Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Approved by:	Governing body	Date: October 2020
Last reviewed on:	Autumn Term 1: Autumn Term 2: Spring term 1:	Date: Date: Date:
Next review due by:		

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies from the start of the Autumn term 2020. It reflects updated advice from the government and local authority.

It sets out changes to our normal Safeguarding and Child protection policy in light of coronavirus, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal Safeguarding and Child protection policy continues to apply.

This addendum is subject to change, in response to any new or updated guidance the government may publish. We will keep it under review as set out in section 16 below.

In this addendum, where we refer to measures to protect pupils who are at home, this means those who are learning at home for reasons to do with coronavirus – for example, due to clinical and/or public health advice, such as if there's a local lockdown or if they need to self-isolate.

In this addendum, where we refer to vulnerable children, this means those who

Are assessed as being in need, including children:

- With a child protection plan
- With a child in need plan
- Looked after by the local authority

> Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

> Have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or LAs, for example those who are:

- On the edge of receiving support from children's social care services
- Adopted
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Young carers
- Considered vulnerable by the school and/or LA

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will follow the statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education.

We will always have regard for these important safeguarding principles:

> The best interests of children must come first

> If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should act on it immediately

> A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should 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 by following the procedures set out in the school Safeguarding Policy. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children at school and those at home.

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 aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed within the main Safeguarding policy including how to contact a DSL/DDSL if they are not in the building.

On rare occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be Miss Sarah Wassell.

Miss Wassell will be responsible for liaising with our off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure they (the senior leader) can:

> Identify the most vulnerable children in school

> Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary

> Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments

5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and with any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners, to help keep children safe.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from the local authority. Safeguarding Partners and current Government advice.

6. Monitoring attendance

We will resume taking our attendance register. We will also follow guidance from the Department for Education on how to record attendance and what data to submit.

All pupils of compulsory school age will be expected to attend school unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is unable to attend because of clinical and/or public health advice, is absent for a necessary religious observance).

Where any child we expect to attend school doesn't attend, or stops attending, we will:

> Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by making an initial phone call to enquire the reason of absence. If no contact can be made before 10:30am staff will visit the family home to check on the families' welfare.

> If a child is absent from school and has a named social worker we will ensure their social worker is made aware of the absence.

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.

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 – about both children attending school and those at home and follow the schools Safeguarding Policy.

8. Concerns about a staff member or supply teacher

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 – whether those concerns are about staff/supply teachers/volunteers working on site or remotely.

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 for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

9. Contact plans

We will ensure there is an individual contact plan for children with a social worker, and other children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where the child is at home.

This will include:

> How often the school will make contact – this will be at least once a week
> Which staff member(s) will make contact – home visits will always be carried out in pairs including one DSL/DDSL
> How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both

10. 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 line with our Safeguarding Policy.

10.1 Children returning to school

The DSL (or deputy) will do all they reasonably can to find out from parents and carers whether there have been any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before children return.

The DSL (and deputy) will be given time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as children return to school.

Staff will be alert to any new safeguarding concerns they need to be made aware of prior to the child returning to school.

10.2 Children at home

The school will maintain contact with children who are at home. Staff will try to speak directly to children at home to help identify any concerns. They will use school phones and devices to make calls home. Or, if necessary they will use personal phones but they will withhold their personal number.

Staff and volunteers will look out for signs like:

> Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
> No contact from children or families

10.3 Home visits

In the current situation, staff may be required to undertake welfare visits

Staff should:

▪ agree the purpose for any home visit with the DSL

▪ have a clear understanding of the actions that should be taken if it is believed that a child or parent is at immediate risk of harm, including when to contact emergency services and / or partner agencies

▪ adhere to agreed risk management strategies

▪ Staff will undertake home visits with a colleague

- Staff undertaking welfare visits should always try to give parents / carers advance warning unless there is good reason not to; e.g. because the visit has been prompted by safeguarding concerns and / or is at the request of children's social care. In these cases, one of the staff undertaking the visit should be a Designated safeguarding lead or deputy safeguarding person. The purpose of the visit should be clarified and staff should be aware of the circumstances in which emergency services or partner agencies should be contact

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

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

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct policy. Online communication with children and their families will only be via the Class Dojo App or Website.

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.

The Head Teacher will:

▪ ensure that all relevant staff have been briefed and understand the policies and the standards of conduct expected of them

▪ have clearly defined operating times for virtual learning

▪ consider the impact that virtual teaching may have on children and their parents/carers / siblings

▪ determine whether there are alternatives to virtual teaching in 'real time' – e.g., using audio only, pre recorded lessons, existing online resources

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, where relevant, 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 teaching and resources our school provides

> Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online by referring to our website

12. Mental health

12.1 Children returning to school

Staff and volunteers will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have had on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed.

12.2 Children at home

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils, this could include remote counselling or phone calls with the class teacher/relevant staff member. We will also signpost all pupils, parents/carers 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.

Staff will be alert to mental health concerns in children who are at home, and act on these immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum

13. First Aid

To help reduce the number of adults moving between class bubbles, each class will have a named first aid trained staff member linked to their class. In the event of this staff member being absent assistance should be sought from the school office. All staff performing first aid will have access to PPE equipment including disposable gloves, aprons and face masks.

First aid records will temporarily be kept in the class however the recording system remains unchanged.

Risks should be minimised as much as possible, for example by not undertaking high risk or adventurous activities.

14. Staff recruitment

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that staff 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.

When carrying out DBS checks and right to work checks, we will follow the latest guidance from the DBS, Home Office and Immigration Enforcement as appropriate (for example, with regards to the process for verifying documents). We will inform candidates about the intended process as soon as reasonably practicable.

Due to our current COVIS risk assessment we will not be inviting any volunteers into school at this current time.

15. Safeguarding induction and training

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

New staff will continue to receive a safeguarding induction in line with the expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy addendum will be reviewed each half term. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

17. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

> Child protection and Safeguarding policy

> Staff behaviour policy/code of conduct

> IT acceptable use policy

> Health and safety policy

> Remote learning policy