

## CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING: COVID-19 ADDENDUM

### 1. SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from government guidance, inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the LSCB and the local authority (LA) Hertfordshire County Council.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection and safeguarding policies in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), and should be read in conjunction with the latest version of that guidance.

Unless covered here, our normal child protection and safeguarding policies continue to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Have a social worker, including children:
  - With a child protection plan
  - Assessed as being in need
  - Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

### 2. CORE SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy will be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements)
- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

### 3. REPORTING CONCERNS

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this.

Concerns must be reported as usual, using either CPOMS for the majority of staff, or for those who do not have access to CPOMS, a paper concern form passed to the DSL in person.

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

#### **4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements**

We are prioritising that one member of the headship team, who is also a DSL, will be on site every day during the current arrangements. Where this is not possible, a senior member of staff will temporarily act as the point of contact.

Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely by mobile.

If no senior staff are available, we will share a DSL with Camps Hill Primary School and will publish contact details to all staff.

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them. This information will be given in the daily email update from the headship team.

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

#### **5. WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES**

We will continue to work with children's social care, and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our three local safeguarding partners
- The local authority about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need

#### **6. MONITORING ATTENDANCE**

As most children will not be attending school during this period of school closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend school during the closure doesn't attend or stops attending. In these cases, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers through a first day response phone call from the school office
- Notify their social worker, where they have one, through an email from the school.

We are using the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible, using our school gateway.

## **7. PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE**

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse. Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately.

## **8. CONCERNS ABOUT A STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER**

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk) for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

## **9. SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN WHO AREN'T 'VULNERABLE' BUT WHERE WE HAVE CONCERNS**

We have the option to offer places in school to children who don't meet the Department for Education's definition of 'vulnerable', but who we have safeguarding concerns about. We will work with parents/carers to do this. These may include, for example, children who have previously had a social worker, or who haven't met the threshold for a referral but where staff have raised concerns.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10.1 below.

## **10. SAFEGUARDING FOR CHILDREN NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL**

### **10.1 Contact monitoring**

We have a monitoring sheet which tracks children identified as 'vulnerable'.

We use this to track circumstances where:

- Vulnerable children won't be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or
- Vulnerable children would usually attend but have to self-isolate

These monitoring sheets record

- How often the school makes contact
- Which staff member(s) made contact
- A summary of the outcome of the contact / next steps

If we can't make contact, we will seek further advice from the Child Protection School Liaison Officer or by making a referral to social care.

## **10.2 Safeguarding all children**

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately. In particular, children are likely to be spending more time online (see section 11 below).

## **11. ONLINE SAFETY**

### **11.1 In school**

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

Due to lone working and 'bubbles', all staff will have access to their mobile phones when in class so they are able to call the HT/SLT in the case of emergency. Phones to be kept in a drawer, cupboard or in a pocket. Phones are not to be visible or used for any other reason other than in the case of an emergency.

We outsource our IT support which provides additional resilience to ensure service levels are maintained during the COVID-19 crisis.

### **11.2 Outside school**

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff code of conduct and IT acceptable use policy.

In particular, we remind staff:

- Only a school device may be used to conduct school business at home. Any deviation from this to use a home owned device when working from home requires approval from the headteacher and particular care around managing sensitive documents.

- To always ensure a device has been locked or logged off when left unattended to prevent sensitive data being accessed by others. Such data could be unwittingly accessed, changed, copied or forwarded.
- Not to use a device where it can be overlooked by unauthorised persons and do not leave it unattended in public places.
- No to allow family and friends to use school devices.
- To preview sites, software and apps before recommending them to pupils to access at home.
- To only use pre-approved school systems if creating blogs, wikis or other online areas in order to communicate with pupils/ families.
- To not contact pupils, parents or conduct any school business using a personal email address.
- To report to the headship team immediately if your school device is lost or stolen. Reports of loss or theft should be made as soon as possible.
- If required to make a conference call to other staff or pupils, to be fully appraised of how to use the technology. These communication processes should have been risk assessed (including parental home learning agreements where appropriate).

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

### **11.3 WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- Know what our school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

## **12. MENTAL HEALTH**

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

### **13. STAFF RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND INDUCTION**

#### **13.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers**

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

#### **13.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools**

We will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our school and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

#### **13.3 Safeguarding induction and training**

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children protection policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of our child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangement

#### **13.4 Keeping records of who's on site**

We will keep a record of which staff and volunteers are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

We will use the single central record to log:

- Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including staff 'on loan'
- The names of any staff on loan from elsewhere and information passed to us from the donor school/setting, *clearly highlighted to show that we have not made these checks ourselves and that this information is subject to risk assessment.*
- Dates of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers on loan from elsewhere

#### **14. CHILDREN ATTENDING OTHER SETTINGS**

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information. Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/ or Assistant Head Teacher for Inclusion) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- Details of the child's social worker
- Details of the virtual school head

Where the DSL, DDSL or Assistant Head for Inclusion can't share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in section 4 will do this.

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

#### **15. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the three local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 3-4 weeks by the headship team.

At every review, it will be forwarded to the local governing body for comment and approval.

