

Appendix 5 - Safeguarding Policy: COVID-19 addendum

Approved by:	Anne Field	Date: April 2020
Last reviewed on:	21 April 2020	
Next review due by:	June 2020	Date: 10.06.20
Next review due by:	As required by BET	

Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Rob Lawrence	rlawrence@matthew-arnold.surrey.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Paula Sheedy	psheedy@matthew-arnold.surrey.sch.uk
Bourne Education Trust DSL	Gayle Jenkins	jenkinsg@bourne.education
Headteacher	Mary Gould	mgould@matthew-arnold.surrey.sch.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)		LADO@surreycc.gov.uk
Chair of governors	Anne Field	01784 457275

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners the Local Authority (LA), The Clinical Commissioning Group and the Chief Officer of Police. The local authority for this school is Surrey.

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

Unless covered here, our normal safeguarding policy continues to apply.

DfE guidance published 1st April 2020 classifies 'vulnerable' children as those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans. Those who have a social worker include 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

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2019\)](#).

Although we are operating in a different way from 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 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. It is still vitally important to do this.
- In all cases, whether working from home or in school, you must report any concerns immediately to your DSL, DDSL or the Trust DSL. If you have access you must also record the incident as quickly as possible on CPOMS.
- 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 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 via email: rlawrence@matthew-arnold.surrey.sch.uk
- If our DSL (or deputy) is unavailable, Gayle Jenkins is acting as Trust DSL and can be contacted via email at jenkinsg@bourne.education.
- We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them.
- We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.
- On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy DSL on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will usually be the Headteacher but another member of SLT will be designated and made known to staff in his/her absence. This senior leader will be referred to as the Designated Senior Person (DSP)
- The DSP will be responsible for liaising with the 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 assessment.

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 3 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. Attendance monitoring

Expectations of an Education Setting to track, identify and action non-attendance of vulnerable children and Automated Tracking Mechanism

We know that some families need more support than others and that attending education settings is an important protective factor for children receiving support. We also know that some families may over-estimate their ability to cope in these extraordinary times.

All professionals need to be mindful that there will be some examples where the current Covid-19 pandemic could be used by families as a reason to avoid contact from professionals when the family may not be symptomatic and to prevent identification of safeguarding issues.

To ensure that appropriate action is taken to keep children safe and protected we require all education settings to identify through a new automated tracking mechanism the non-attendance of **vulnerable children that are expected to attend an education setting.**

Education settings must act by notifying the local authority on the first day of non-attendance and any day following, when a vulnerable child, that is expected to attend an education setting is absent, by using the following link to the Automated Tracking Mechanism:

<https://www4.surreycc.gov.uk/social/child/absence-submission-portal/>

Education settings must continue to take action as soon as they are aware of non-attendance using first day calling and other internal tracking and follow up procedures. Education settings must continue to inform relevant agencies (including Social Work Teams) and professionals of any concerns that require a response.

Expectations of the Social Work Team response to non-attendance

The Automated Tracking Mechanism, described above, immediately alerts the Social Work Team to act in response to the child's non-attendance at the education setting. Surrey Virtual School will be informed if the child is looked after.

On receipt of an alert the social work team must act to contact the family to find out why the child hasn't attended and act to encourage them to attend if it's safe to do so.

The social work team must act to contact the education setting to further inform their assessment of the risk to the child of non-attendance.

If a child is not presenting at an education setting because they are symptomatic or self-isolating it is essential that the social worker contact the education setting and any relevant partner (including Surrey Virtual School), to action arrangements for maintaining contact with the child and agree who will contact the child and how.

It may be necessary for a Social Worker to take action by visiting the child in person to establish their wellbeing

Keeping in touch with the child and the family during any isolation period is the responsibility of the team around that child. A clear plan for visiting (virtual or in person) must be made and acted upon by all partners. The team around the child partners must communicate to the Social Worker findings from each visit they undertake.

Due to the number of notifications it is not possible for social care to guarantee a response time, each response time will be based on the Social Work Team's analysis of risk.

If an education setting has significant concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing the education setting should ring the child's Social Worker for an urgent discussion. If the child's social worker is not available a discussion should be held with the Social Work Team Manager. If neither are available contact must be made with the Social Work Service Manager. If you are not satisfied with the response you get from the Social Work Team education settings must follow the [SSCP Inter-Agency Escalation Policy and Procedures](#).

Expectations of a SEND/Vulnerable Learner Team response to non-attendance

Where a child with an EHCP has a Social Worker, the process above will be followed by the Social Work Team.

The Automated Tracking Mechanism, described above, will collate data for EHCP children to be sent to the Vulnerable Learners Service once a week for action.

Attendance and any known history of the child will be considered by the appropriate professionals within the Vulnerable Learners Service to establish further action.

The Vulnerable Learners Service will establish with the family the reasons why the child has not attended and act to encourage them to attend if it's safe to do so.

If a child is not presenting at an education setting because they are symptomatic or self-isolating it is essential that the Vulnerable Learner Service contact the education setting to inform them of this and act to establish the ongoing point of contact while the child is not attending the education setting.

Where circumstances change the education setting should act to ensure any changes to risk are notified to the Local Authority in a timely manner (within 24 hours of being informed of the change) via the SEND Team area email address.

Children and young people who are “otherwise vulnerable” expectations on the education partnership

This cohort is defined as children and young people who have been assessed as “otherwise vulnerable” by education settings, the local authority or partner agencies; examples may include Young Carers, adopted children and/or children with mental health and wellbeing concerns.

The Vulnerable Learners Service will contact education settings to assist the identification of these children and young people.

Education settings should use their discretion to encourage the attendance of children and young people that they or partners feel would be safer by attending provision. In the case of non-attendance education settings should act to follow up with both the parent/carer and any partner agency involved to establish the reason for absence and act to encourage attendance.

The Vulnerable Learners Service will provide support to education settings to identify “otherwise vulnerable children” who do not have a Social Worker or an EHCP. The Vulnerable Learners Service will assist the setting to make arrangements with families to provide for these children and track and encourage attendance.

Where any professional continues to have concerns about the safety of a child they should email a Children’s Services Request for Support Form to cspa@surreycc.gov.uk or contact the C-SPA on 0300 470 9100.

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. If guidance is needed about dealing with concerns and carrying out investigations you should immediately seek the advice of the DSL, DDSL, Trust DSL or DSP.

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 by following the process set out in the main body of this policy.

In dealing with allegations or concerns against an adult, staff must:

- Report any concerns about the conduct of any member of staff or volunteer to the Headteacher immediately. If the Headteacher is not available the matter should be immediately referred to the Designated Senior Person or the Trust DSL, Gayle Jenkins (contact information is listed at the beginning of this appendix).

- If an allegation is made against the Headteacher, the concerns need to be raised with the Chair of Governors as soon as possible. If the Chair of Governors is not available, then the Trust DSL or the LADO should be contacted directly – [see Appendix 4 for contact details.](#)

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. Supporting children in school

We are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our pupils.

We will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

We will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

We will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

10. Support for children who are not categorised as vulnerable but where we have concerns

We have the option to offer places in school to children who do not 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.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 11.1 below.

11. Safeguarding for children not attending school

11.1 Contact plans

We have contact plans for children with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

- They 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
- They would usually attend but have to self-isolate

These plans set out:

- How often the school will make contact
- Which staff member(s) will make contact

- How they will make contact

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them on a weekly basis.

If we can not make contact, we will contact children's care or, if necessary, the police.

11.2 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 12 below).

12. Online safety

12.1 In school

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

The Bourne Education Trust Staff Code of Conduct and Staff Information Communication Technology policies have both been amended to reflect the current situation and revised copies have been made available to all staff.

12.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our revised Staff Code of Conduct and Staff Information Communication Technology policies.

Safeguarding element of these policies will apply equally to any online and distance learning arrangements and include but are not limited to:

- Acceptable use of technologies
- Staff/pupil relationships and communication, including use of social media

Staff must 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.

We will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- Real-time videoconferencing or live lesson delivery has inherent risks and should only be offered with the agreement of the Headteacher.

- If live class delivery has been agreed with the Headteacher, lessons should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must ensure they deliver live or recorded lessons from a suitable environment, ideally with the background blurred
- Staff must only use platforms provided by or agreed by the Trust to communicate with pupils.

12.3 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

Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes access information to the following online sites:

- [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
- [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers

These will be made available on the school website.

13. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. This includes working with our youth relational support service, East-to-West.

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.

14. Staff recruitment, training and induction

14.1 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 are not in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

14.2 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. These risk assessments will be coordinated by the School Business Manager and will be signed off by the Headteacher.

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

14.3 Safeguarding induction and training

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

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.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children protection policy (including 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 safeguarding policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

14.4 Keeping records of who is on site

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, we will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE. The SCR can also, be used to log details of any risk assessments carried out on volunteers and staff on loan from elsewhere.

15. 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 special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will securely 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
- Details of any medical needs and medication
- Contact details of parent(s)/carer(s)

Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO cannot share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in section 4 will do this.

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

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 8 weeks. At every review, it will be approved by the Headteacher and a member of the Trust Executive team.

17. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff Information, Communication and Technology policy
- Data Protection policy
- Equal Opportunities and Inclusion policy
- E-safety policy
- Whistle-blowing policy