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April 2020

Important safeguarding notice for parents, carers and pupils

Safeguarding Procedures during school closure

We understand that during this unprecedented school closure period, you may have concerns about the welfare of a child. This document outlines what is considered to be a safeguarding concern and how to report it. It also offers advice and guidance on specific safeguarding issues that may be more prevalent at this particular time. As always, we will continue to work together to ensure that the children and adults in our school community stay safe.

What is classed as a safeguarding concern?

The Department for Education classes safeguarding as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

See more details in '*Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019*'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Who is at risk?

We know that any child may be vulnerable but nationally and statistically we should be particularly alert to the potential need for help for a child who:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs (Whilst it is important to be aware of national statistics we would never make the presumption a disabled child or a child with additional needs in our community will be vulnerable).
- Has special educational needs.
- Is a young carer.
- Is a privately fostered child.
- Has returned home to their family from care.
- Is showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour.
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health, domestic violence; and/or is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.
- Is showing signs of displaying behaviour or views that are considered to be extreme.
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- Not attending school or are at risk of exclusion from school.
- Frequently going missing/goes missing from care or from home.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, exploitation, radicalised.
- Not in education, training or employment after the age of 16 (NEET).

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How to raise a safeguarding concern during the closure period:

Safeguarding is still our first priority. We are maintaining links with our most vulnerable pupils and families and working with outside agencies such as Social Care to ensure that appropriate safeguarding provision is maintained.

However, safeguarding is **EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS**. If you feel the need to report a safeguarding concern to school during the closure period, please email:

Mrs S Cain- Deputy Head & Designated Safeguarding Lead scain@stmaryshesterfield.org.uk

Miss H McKay- Senior Assistant Head & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
hmckay@stmaryshesterfield.org.uk

We will respond to the concern by following our usual safeguarding procedures and liaising with the appropriate local and national agencies as outlined in our Safeguarding Policy.

IMPORTANT: If you think a child is at immediate risk of significant harm, please contact:

Call Derbyshire: 01629 533190

Sheffield Safeguarding Hub: 0114 273 4855

Free School Meals provision:

We are working with Compliments Select, to issue supermarket vouchers to those families who have children eligible for Free School Meals. This has been setup in partnership with the Department for Education and Edened UK.

Compliments Select enables you to issue an 'eCode' by email to eligible families (a 16-digit number with a value attached). Parents or adults with caring responsibilities for the eligible child can then go online to redeem the eCode against a choice of eGift cards (a digital gift card delivered via email) which currently includes the following food retailers:

- Morrisons
- Tesco
- Sainsbury's
- Asda
- Waitrose
- M&S food

If it is not possible for families to access the internet, a gift card will be posted to the home address of the child. We are working hard to provide families with a voucher as soon as possible. We appreciate your patience in this matter.

Mental health & wellbeing during the lockdown period

We understand how stressful and worrying this unprecedented time may be for our young people and families. To help support you, we have a wide selection of resources and useful links on our school website covering issues including stress, anxiety, coping strategies and an A-Z directory of charities and organisations:

<https://www.st-maryshigh.derbyshire.sch.uk/information/mental-health-emotional-wellbeing/>

You may also find the following links helpful:

The Children's Society have shared this information around dealing with conflict at home:

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/news-and-blogs/our-blog/dealing-with-conflict-at-home>

Heads Together, have published a free toolkit with resources and tips to help address anxiety arising from these challenging times.

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/coronavirus-resources-for-mental-health-and-wellbeing/>

Emotional health and wellbeing during the coronavirus outbreak from Derbyshire County Council:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/health-and-wellbeing/health-protection/disease-control/coronavirus/emotional-health-and-wellbeing/emotional-health-and-wellbeing.aspx>

Online safety

Young people will be online more than usual during the closure period in order to access work and stay in touch with friends and family. Please continue to be vigilant and monitor your child's use of internet and social media. Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online include:

- [Thinkyouknow](#) (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online)
- [Internet matters](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- [Parent info](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- [LGfL](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- [Net-aware](#) (support for parents and careers from the NSPCC)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

Concerns about domestic abuse

Derbyshire Police has issued the following statement:

- We are urging residents to look and listen for the signs of domestic and child abuse and report any concerns to the police.
- If you are aware of, or suspect that a neighbour, friend or family member may be a victim of domestic violence, please ensure that this is reported as soon as possible.
- If you are currently experiencing domestic violence yourself, please remember that you are not alone.
- If you possibly can, try to find a private place to contact the Derbyshire Domestic Abuse Support Line on 08000 198668.
- The current situation may cause increased pressure for families and if you are struggling to manage
- Your emotions and behaviour please seek help and advice by ringing Respect on 0808 802 4040

For more information, follow this link:

<https://www.derbyshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/daa/domestic-abuse/support-helplines/>

As we approach what would have been our Easter holiday, we feel it is crucial for pupils and staff to have some respite from the pressures of this stressful time. **Therefore, work will not be set by staff and there is no expectation that pupils will complete work during the two week period commencing on Monday 6th April.**

We appreciate your continued support and understanding as we navigate our way through such challenging circumstances. The safety and health of our school community is our top priority and we fully promote the government guidance on how to protect yourself and others <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>.

We wish you good health and a happy and holy Easter.

St. Mary's Catholic High School

