



## **Annex to Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedure Updated Wednesday 06 January 2021**

In these exceptional circumstances, where our current contact with students is no longer 100% face to face, we are conscious that children, young people and vulnerable adults could be at greater risk of abuse. 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 via [My Concern](#).

### **RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

There have been significant ongoing changes within our setting and within the UK in response to the outbreak of COVID-19 and government guidelines.

This annex sets out some of the adjustments South Gloucestershire & Stroud Academy Trust (SGSAT) is making in line with the changed arrangements in its schools and following advice from government and local agencies:

- [South West Child Protection Procedures](#)
- [Tri-x Resource Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

In order to provide clarity in terms of how the schools will operate, the SGSAT has developed a detailed [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on all of the main questions that have been raised to date. As national or local guidance changes, these will be updated.

### **TIMETABLING**

The current position is that, following the most recent Government guidelines, all school learning has moved to remote learning, except for the categories of students in the link below.

[Children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Timetables have been adjusted to support remote delivery for staff and for students.

Despite the changes, the SGSAT's Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedure is fundamentally the same: the welfare of children and young people always comes first, staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and referrals should continue to be made in line with our established safeguarding procedure.

## **'AT RISK' COHORTS**

The pressures on children, young people and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures for a variety of reasons including through having to stay within the household, through financial hardship or health anxieties. These areas should be considered in terms of setting any work for students to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning and their ability to access, or not, online resources). Staff may be aware of the mental health of both students and their parents or carers, and should refer to safeguarding about any emerging concerns.

We have undertaken a scoping exercise to identify the most vulnerable students and individual arrangements will be made with students who have a social worker and those with an EHCP. In addition to the regular interactions those children have (if not in school) with their teachers through our remote learning:

**For students subject to a Child Protection Plan and Child In Need Plan, and who have an allocated social worker:** regular contact will be made by the DSL / DDSL or their representative weekly with these students in agreement with the family and social worker. Social workers are contacted and provided with a weekly update.

**For students who are Looked after Children and Care Leavers:** contact will be made by the DSL / DDSL or their representative who will make regular contact as agreed with the student, carer and social worker.

**For students with an EHCP:** The SENDCO, class teachers, support workers and / or learning support advisors will maintain regular contact as agreed with student and parents / carers. Support can be delivered through individual arrangements based on curriculum activity.

**For students on the edge of social care involvement or pending allocation of a social worker, or identified as high risk:** contact will be made by the DSL / DDSL or their representative once per week for a welfare check.

A risk assessment has been undertaken to consider the implications of COVID-19 alongside other risks perceived to students. The risk of COVID-19 does not override the duty on the SGSAT to ensure children and young people are safe.

**NB:** Dependant on the school, contact will be made with students remotely via Show my Homework, Teams, Google Classroom, Dojo, Email or if available by work mobile phone.

In addition, these groups and children of key workers have been offered on-site provision in line with the following government guidance. [Children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/children-of-critical-workers-and-vulnerable-children-who-can-access-schools-or-educational-settings)

## **CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION (CME)**

If a student is going to be absent from lesson, the student, parent(s) / carer(s) should contact the before 09:30 on the day of absence to inform us that the student is not able to attend and the reason why. Please follow the [CME Procedure in the Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedure, Appendix 3.](#)

## **REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS**

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School staff are currently working remotely and are operating during normal business hours, 08:30 – 17:00 (Monday – Thursday) and 08:30 – 16:30 (Friday) **term time only**.

Onsite provision is available to our most vulnerable students with a social worker, students of key workers and ECHP students, 09:00 – 17:00 (Monday – Thursday) and 09:00 – 16:30 (Friday) **term time only**.

We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged:

Bristol Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	<a href="tel:0117 9037795">0117 9037795</a>
Gloucestershire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	<a href="tel:01452 426320">01452 426320</a>
South Gloucestershire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	<a href="tel:01454 868508">01454 868508</a>

Staff will continue to follow the safeguarding procedures and advise the DSL / DDSL 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.

Please continue to record safeguarding concerns on [My Concern](#). In the event of an allegation or disclosure relating to a member of staff please contact the DSL / DDSL who will liaise with the HR Team. If you do not have access to My Concern please email: [wellbeingservice@sgscol.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeingservice@sgscol.ac.uk) to request access.

Normal safeguarding procedures apply for referrals to children's services. This contact will go through a member of the safeguarding team (listed above) who will follow appropriate measures in seeking the appropriate and necessary support. Out of hours guidance can be found in the [Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedure](#) and also here: [South West Child Protection Procedures](#).

Should a child or young person 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, available here: [South West Child Protection Procedures](#).

#### **NEW STAFF, VOLUNTEERS & SUPPLY STAFF**

All new starters, volunteers & supply staff must have an online induction. They must read the school Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedure, Staff Code of Conduct & the Whistleblowing Policy. The DSL / DDSL will ensure new recruits know who to contact if they are worried about a child or young person and ensure the new starters are familiar with the child protection procedure.

All new starters, volunteers and supply staff need to confirm that they have read Part 1 and Annex A of the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 Guidance.

### **MANDATORY SAFEGUARDING TRAINING**

All staff that are due for refresher training will be directed to online safeguarding training.

### **MAINTAINING PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES**

In the course of their roles many staff will work closely with students and where there is daily contact with students, there will be a development of a professional working relationship and this development should be positive and enjoyable for both staff and students. However, students often have much less experience of relationships and roles than school professionals. It is common in this situation for a student to “reach out” to people they see on a daily basis (e.g. tutor, key worker, etc.) and confide in them, particularly if they lack support outside of school. The responsibility is on school staff to set the boundaries of their roles, so that the student is clear about what support may be offered.

There are some situations that are never appropriate while working with students

- Having any form of sexual relationship with a student. See the SGAT’s [‘Abuse of Trust’ Policy](#) for more detail.
- Telling a student your home address or home telephone number, or personal mobile telephone number. Under no circumstances should staff use their own personal devices to text or phone students or parents either in or out of school time.
- Taking a student to your home.
- Arranging to meet a student outside of work hours or on non-school business.
- Allowing students’ access, as friends on personal social networking sites.
- Communicating with students inappropriately using any form of social media or messaging technologies.

**The Guidelines for Maintaining Professional Boundaries (including use of Social Media)** provides staff with detailed guidance. The guidance explains that staff are expected to exercise appropriate discretion and maintain a clear professional distance between themselves and students.

Types of interaction that Staff must avoid:

- Interacting with students online other than through approved Trust / School software.
- Communicating with students or parents on the internet other than approved Trust / School software.
- Allowing students to see their social networking sites where permission is required to see those sites.
- Participating in the individual social networking sites of students.

Staff are reminded of the importance of only using official school channels to communicate with students. Please refer to the [Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedure](#), [Guidelines for Maintaining Professional Boundaries](#) and the [IT Acceptable Usage Policies](#).

Staff can access further guidance here:

- [TES – Coronavirus 10 Safeguarding Rules for Teachers at Home](#)
- [NSPCC – Understanding Remote Teaching Safely](#)

Students accessing remote learning will receive guidance on keeping safe online and know how to raise concerns with the school, Childline, the UK Safer Internet Centre and CEOP.

- [NSPCC – Internet Connected Devices](#)

## ONLINE SAFETY

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. SGSAT has an effective approach to online safety designed to protect and educate the whole school community in their use of technology. Appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place in order to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. UKCISS sexting advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexting-in-schools-and-colleges>

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- **conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

## PARENTS AND CARERS

Parents and carers will receive information about keeping students 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 students will be asked to access and set out who from the school (if anyone) their student is going to be interacting with online. Parents have been offered the following links:

- [Internet Matters](#) - support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [London Grid for Learning](#) - support for parents/carers to keep children safe online
- [Net Aware](#) - support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- [Parent INFO](#) - support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [thinkuknow](#) - advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers

## MENTAL HEALTH

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the [Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedure](#) and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

#### **Information for all Students:**

- [COVID-19 Guidance for the Public on Mental Health & Wellbeing](#)

#### **Information for Parents / Carers:**

- [COVID-19 Guidance for Parents and or Carers on Supporting Children & Young People Mental Health & Wellbeing](#)

#### **The following organisations can also provide support:**

- [Food Bank \(Gloucestershire\)](#)
- [Food Bank \(South Gloucestershire\)](#)
- [Food Bank \(Trussell Trust\) or \(East Bristol\)](#)
- [Government Advice](#)
- [Mental Health Apps \(approved by the NHS\)](#)
- [MIND](#)
- [NHS Advice](#)
- [Student Minds](#)
- [The Mental Health Foundation](#)
- [The Mix](#)
- [Young Minds](#)

