

# **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy – COVID-19 Addendum 1 Version 3**

**This document should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy September 2020**

**This addendum has been updated on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021 to reflect the government guidance [Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91111/restricting-attendance-during-the-national-lockdown-schools) and replaces version 2 – 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020.**

## **Designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) and Deputies**

Where possible we will ensure that there is a trained DSL or deputy available on site. Where this is not possible we will consider these 3 options:

- a trained DSL or deputy from the school can be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example working from home
- sharing trained DSLs or deputies with other schools (who should be available to be contacted via phone or online video)
- seeking advice and support for the Trust's central team Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead

Where a trained DSL or deputy is not on site, in addition to one of the above options, we will have a named senior leader who will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to child protection files, liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school.

We will ensure that all staff and volunteers are clear about the arrangements for sharing and reporting any concerns and these must be updated to reflect any changes on any given day.

We will ensure that the contact details for the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead are shared with all staff and volunteers.

## **Vulnerable children**

We will identify our most vulnerable children and create a register/plan for these children. This will include any children who are not identified as being in a vulnerable group but where the school have concerns. We will consider if we can offer a place to those on the edges of receiving children's social care support or where it would be in the best interests of the child.

[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)

Vulnerable children include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
  - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
  - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
  - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
  - those living in temporary accommodation
  - those who are young carers
  - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
  - care leavers
  - others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

We will ensure that we provide a place for children in this group and support families to access this provision. We will liaise with the family and the social worker (where applicable) where it is deemed in the best interest of the child not to attend. This will be regularly reviewed in line with the expectation that these children are attending school. We will establish the best way to maintain contact with these children and monitor them.

We will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children and follow the guidance issued by the Local Authority.

<https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/>

## **Attendance**

We will allow and strongly encourage vulnerable children to attend. If vulnerable children do not attend, we will:

- work together with the local authority and social worker (where applicable) to follow up with the parent or carer to explore the reason for absence, discussing their concerns using supporting guidance considering the child's circumstances and their best interests.
- work together with the local authority and social worker (where applicable) and other relevant partners to encourage the child to attend, particularly where the social worker agrees that the child or young person's attendance would be appropriate.

Where we grant a leave of absence to a vulnerable child or young person we will still speak to parents and carers, and social workers (where applicable) to explore the reasons for this and any concerns raised. The discussions will focus on the welfare of the child and will ensure that the child is able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home.

If we have to temporarily stop on-site provision on public health advice, we will inform the local authority to discuss alternative arrangements for vulnerable children and work towards welcoming back pupils as soon as possible, where feasible to do so.

We will work collaboratively with other schools and education providers and other local partners (including the local authority, social workers, police, youth services, key workers etc.) to maximise opportunities for face-to-face provision for vulnerable children.

As vulnerable children are still expected to attend school full time, they will not be marked as Code X if they are not in school (except if they are shielding, self-isolating or quarantining). If the parent of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent, we will ask the parent to let the school know. We will grant applications for leave of absence given the exceptional circumstances. This will be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

## **Children moving schools and colleges**

Where children need to attend another school/setting we will do whatever we can to provide the receiving institution with any relevant welfare and child protection information. This will be especially important where children are vulnerable. We will ensure that the receiving institution is aware of the reason the child is vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum we will, as appropriate, make sure that they have access to a vulnerable child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible VSH is). We will also ensure that we share any relevant information relating to allergies, medical conditions and dietary requirements. We will endeavour to make sure that this happens before a child arrives and, where that is not possible as soon as reasonably practicable. Any exchanges of information will happen at DSL (or deputy) level, and likewise between special educational needs co-ordinators/named

individual with oversight of SEN provision for children with EHC plans. Where this is not possible a senior leader will take responsibility.

We will continue to have appropriate regard to data protection and GDPR, but this will not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. We will continue to follow advice about information sharing at paragraphs 82-86 of KCSIE.

### **Mental health - Pupil wellbeing and support**

We will be aware that negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances may affect the mental health of children and their parents.

For those children of critical workers, vulnerable children and children who are working remotely, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them. We will have package of support available for all children. We will refer to the mental health and behaviour guidance as appropriate [mental health and behaviour in schools](#).

Where there is a concern for a child we will ensure that any concerns are reported to the DSL or deputy and recorded. We will draw on external support where necessary and consider any referral to statutory services (and the police) as appropriate.

### **Remote learning and online safety**

We will ensure that we are doing everything we can to keep all children safe online. We will ensure that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns will be reported and recorded like any other safeguarding concern and where appropriate referrals will be made to children's social care and as required the police.

We will be aware of the impact the current circumstances can have on the mental health of those children (and their parents) who are working remotely, including when setting expectations of children's work.

We will ensure that we are monitoring how children and parents are feeling about the work that they are being asked to do and any other concerns that they have.

We will refer to the [guidance on safeguarding and remote education](#) , [guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning](#) and from the [London Grid for Learning on the use of videos and livestreaming](#) to help us plan online lessons and/or activities safely. We will seek advice from the Trust IT department where we have any concerns or questions.

We will ensure that any concerns are reported to the DSL or deputy and recorded.

We will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. We will seek advice from the DPO where there are any concerns about a breach of the requirements.

We will issue guidance to parents to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. We will ensure that parents and carers are made aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and we will make it clear which members of school staff their children will have interaction with

## **Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff**

We will comply with our legal duties regarding pre-appointment including having regard to part three of the statutory safeguarding guidance keeping children safe in education. We will follow the updated guidance issued by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) [guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking](#) to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

Where we are recruiting volunteers we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 183 to 188 of KCSIE. We will ensure that under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. Mixing of volunteers across groups will be kept to a minimum, and we will ensure that they remain 2 metres from pupils and staff where possible.

We will ensure that new staff and volunteers are added to the Single Central Record, that the assurance from the current employer is recorded and the risk assessments are held on file.

We will seek advice from the HR Department if there are any concerns about a member of staff or a volunteer's suitability to work with children.

## **Staff training and safeguarding induction**

We will ensure that all school staff and volunteers are made aware of any new arrangements or changes to reporting and recording concerns so they know what to do if they are worried about a child or an adult's behaviour towards children.

We will ensure that where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter the school, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

Where we have new staff/volunteers on a temporary basis in response to COVID-19 we will judge, on a case-by-case basis, the level of safeguarding induction required. In most cases, the individuals will receive a copy of the receiving setting's safeguarding and child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements and contact details. We will also ensure that they are clear about how to report and record a concern. We will keep a signed record of what was included in the induction.