

# Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

**Update: 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

On 30<sup>th</sup> December, the Secretary of State for Education announced that only Year 11 and Year 13 pupils could return to face-to-face teaching (in addition to Early Years provision for some and additional provision for vulnerable children and children of critical workers). Since Hertsmere is in a Contingency Framework Area, this means that all year groups in the school will be taught remotely until at least 18 January, with the exception of children of critical workers where provision for their learning will be provided on site during school hours.

|                            |   |   |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Prepared by:</b>        | Andy Kaye, DSL  | <b>Date:</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2020 |
| <b>Approved by:</b>        | Deborah Nicholes,<br>Governor with lead<br>responsibility for<br>Safeguarding | <b>Date:</b> 6 <sup>th</sup> April 2020 |
| <b>Last reviewed on:</b>   | 4 <sup>th</sup> January 2021  |   |
| <b>Next review due by:</b> | 4 <sup>th</sup> February 2021   |   |

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## Important contacts

| ROLE                                      | NAME              | CONTACT DETAILS  |
|---|-------------------|--|
| Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)        | Andy Kaye         | 07976 619173<br>akaye@sthildasbushey.co.uk   |
| Deputy DSL                                | Sarah Jane Styles | 07502 285 088<br>sjstyles@sthildasbushey.co.uk   |
| Headteacher                               | Sarah Jane Styles | 07502 285 088<br>sjstyles@sthildasbushey.co.uk   |
| Local authority designated officer (LADO) | Tony Purvis       | 01992 556979<br><a href="mailto:tony.purvis@hertfordshire.gov.uk">tony.purvis@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a>                               |
|   | Yvette Morello    | 01992 556463<br><a href="mailto:Yvette.morello@hertfordshire.gov.uk">Yvette.morello@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a>                         |
|   | Referral Form     | <a href="mailto:LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk">LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>(Referrals are only accepted by email) |
| Chair of governors                        | Trevor Barton     | 01923 850866/07881 518643  |

### 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 (Hertfordshire Children's Services, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Herts Valley CCG and local authority (Hertfordshire LA))

It sets out changes to our normal child protection 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 child protection policy continues 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 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.

All staff have been reissued with our safeguarding policy, detailing the contact details of the DSL and DDSL, and have been issued this addendum. Wherever possible, a referral should be discussed with the DSL or DDSL before being submitted. Concerns must also be logged on MyConcern as soon as possible after the referral has been made.

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 they are not on site, the DSL and DDSL will be contactable by the following methods:

- By phone
- By email
- By videocall on Microsoft Teams

If the DSL or DDSL is unavailable for an extended period of time, we will communicate this via email.

We will ensure that the DSL and DDSL, wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in the school are. The DSL and DDSL have full remote access to MyConcern.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will normally be Sandra Seal and can be contacted via [sseal@sthildasbushey.co.uk](mailto:sseal@sthildasbushey.co.uk)

The senior leader 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 assessments
- Ensure that all relevant information is forwarded to the DSL if making a referral off site
- Ensure that visitors and volunteers are strictly monitored for appropriate conduct

## 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
- Advice received from relevant legal partners

## 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, by phone in the first instance, then email if no contact is established by phone
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

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. On the first day of attendance a member of SLT will check that the contact details for each are correct on Operoo (formally CareMonkey) and, if not, will ask the parent or care to amend them immediately on their child's Operoo (formally CareMonkey) Profile.

## 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.

Full details of the referral process can be found within our safeguarding policy. In the first instance, the form tutor would be expected to contact the pupil to offer pastoral support and to liaise with the DSL/DDSL as necessary.

## 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.

Full details of how to act on concerns are detailed in the school's safeguarding policy.

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. Such children will be considered on a case by case basis and the best interests of the child will always be paramount. The parents requesting a place for such children will be informed of the school's decision as soon as is practically possible after the request has been submitted.

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 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
- Initial contact will be made by the form tutor. This will escalate to the Deputy Head if contact is not established. Any concerns arising from the contact must be logged on MyConcern.

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

If we can't make contact directly with a pupil or their family, particularly if they are seen as vulnerable, we will attempt to make indirect contact (e.g. through friends or extended family) before contacting Children's Services and/or the police.

### 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.

We are not envisaging a lack of continuity in provision, given that all servers are held off site and remote assistance has already been put in place. However, if IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is for Andy Kaye, the deputy head, to take charge.

## 11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing Guide to Professional Conduct and ICT Acceptable Use Agreement.

Further specific guidance has been published to staff, parents and pupils about the appropriate use of technology during the period of remote learning.

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 have made sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too. Contact details for the DSL have already been circulated to pupils and parents.

## 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. Initial cases of pupils needing support will be logged on MyConcern and referred to the Foundation Chaplain and Foundation Counsellor as necessary.

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 do not intend to make use of staff "on loan" from outside The Foundation. However, should this be necessary, we will assess the risks of staff "on loan" working in our school, and seek assurances from the

“loaning” school that staff have had the appropriate checks. Full risk assessments will be taken by either our HR Team or our SLT.

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 arrangements

### **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.

All permanent staff will still sign in in the usual way when they arrive on site. If there are any staff not regularly employed by the Foundation, they will be added to the single central record on a daily basis.

We will use the single central record to log:

- Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including staff ‘on loan’
- Details 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 special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) 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

Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO 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 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum monthly by the DSL. At every review, it will be approved by the Safeguarding Governor and circulated to the full governing board.

## **16. Links with other policies**



This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- IT Acceptable Use Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

All other relevant policies are mentioned in the school's safeguarding policy.

## 17. Useful contacts, including all relevant external agencies

|                                      |              |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| James Fowler (Headmaster/CEO (home)) | 01923 851600 |
| Sarah Jane Styles (Head/DDSL)        | 07502 285088 |

|  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Andy Kaye (DSL)                                | 07976 619173                      |
| Jos Perris (Chaplain to the Foundation)        | 07557 008543                      |
| Debbie Love (Foundation Counsellor)            | 07584 131696                      |
| Hertfordshire MASH                             | 0300 1234 043                     |
| Hertfordshire HSCP                             | 01992 588757                      |
| Buckingham MASH                                | 01296 383962                      |
| Brent MASH                                     | 020 8937 4300                     |
| Barnet MASH                                    | 020 8359 4066                     |
| Camden MASH                                    | 020 7974 3317                     |
| Enfield MASH                                   | 020 8379 5555                     |
| Haringay MASH                                  | 020 8489 4470                     |
| Harrow MASH                                    | 020 8901 2690                     |
| Islington MASH                                 | 020 7527 7400                     |
| Westminster MASH                               | 020 7641 4000                     |
| ChildLine                                      | 0800 1111                         |
| OFSTED   | 0300 1234 666                     |
| The Children's Commissioner                    | 020 77838330                      |
| Samaritans National Helpline                   | 116 123                           |
| Signpost Young People's Counselling Service    | 01923 239495                      |
| YC Hertfordshire                               | 0300 123 7538                     |
| Watford Sexual Health Clinic                   | 0300 008 5522                     |
| CPSLO North Herts (Paula Hayden)               | 07788 567907                      |
| Hertfordshire Targeted Advice Service          | 01438 737511 or 03001234 043      |
| Hertfordshire Domestic Violence/Abuse helpline | 08088 088 088 or in emergency 999 |
| The SAFA Team (PREVENT Strategy advice)        | 01707 354556                      |
| Hertfordshire DO (Tony Purvis)                 | 07920 283106                      |

|                                   |              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Hertfordshire DO (Yvette Morello) | 07812 322582 |
| Marrie Moat (Admin)               | 01992 555420 |