - Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
    - UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carers

- Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre.

Allegations or concerns about staff
With such different arrangements young people could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

Any staff or volunteers from outside our setting will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to take action if they are concerned.

New staff or volunteers

New starters must have an induction before starting or on their first morning with the DT or a deputy. They must read the school child protection policy, the behaviour policy, the whistleblowing policy and the code of conduct. The DT or deputy will ensure new recruits know who to contact if worried about a child and ensure the new starters are familiar with the child protection procedure.

New children at the school

Where children join our school from other settings we will require confirmation from the DT whether they have a Safeguarding File or SEN statement. This file must be provided securely **before** the child begins at our school and a call made from our DSL or a deputy to the placing school's DT to discuss how best to keep the child safe. In some unusual circumstance this may not be possible. Information provided must include contact details for any appointed social worker. Safeguarding information about children placed in our school will be recorded on our safeguarding system (CPOMS), will be securely copied to the placing school DT and will be securely returned to the placing school on completion of the child's placement with us so there is a continuous safeguarding record for the child.

The DT will undertake a risk assessment in respect of any new information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know about the information. This will be recorded on our safeguarding recording system.

This policy has been remotely approved by Governors on [23/9/20] and is available on the school website at www.stjosephspsballycruttle.com