

Response to COVID-19

There have been significant changes within school in response to the outbreak. Many young people are now at home and staffing is likely to be significantly affected through illness and self-isolation.

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

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

The current school position and local advice

Our school continues to follow statutory guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education and Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership, in accordance with the Somerset Effective Support Children and Families, threshold for assessment and services guidance. All referral routes to children's social care, early help, and local authority designated officer remain the same.

Reporting arrangements

Our school's arrangements continue in line with and Child Protection and Safeguarding policy which is available on the school website. Where available staff have access to report any child protection concerns via My Concern or by contacting DSL/DDSL as below.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: **Matt Clinkard, 07503 636863, matt.clinkard@stanchester.co.uk**

The Deputy DSLs are: **Gemma Glentworth Gemma.Glentworth@stanchester.co.uk**

Teresa Priest Teresa.Priest@stanchester.co.uk

Jonathan Belcher jonathan.belcher@stanchester.co.uk

The Head teacher: **Amy Joynes, 07503 671088, amy.joynes@stanchester.co.uk**

Our school approach ensures the DSL or a deputy is always on site while the school is open. In the unusual circumstance this is not possible the DSL or Deputy DSL will be contactable and the Head teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team will email all staff by 8.00am to advise they are acting in an on-site safeguarding role together with contact details for the Duty DSL or Deputy DSL. If needed the Trust Safeguarding Lead is also available: Sally Power M: 07867 976901 E: sapower@educ.somerset.gov.uk

Staff in our school will continue to follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding 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 children's services are:

Somerset Direct please call: 0300 123 2224

Should a child in our school view be at risk of immediate and significant harm and local agencies are not able to respond, the school will immediately call the police.

Identifying vulnerability

Stanchester have undertaken a scoping exercise to identify the most vulnerable children. Stanchester have completed a Safeguarding Contact Plan outlining specific arrangements for the following groups:

- Looked After Children
- Previously Looked After Children
- Children subject to a child protection plan
- Children who have, or have previously had, a social worker. There is an expectation that children with a social worker **must** attend school (or another school by arrangement), unless in consultation with the child's social worker and family it is agreed this is not in the best interests of the child. Our schools will record the decision making.
- Children with an EHCP – SENDCo will record a risk assessment
- Children on the edge of social care involvement or pending allocation of a social worker. Where required these children will be offered a place at school (or another school by arrangement).
- Other children the school considers vulnerable. More children may be added to this group in response to concerns raised with the DSL. These children can be offered care at school if required.

Procedure for Safeguarding Contact Plan:

- All parent/carers identified in the above groups were contacted and informed of their right to send students to school. The contact and decision by parent/carer with social worker (if applicable) was updated on vulnerable student contact log.
- All parents were contacted to ensure they were aware that our schools will continue to provide care for children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home, and vulnerable children include children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with [education, health and care \(EHC\) plans](#).
- All parents with EHCP were contacted by the SENDCo and informed of their right to send students to school.
- Phone contact twice a week for children with a social worker and/or EHCP or on most vulnerable list. Phone contact once a week with children on vulnerable list. DSL and DDSL monitoring staff contact and updating my concern
- Safeguarding team updating their contact directly on to vulnerable student contact log or My Concern if necessary.
- Liaising with all necessary professionals as usual to include SWs and FIS worker by DSL and DDSL.
- Attending any planned review meetings via phone link or Microsoft Teams (CSC), unless advised otherwise.
- Ensure all parents/pupils have access to ePraise.
- Staff continue to have an oversight of academic progress through monitoring of ePraise.

- Ensure DSL and DDSL daily monitoring of MyConcern to act on safeguarding concerns raised by staff
- Ensure DSL daily monitoring of school safeguarding phone (sent to all parents and carers) to act on safeguarding concerns raised by parents and carers.

Each of these children will have an individual risk assessment which has been shared with other agencies involved in their care, including where appropriate their social worker and the Virtual School Head for Looked After and previously Looked After Children.

In addition, the following groups have specific arrangements around contact and support from the school.

- Children of key workers and children at home – phone contact once per fortnight recorded on tutor group spreadsheets. Monitored by senior leader. If children of keyworkers who are expected in school but do not attend school, duty SLT will make contact with home. If no contact will follow procedure in attendance below.
- Any cause for concerns to be recorded and reported through My Concern unless at risk of immediate risk of significant harm, they will contact Duty DSL immediately.

Stanchester will review the Safeguarding Contact plan on a weekly basis. We will share and record all decision making with head teacher and Trust Safeguarding Lead.

Holiday arrangements

Stanchester is continuing to provide places for children of key workers over the Easter break.

Attendance

Our schools are following the [attendance guidance issued by government](#). Where a child is expected and does not arrive the school will follow their attendance procedure and make contact with the family. If contact is not possible by 9:30am the Duty DSL will be informed. The Duty DSL will attempt a range of methods to contact the parent (Skype, FaceTime, through a relative etc.) but if necessary arrange a home visit by the school (PFSA) or another appropriate agency. A risk assessment will be undertaken to consider manage the implications of COVID-19 alongside other risks perceived to the child. The risk of COVID-19 **does not override** the duty on the school to ensure children and young people are safe.

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.

Stanchester will also address the issue of peer-on-peer abuse in our remote learning curriculum.

Risk online

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. Our schools 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](#)
- The school have 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.
- Staff have discussed the risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and been reminded of the Trust 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 be asked to access and set out who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. Parents have been sent a range of links to resources on online safety and positive mental health and wellbeing. This information to parents will be updated as necessary.
- 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.

We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged, speak to Head teacher or Sally Power Trust Safeguarding Lead M:07867 976901

LADO 0300 123 2224

If necessary, the school will continue to follow the duty to refer to DBS any adult who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, and to the Teacher Regulation Agency in line with paragraph 166 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 using the address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk.

New staff or volunteers

New starters must have an induction before starting or on their first morning with the DSL or a deputy. They must read Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 and Annex A, the school child protection policy, the behaviour policy, the whistleblowing policy and the staff code of conduct. The DSL 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.

If staff or volunteers are transferring in from other registered education or childcare settings for a temporary period to support the care of children, we will seek evidence from their setting that:

- the member of staff has followed Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership training protocol and complete Basic Awareness or online equivalent.
- they have read Part I and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and
- An Enhanced DBS check has been undertaken by that setting we will undertake a risk assessment to determine whether a new DBS would need to be undertaken. It may be in these exceptional times we can rely on the DBS undertaken by their setting.

Our child protection procedures hold strong:

- People supervising volunteers must be themselves in regulated activity, able to provide regular, day to day supervision and reasonable in all circumstances to protect the children. Have an Enhanced DBS check in place.
- When undertaking ID checks on documents for the DBS it is reasonable to accept scanned images of documents for the purpose of applying for the check. The actual documents will then be checked against the scanned images when the employee or volunteer arrives for their first day.
- The Academy HR lead will update the Single Central Record
- A record of all staff and volunteers working in our schools, including those from other settings, during partial closure will be kept by Duty DSL. All to sign in and out of reception, information available each day of Duty DSL and how to contact and staff/volunteers acknowledge receipt of this information. After set time 8.30am for example, safeguarding checklist of who is on site passed to Duty DSL/Duty SLT. All children and young people informed who they can speak to on site if needed, how to contact them and children updated on emergency evacuation information. Duty DSL/Duty SLT checks attendance and contacts home (and social worker if applicable) of any children expected but not attending. Duty DSL/Duty SLT contacts home of any children of keyworkers expected but not attending.

New children at the school

Where children join our school from other settings we will require confirmation from the DSL whether they have a Safeguarding File or SEN statement/EHCP. 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 DSL 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 and where relevant for the Virtual School Head. Safeguarding information about children placed in our school will be recorded on our safeguarding system, will be securely copied to the placing school DSL 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 DSL 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 our Head teacher Amy Joynes and is available on the Stanchester Academy website in the Policies section and in the Staff Handbook.