

Policy/Procedure	COVID-19 ADDENDUM / Child Protection and Safeguarding		
Type	Safeguarding children during Coronavirus (COVID-19) / Local Policy		
Applies to project(s)	All	Policy No	S/01
Created by(owner)	C Fyfe		
Status	Released		
Date	20.03.2020		
Reviewed:	1.09.2020		
Next review date:	January 2020		

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

1. Child protection and safeguarding policy
2. Staff code of conduct
3. E-Safety policy
4. Health and safety policy
5. Whistleblowing policy

Contents

1. Scope and definitions
2. Core safeguarding principles
3. Vulnerable children
4. Attendance and monitoring
5. Home visits
6. DSL
7. Reporting a concern
8. Safeguarding training and induction
9. Safer recruitment; volunteers and movement of staff
10. Online safety
11. Children and online safety away
12. Supporting children not in school/setting
13. Supporting children in a school/setting
14. Mental Health
15. Working with parents / carers
16. Peer on peer abuse
17. Support from the local authority

Important Contacts:

ROLE	NAME	CONTACTS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Claire Fyfe	01827 872 377 07494 973915
Deputy DSL	Judith Little	01827 872 377 07719 683 109

1. Scope and definitions

- 1.1 The addendum applies during the period of school closure due COVID-19 and reflects updated advice from the DfE and our local safeguarding partners. The addendum is based on DfE advice published in July 2020 'Guidance for full opening: schools': <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>.
- 1.2 For safeguarding purposes, the above guidance refers back to earlier guidance 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers', even though such guidance was withdrawn on 31/07/2020: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>
- 1.3 It is expected that, with the exception of children with specific health vulnerabilities, all children will return to school from September 2020. This appendix addresses how the centre will apply the safeguarding and child protection policy in order to safeguard all pupils/students including a minority of children who may remain at and access learning from home.
- 1.4 The addendum applies both to children who may attend the centre and those who will be staying at home pending further government advice.
- 1.5 Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

2 Core Safeguarding principles

- 2.1 We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education\(2020\)](#).
- 2.2 Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- i. the best interests of children must come first
- ii. staff continue to have a responsibility for safeguarding children
- iii. if anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately, reporting the concern to a DSL in the normal way as set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy
- iv. a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times (see section 6 for details of our arrangements)
- v. unsuitable people must not enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- vi. children should continue to be protected when they are online

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

2.4 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 the procedures set out in section 7 below:

2.5 For children at home, they will look out for signs like:

- i. no contact from children or families
- ii. seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls
- iii. alerted to concerns by other agencies

3 Vulnerable children

3.1 From 20th March 2020 the government asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend. Children who absolutely need to attend are those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response and children defined as vulnerable as follows:

- i. children who have a social worker, including children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989**
- ii. children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans*
- iii. other children who the Designated Safeguarding Lead considers to be vulnerable, including those children who may be in receipt of early help; were previously the subject of child protection or child in need plans; were previously looked after; or whose situation and wellbeing at home may become unsafe or insecure if they do not attend school.

3.2 *The DSL will undertake a risk assessment, in consultation with the local authority and parents/ carers, to determine whether children with an EHC plan need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if

necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

- 3.3 **It may also be necessary, and appropriate, to undertake a similar risk assessment in relation to children with social workers. However, the centre will provide a place for any child with a social worker:
- i. if the social worker requires a place to be provided
 - ii. the child's parents/carers are willing to send the child to the centre
 - iii. the child does not have an underlying health condition that puts them at increased risk
- 3.4 In circumstances where the centre considers a child to be vulnerable, and eligible to attend school, but a parent/carer does not want to bring their child to the centre, the DSL will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent/carer. If the child has a social worker, the DSL will liaise with the social worker and seek to involve them in the discussion with the child's parents/carers.
- 3.5 Where parents/carers are concerned about the risk of their child contracting COVID19, the DSL will discuss those anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. If the child has a social worker, the DSL will liaise with the social worker and seek to involve them in the discussion with the child's parents/carers.
- 3.6 Eligibility for free school meals in, and of itself, will not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability for these purposes.
- 3.7 In line with advice from Warwickshire County Council, the centre will create and maintain an up-to-date register/database of all pupils who are considered vulnerable as above.
- 3.8 The register/database will contain the names and contact details of the child's parents/carers; other significant family members; social workers; family support workers; and any other key professionals including health professionals and youth justice workers. The register/database will be accessible to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and all deputy designated safeguarding leads including by secure access for DSLs who may need to self- isolate and/or work from home.
- 3.9 The centre will assess the level of vulnerability of each pupil on the register/database using the RAG rating format as below. This will support the DSL to identify those children that need to be offered the opportunity to attend school/ an educational setting (this must include all children with a social worker), those that can be supported by regular contact from a DSL and those whose attendance might be inconsistent and who may therefore need additional contact and support.
- 3.10 The RAG rating criteria are:
- i. Red - most at risk of harm or neglect (will include all children subject of a child protection plan); and all children who are looked after);

- ii. Amber - a moderate risk of harm, but with some protective factors (will include those with a Child in Need plan and/or being supported by a social worker or family support worker who are not subject of a child protection plan or looked after);
 - iii. Green - some concerns or unmet needs; or have been red or amber and need monitoring.
- 3.11 Every child on the vulnerable children register/database will be allocated to a named DSL who will be responsible for ensuring that the identified level of support and contact is provided.
- 3.12 DSLs will record all contacts and outcomes with vulnerable children and their families in the usual way so that those records are visible to colleague DSLs and can be reviewed in regular DSL meetings.

4 Attendance monitoring

- 4.1 Attendance will be monitored in the usual way with reference to this and the centre's attendance policy. The DSL will explore the reasons for any child not returning to school from September 2020 directly with their parents/carers. In the event that the child is in one of the defined vulnerable groups as above and has a social worker or family support worker, the DSL will also liaise with the social worker or family support worker and seek to involve them in the discussion with the child's parents/carers.
- 4.2 The centre will undertake a written risk assessment in relation to the needs of any child with a disability, special needs or health issues in order to support the child's safe return to the centre if at all possible. If the child cannot return to the centre safely, the centre will work closely with parents/carers and partner agencies to ensure the child's educational needs are met and to work towards their eventual safe return to the centre.
- 4.3 For any child eligible to attend school/the centre who does not attend, the centre will follow the normal absence management procedure. As a minimum, a text message will be sent home in relation to each pupil eligible on each day of absence. If the DSL is concerned about the child's level of vulnerability, a decision will be made about whether a home visit is appropriate or if a phone call will suffice, and the necessary frequency of such contact for each day of absence
- 4.4 In relation to all children subject of child protection plans, and who are looked after, who do not attend the centre, the DSL or designated teacher for children who are looked after, will liaise closely with Children's Social Care. A shared decision may be made that as long as one practitioner has seen the child, that will suffice as a safe and well check. The DSL will log any such decision along with all home visits undertaken.
- 4.5 The social worker must be informed about any child subject of a child protection plan, child in need plan or who is looked after, who does not attend the centre on the first and (subject to the agreement reached with the social worker) each subsequent day of absence.
- 4.6 For each child identified as vulnerable, but who the DSL considers can be safely cared for at home (NB this will not include any child with a child protection plan, child in need plan or who is looked after

without written agreement with the child's social worker), the DSL will identify the nature and frequency of contact the child will need to reassure the DSL of their safety and wellbeing. This might include phone calls, text contact, Microsoft Teams or home visits.

5 Home visits

- 5.1 Any home visit must be risk assessed. If agreed that a home visit is necessary, it should be undertaken by two members of staff.
- 5.2 It is unlikely that home visits will be frequent. If they are undertaken, they will be subject of a risk assessment based on the following guidelines:
 - i. the DSL will speak to the child's parents/carers to establish whether any member of the household has symptoms of COVID-19; has been diagnosed; or is self-isolating
 - ii. home visits will be undertaken by two members of staff, one of whom will be a DSL.
 - iii. any member of staff who has an underlying health condition/ vulnerability, will be at home self-isolating. For the absence of doubt, no such member of staff will therefore undertake home visits
- 5.3 The DSL will inform the parents/carers of the plan to undertake a home visit and that visiting staff will need to see and speak to the child through a window.
- 5.4 Staff undertaking home visits must wear gloves and avoid contacting metal surfaces with their bare skin. They will knock on the door of the house with covered hands. After knocking on the door, they will step back from the door.
- 5.5 Visiting staff will ask to see and talk to the child through a window; and will aim to keep the conversation as upbeat and positive as possible.
- 5.6 Staff are advised not to enter households, but simply to check that the child is well by a conversation through a window, maintaining the recommended social distance of 2 metres.
- 5.7 Staff must actually see the child when undertaking a home visit.
- 5.8 If a family is self-isolating and/or it is difficult/not appropriate to carry out a home visit subject to the risk assessment, the DSL will consider whether technology can be used to see the child, e.g. via Microsoft Teams or other means of video chat. If carrying out video chat, this should be agreed with parents/carers prior to any call being made.
- 5.9 All centre policies including the child protection, staff behaviour and ICT acceptable use policies must be followed at all times, both in face-to-face and electronic communication, with pupils and parents/carers. No staff member should use their own ICT or telephone equipment; or private message children; or video

conference with a child directly other than via centre-owned equipment subject to parental agreement as above.

- 5.10 Where concerns for a child at home reach the threshold for significant harm, a referral must be made to Children's Social Care/Police as per normal safeguarding procedures. For that reason, all DSLs must have access to MASH and other key agency phone numbers and children's details even when working from home.

6 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- 6.1 The DSL and Deputy DSLs are as named in the main policy.
- 6.2 The DSL or a deputy DSL, will be available on site at all times whilst the centre is open. In the event that this is not possible (every effort will be made to ensure that such occasions are rare), the DSL or a deputy DSL will be readily accessible via telephone or online video contact, e.g. when working from home. All staff will be provided with contact details in order to be able to contact a DSL without any difficulty and will be informed about which members of the DSL team are available on each day that the centre is open.
- 6.3 Where it is not possible for the DSL (or deputy DSL) to be on site, a senior leader will always be present and will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site, always with ready telephone/online access to the DSL as above.
- 6.4 All DSLs will have remote access to the register/database of all vulnerable children and other safeguarding records when working off site.
- 6.5 The DSL team will meet weekly to discuss the welfare and status of each child on the register/ database of vulnerable children.
- 6.6 The DSL team will liaise with MASH, Social Care, family support workers and other key safeguarding partners as normal, whether working in the centre or working remotely. When working from home, DSLs will be accessible via access to their centre Email account and should have use of a centre-owned mobile telephone, the number of which should be shared with colleague DSLs, partners and the Education Safeguarding service.
- 6.7 The DSL team will continue to attend, either in person or virtually, child protection conferences; core group meetings; strategy meetings; child in need meetings; children who are looked after reviews; and early help meetings.
- 6.8 If the centre closes and pupils need to attend another educational setting in accordance with local/hub arrangements, the centre will maintain its overarching responsibility for safeguarding the child. The DSL will be responsible for liaising with the receiving school in order to share information from the register/database of vulnerable children and to advise the receiving school about how best to respond to

new/emerging concerns. The DSL must be informed by the receiving school about any new incidents or concerns and agreement must be reached and recorded about whether the DSL or a DSL in the receiving school is best placed to discuss issues with parents/carers, contact social workers, make referrals etc.

7 Reporting a concern

- 7.1 All staff and volunteers continue to have a responsibility for safeguarding children and will report any safeguarding concerns about children to a DSL in the normal way as set out in the main policy.
- 7.2 Staff should have access to the normal safeguarding recording format (e.g. green forms) when working off site including when working from home.
- 7.3 Staff and volunteers are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.
- 7.4 In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access the normal safeguarding recording format remotely, they will contact the DSL via Email (cc to at least one other DDSL and the principal) to inform them that they need to share a concern. This will ensure that the concern is received.
- 7.5 Where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned about the behaviour of an adult working with children in the centre, they should inform the principal as normal (using a yellow form). If the notification needs to be made when the reporting individual is offsite, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the principal on the same working day.
- 7.6 As normal, any concerns about the principal should be reported to headteacher of the commissioning school or the commissioning local authority.

8 Safeguarding training and induction

- 8.1 The DfE recognises that DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst the threat of the COVID-19 virus remains and government guidance in relation to large gatherings and social distancing is relaxed.
- 8.2 DfE guidance states that for the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.
- 8.3 The DSL will communicate any new or revised safeguarding advice, guidance, requirements, arrangements or information in writing to all staff and volunteers.
- 8.4 Where new staff or volunteers are recruited, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.
- 8.5 If adults from another school or setting are redeployed to work at the centre during the COVID-19 virus, the centre will take into account DfE supplementary guidance and will accept portability of pre-employment checks as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:

- i. the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's Barred List check
- ii. there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- iii. there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

8.6 Upon arrival, all such redeployed staff will be given a copy of the centre's safeguarding and child protection policy, staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy, behaviour policy, the centre's safeguarding recording and reporting procedures and confirmation of DSL details and arrangements.

9 Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

9.1 The centre will maintain its commitment to ensuring that only suitable people are given opportunities to work with children at the centre. Any recruitment during COVID-19 will therefore be undertaken following the normal safer recruitment processes subject to the centre's policy, local authority guidance and advice and Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2020).

9.2 Safer recruitment principles also apply to the recruitment of volunteers, subject to KCSiE.

9.3 Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current national emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that the centre is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers are in the centre and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in Regulated Activity. As such, the centre will continue to maintain the single central record as outlined in KCSiE.

10 Online safety

10.1 The centre is committed to providing children with a safe environment in which to learn. That includes online learning. The online filtering (in relation to centre-owned devices) and monitoring systems will be in operation as normal. The centre is unable to filter activity on devices not owned by the centre. Parents may find it useful to refer to: <https://www.internetmatters.org/blog/parental-controls/broadband-mobile/> for guidance on putting some restrictions in place to keep children safe.

10.2 Where pupils/students are using ICT equipment in the centre, appropriate supervision will be in place as normal.

10.3 Opportunities to teach safeguarding, including online safety, will be delivered through our PSHE and ICT programme.

10.4 The centre has a no mobile phone policy. Students will be required to hand in mobile phones on entry to the building; phones will be stored securely and returned at the end of the school day.

11 Children and online safety away from school

- 11.1 Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct/IT acceptable use policy.
- 11.2 All online lessons should be delivered by centre staff in accordance with the centre's safeguarding and child protection, staff behaviour (code of conduct) and acceptable use of ICT policies.
- 11.3 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 7 of this addendum.
- 11.4 We will make ensure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our centre, and signpost them to other sources of support too.
- 11.5 The centre will take account of guidance from DfE in relation to the planning and delivery of online learning when it is issued; as well as nationally recognised guidance including guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning and London Grid for Learning on the use of videos and livestreaming.
- 11.6 Staff will always use centre/service owned technology and accounts for the delivery of remote lessons/tutorials. Applications that facilitate the recording of lessons will be used. Centre leaders will randomly sample recorded lessons in order to safeguard pupils/students and staff and to ensure that policies are being followed.
- 11.7 Lessons will not be delivered online on a 1:1 basis.
- 11.8 The centre will ensure that parents/ carers have read and signed our E-Safety agreement before staff deliver lessons online.
- 11.9 It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk, distressed for some reason or vulnerable in some other way; and report and record that following normal safeguarding procedures. All such concerns must be brought to the attention of a DSL and dealt with by a DSL as per the main policy in the normal way.
- 11.10 The centre will ensure that online learning tools and systems are used in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.
- 11.11 Below are other issues that staff need to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:
 - i. staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household
 - ii. any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred

- iii. the live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed
 - iv. live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day
 - v. language must be professional and appropriate, including that used by any family members in the background
 - vi. staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by the centre's ICT manager/co-ordinator for communication with pupils/students
 - vii. staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held
- 11.12 The centre recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people and that the extraordinary circumstances created by the COVID-19 virus may well affect the mental health of some pupils/students and/or their parents/carers.
- 11.13 All staff will maintain an awareness of those issues in communications with children and their parents/carers including when setting expectations of pupils' work when they are at home.

12 Supporting children not in the centre

- 12.1 Any child on the centre's register/database of vulnerable children who it has been decided does not need to attend the centre; cannot attend the centre due to a risk to their own health or the health of another member of their household; or whose parents/carers are unwilling to send them to the centre will have an identified plan of support that will be overseen by a named DSL and recorded on the child's safeguarding file.
- 12.2 The plan will include regular communication with the child's named social worker or family support worker where there is one. A record of all communications¹with the child, parents/carers and practitioners in partner agencies will be made on the child's safeguarding file.
- 12.3 The centre will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan in order to safeguard the child.
- 12.4 This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once per week) by the allocated DSL in discussion with at least one other member of the DSL team, using regular/planned DSL team meetings as appropriate.
- 12.5 The centre will continue to share safeguarding messages on its website, social media pages and via newsletters.

13 Supporting children in the centre

¹ Communications include telephone calls, Emails, other online communication, video conversations and virtual meetings

- 13.1 The centre will continue to be a safe space for all children who attend during the COVID-19 virus. Whenever the centre is open and to maximise safety, the principal will ensure that appropriate numbers of staff are on site and that staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate.
- 13.2 The centre will ensure that government guidance for education and childcare settings in respect of social distancing and advice from Public Health England in respect of handwashing and other protective measures to limit the risk of spreading COVID-19 is followed regularly and robustly.
- 13.3 All children attending the centre will be provided with appropriate emotional support, bespoke to their needs, assessed vulnerability and circumstances.
- 13.4 Where the centre has concerns about the availability of critical staff to work in the centre – particularly members of the DSL team, SENCo, designated teacher for children who are looked after and first aiders – those concerns will be raised with the local governing body without delay.

14 Mental health

- 14.1 Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for **all** pupils.
- 14.2 We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.
- 14.3 When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending the centre, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.
- 14.4 In addition to all of the other safeguarding issues and risks as set out in this policy, staff will also be mindful of the increased likelihood that some pupils/students will have experienced one or more of the following as a result of the COVID-19 situation and the restrictions imposed on children and their families by the lockdown arrangements:
 - i. neglect as a result of lost/reduced income and diminished circumstances
 - ii. domestic abuse/parental mental ill health/parental drug and/or alcohol abuse as a result of parental anxiety, loss of employment/income, frustration, not coping with increased contact with children, boredom, etc.
 - iii. higher likelihood of online bullying, abuse and/or grooming for sexual abuse, sexual and criminal exploitation or radicalization as a result of spending more time online
 - iv. physical and emotional abuse as a result of parents not coping, becoming very low or bad-tempered
 - v. greater risk of all forms of 'hidden' abuse including sexual abuse, emotional abuse, witnessing or being caught up in domestic abuse as a result of families spending more time together without children being able to access other protective adults, recreational activities or go outside.

15 Working with parents and carers

- 15.1 We will ensure parents and carers:

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

16 Peer on peer abuse

- 16.1 The centre recognises that a revised process for managing any report of peer-on-peer abuse and supporting victims may be required during the COVID-19 virus when only a relatively small number of children will be attending the centre.
- 16.2 Where the centre receives a report of peer-on-peer abuse, it will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and as outlined in the main policy as closely as possible.
- 16.3 The centre will listen and work with all children involved, their parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of alleged victims, alleged perpetrators and all other children attending the centre.
- 16.4 Concerns and actions must be recorded on the child's safeguarding file and appropriate referrals made by the DSL.

17 Support from the local authority

- 17.1 The Education Safeguarding service will be available as usual for advice and support via:
0796 622 4286 or 01926 742525