



**Good Shepherd Catholic
Primary & Nursery School**

**SAFEGUARDING DURING THE
CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC POLICY**

Last Review Date: September 2020

Next Review Date: September 2021

Statement of intent

We understand that we face a time of great uncertainty and, as a school, we are doing all we can to provide clarity and safety to the school community. The information in this policy is under constant review and is updated to reflect changes to government and local guidance as it is released.

Key Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions will be utilised:

Children of critical workers: children of parents who work in certain jobs as outlined by the government. These include, but are not limited to health and social care, those in education and childcare, those involved in food, transport or utilities.

Vulnerable children: children who are supported by social care, have safeguarding and welfare needs, are looked after or have an EHCP or are assessed as otherwise vulnerable by the school.

The Role of the DSL and their Deputies

In light of the current pandemic, the school will have additional measures in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of its pupils – this approach will be led by the DSL.

The school will have a trained DSL or their deputy on site while pupils attend school. Where the DSL or deputies are unavailable on site due to illness, the role will be conducted remotely.

During the pandemic, the DSL and their deputy will be responsible for:

- Sharing their time and resources with other schools, where necessary.
- Ensuring staff are kept up-to-date with the latest safeguarding information and developments.
- Communicating any changes in safeguarding procedures to staff.
- Working with the Virtual School Head and wider LA to protect vulnerable children.
- Providing support to staff to ensure that contact is maintained with pupils at home and their families.
- Ensuring staff are aware of reporting channels for safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring there is a consistent approach to safeguarding children throughout the coronavirus pandemic.
- Speaking to pupils directly where possible to identify any concerns and ensuring pupils are provided with clear communication channels so they can report any concerns they have, including reports of peer-on-peer abuse.
- Identifying an experienced member of staff to assume the role of temporary DSL should both themselves and their deputies become unable to work, e.g. due to illness.
- Sharing their contact information with the school community.
- Identifying vulnerable children and communicating additional safeguarding provisions to pupils and their families. The DSL will report back to the governing board on all relevant safeguarding concerns.
- The DSL will work with the local safeguarding partners to ensure pupils remain safe during full opening.
- All email/text communication will be made using Teachers2Parents. Telephone communication is either on school phone lines or if any staff need to use their personal number, this is withheld.

Attendance

The school will report attendance figures to the DfE using the educational setting status form.

Parents will not be penalised if their child does not attend school due to following clinical or public health advice to stay at home, e.g. if they are self-isolating. In circumstances where pupils cannot attend school for reasons related to coronavirus, the school will mark the register using the codes advised by the DfE.

The school will record and investigate any absences where a pupil who was expected to attend school did not.

The school will ensure that all pupils' emergency contact information is correct and encourage parents to provide as many contact numbers as possible.

Mental Health and Pastoral Care

The school understands how the coronavirus pandemic can cause pupils and staff to feel anxious and concerned and will offer any essential support required to those in need.

The headteacher will regularly hold 1:1 meetings with staff to ensure they feel supported during this stressful time. The Education Support Partnership (<http://www.educationsupport.org.uk>) provides a free helpline for school staff and targeted support for mental health and wellbeing.

Pupils and parents will be provided with different resources they can access to help them cope with their mental health, including Childline and other online services.

Face-to-face support will only be provided where two-metre social distancing can be adhered to. Teachers will have due regard for the negative impact the current pandemic may have had on pupils, especially when setting expectations for pupils' work.

Our counsellor will continue to provide weekly sessions either face-to-face or over the telephone and our Learning Mentor will support children both individually and in small groups.

Communication

For pupils who are receiving education at home, e.g. pupils who are self-isolating, or during whole school closure, Good Shepherd will help parents and pupils follow a structure that includes time for education, playing and relaxing.

The weekly newsletter will continue during school closures as a way of sharing resources and tips.

Staff will telephone each family every week to check on their wellbeing and provide support where needed.