Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Hope Community School Sidcup

Approved by:	Waiting Approval	Date: 2nd April 2020
Last reviewed on:		
Next review due by:		

Contents

Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Anne Wood	0770 44 75385
Deputy DSL	Fiona Verge Emma Carvosso	07540 077 121 07841 685 893
Principal	Anne Wood	0770 44 75385
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Rozelle Uter	020 3045 5543 or 020 3045 5440 M or 07950 562936 lado@bexley.gov.uk
Chair of governors	Lynn Mason	078660787439
MASH		mash@bexley.gov.uk 0203 045 5440

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from (LA) Bexley, our local authority

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.

Staff are to continue to use our normal reporting software – My Concern. In addition to this, please text Anne directly, if you do not receive a response, please phone her to confirm she has seen the message.

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 deputies) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely using the details above and using My Concern.

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. See each weekly rota for details.

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 on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be the designated Head of Site on each weekly rota. 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

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 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

The following guidance is currently in place:

- Staff must continue to report immediately any concerns;

- Contact with, and between professionals supporting children should be retained to ensure the most up to date information is shared;

-Adults should continue to place the best interests of the child first;

- Referrals should be confirmed as received by the DSL;

-Education staff should familiarise themselves with supporting children's metal health

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing

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.

> 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.

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.

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.

The procedure for reporting concerns are the same as in our current CP policy. Concerns regarding staff should be reported to the DSL who will share this information with the LADO. If the concern is about the DSL this should be shared with Lynn Mason, chair of the School Council.

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. 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. These children might be, for example, children who have previously had a social worker, or who haven't met the threshold for a referral but where staff have raised concerns.

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

> This information is shared

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

If we can't make contact, we will contact the named social worker or MASH.

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.

Out IT consultants work remotely and can be contacted howard.

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online or by phone, they will continue to follow our existing code of conduct/technology acceptable use policy.

In addition, staff will:

-seek advice if unsure using this guidance: https://saferinternet.org.uk/helpline/professionals-online-safety-helpline

- Check online resources before they are issued;

- Ensure that personal social media channels are not used to communicate with pupils;

- Wear appropriate clothes when recording lesson content – laptop cameras give different & unexpected camera angles – so wear what you would wear if you were in school.

- Will think about their 'classroom' when recording content:

- • Look at the background – does it have photo's you don't want everyone to see

- • Warn others in your house that you are broadcasting on-line – you don't want your family wandering past the camera in various states of disrepair

- • Avoid 1:1 support if you can – if 1 child is struggling with a concept, then the rest probably are as well. BUT ALWAYS record your on-line sessions.

- • Think about your language – the students are going to be worried and anxious about the future, keep calm, re-iterate the government message of washing hands and social distancing. Remember we are a Hope Family, we have a duty to support our kids and offer them reassurance.

- • Consider the safeguarding of each child you teach on-line. You may be the only non-family member they are going to see today. Listen for any cues that indicate a safeguarding concern and report these to your DSL as soon as possible. These cues might be about:

o Child abuse or neglect

o Inadequate supervision at home

o The impact of food poverty

o The health status in a family and any young careering responsibilities they are having to pick up.

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 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.

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

This will be communicated to parents in an end of term newsletter which will be emailed on Friday 3rd April.

12. Mental health

We will 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

If we were in a position where we need to use staff 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 checks will be carried out by the Principal.

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 Safeguarding 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. Staff will continue to sign in and out using Inventry.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

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

> Details of the virtual school head

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 local safeguarding partner, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 4 weeks by the Principal. At every review, it will be approved by the trust.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

> HCS Sidcup Safeguarding policy

> Emotional Health and Wellbeing policy

> Staff code of conduct as outlined in the Staff Handbook

> Technology acceptable use policy

> Health and safety policy

> Online safety policy