

**Safeguarding and Child Protection
Annex (2) to Child Protection Policy 2019
With Specific Regards to Online Learning
In response to the Covid19 Pandemic
28th April 2020**

Online Learning

Staff are reminded of the importance of the school's staff code of conduct, GTCS Guidance and the importance of using school systems to communicate with children and their families. Parents and carers have received information about keeping children safe online with peers, the school and the wider internet community. Pupils have been advised to only use school email in correspondence with staff and have received information about expected behaviours whilst participating in their online learning.

Online communication can encourage casual dialogue – think emojis, text-speak, gifs – and can often disarm inhibitions as it brings a new dimension and 'feel' to relationships. As a result, the traditional boundaries between teacher, learner and parent, can quickly become blurred. Teachers need to be alert to this; maintaining a formal, professional tone online and communicating with learners and parents only through a school account, will help build professional relationships and maintain appropriate boundaries. [GTCS]

Staff should give careful thought to what is the best method of teaching their class online. Large classes may present problems with 'classroom' management and live, interactive lessons may be more challenging as a result of this. Likewise, live, interactive lessons with very young Junior School children may also be challenging as a result of their age and stage. It may be more helpful to adopt a broadcast or passive approach with pre-recorded lessons, but this must be decided on a teacher by teacher/class by class basis. Professional judgement must be applied at all times.

If teachers choose to adopt a more interactive approach, it may be helpful to set some ground rules with your class(es) so that everyone is clear about the expectations of both pupil and staff behaviour (e.g. a 'classroom standard' of behaviour is expected from all participants, hands up if you want to speak, etc.) Whilst safeguarding should be at the forefront of everyone's mind, this must be kept in perspective. Adopting a commonsense approach to online interaction should minimise any safeguarding concerns.

Class Meets

Guidance for staff has already been issued with regards to protocols to follow in any online interaction with our pupils; this has also been shared with parents and pupils.

To re-iterate, these protocols are as follows:

- Give careful consideration to location - Google Meets should take place in a quiet space which is neutral in appearance and does not reveal too much of a teacher's personal life or home.
- All teachers present in the Meet - even if they are only present in a monitoring capacity - should identify themselves explicitly at the start of the meeting to the pupils/class that are in the Meet.
- Junior School pupils should have a parent at hand at all times - within earshot is fine, without being 'in' the meeting.
- Senior School pupils (S1 and up) do not need to have a parent on hand.
- Junior and Senior School pupils should not meet from their bedroom, where possible, although it must be appreciated that this is where many senior pupils have a work/study space, and may be entirely appropriate if, for example, they are sitting at a desk with a bookshelf behind them.
- Pupils and staff should be appropriately dressed - smart casual is acceptable. Pyjamas are not.
- A formal tone should be maintained - that which you would use in a class setting.
- Any safeguarding concerns raised during or by a meeting should be reported in the usual way on the same day to the CPC or DCPCs.

One-to-One Meets

- **Junior School**

In the case of any **one-to-one** Meets with individual pupils (for example, instrumental music teachers, Support for Learning staff or small classes where there may be individual tutorials) the member of staff should contact parents directly by email to inform them of the time and date of this contact. Parents should reply confirming that this is acceptable and at the time the one-to-one lesson, be available nearby to register their presence. In order to safeguard all involved, this process is necessary on **every** occasion. Ideally, two members of staff should be involved in any one-to-one meetings of a pastoral nature, however, a commonsense rule must apply here and if a second member of staff is not available, the meeting should proceed under the usual guidance.

- **Senior School**

In the case of any **one-to-one** Meets with individual pupils (for example, instrumental music teachers, Support for Learning staff or small classes where there may be individual tutorials) pupils, parents and staff have been issued with guidance regarding the protocols (above) surrounding these meetings. In order to safeguard all involved, this process is necessary on **every** occasion.

Recording of Live Meets

Ordinarily we would not expect teachers to record a Google Meet. In any case where a teacher wishes to do so, consent must be sought from a member of SMT who will discuss with the teacher the justification for this.

In every case where a Google Meet is to be recorded, the teacher should:

- Be the first and last to leave a Google Meet, as it is when the teacher is no longer in the Meet that unwanted behaviours could occur.
- Inform the pupils that the Meet is being recorded and if they do not consent to this, then they should leave the Meet. Any pupil who remains in the Meet will be assumed to have given implied consent. Senior School Pupils (12 years old and upwards) may consent to this on their own behalf. Junior School Pupils (under 12 years) must ask a parent/guardian to consent for them at the start of the meeting. Verbal consent at the time of the Meet is acceptable.
- Tell pupils that the recording of the Meet will be kept for no more than one week (for purposes of addressing any safeguarding concerns) in line with GDPR.
- Make a note in their planner of when the Meet took place and who attended.
- Give reasonable notice of a Meet so that all pupils can attend, but do not be too hard on pupils who cannot attend a Meet - there can be many legitimate reasons.
- Not share the recorded Meet with anyone else, even for the purpose of passing on the content of the 'lesson to a pupil.
- Make it clear to pupils that they should not record the Meet using the device they are on or another device.

- Any safeguarding concerns raised during or by a Meet should be reported in the usual way on the same day to the CPC or DCPCs.

General Guidance

- Please remember that, for now, this is the 'new normal'. Please do not become complacent about the potential for safeguarding concerns to arise, however, this is unlikely to happen and if it does happen it is most likely to happen inadvertently. Applying sound professional judgement, at all times, will serve to mitigate this risk.
- Plan for a lower volume of work for students. This is not a time to burden pupils with Google Meets, classwork and homework. Pupil and staff wellbeing is paramount. Having a group/class discussion instead of asking for answers to be written down, is a fun way for the pupils to learn and keeps everyone connected. Don't be afraid to have a Google Meet.
- Set reasonable deadlines.
- Provide pupils with some non-screen activities to do as well.

NO'Connell 28th April 2020