

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Milford School April 2020



Approved by: A.Stear(Head), E. Hardy, M. Isherwood (Co-Chairs of Governors Date: 3.4.20

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Next review due by: Ongoing based upon updated guidance during this time.

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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Andrew Stear	01483 422087/07531273964
Deputy DSL	Nicola Jones	01483 422087/07725462003
Other contactable DSL(s) and/or deputy DSL(s):		
DSL at Witley School	Nicki Payne	07920779792
Local authority designated officer (LADO)		0300 123 1650
Chairs of governors	Emma Hardy	07751870815
	Mel Isherwood	07977566673

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our local safeguarding partners and local authority (LA) Surrey County Council.

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.

Safeguarding concerns should continue to be raised appropriately either via email to head@milford.surrey.sch.uk or to the phone numbers listed above.

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 using the details listed above.

If our DSL (or deputy) is unavailable, we will share a DSL with Witley C.E. School. Their DSL can be contacted by using the number listed above.

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by [email/other method of communication] 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 on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding.

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 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. 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 calling, emailing directly and if significantly concerned, making a house call whilst maintaining appropriate social distancing.
- 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. This has been co-ordinated and recorded on school systems and also in our Covid-19 folder on the school server.

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.

Procedures around this will be carried out by the DSL or DDSL as per normal.

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.

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 previously.

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
- What to do if we can't make contact

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them (usually daily update to social care via email if actively involved). If significant concerns, a house call following social distancing guidance will be carried out by a DSL or DDSL at the earliest possible

opportunity. The children will be monitored through our use of Google Classroom to ensure they are at least making contact through our educational platform for their learning.

If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care or the police if appropriate.

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.

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is to contact the Headteacher who will seek support from IT from another school within the Godalming Learning Partnership.

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct/IT acceptable use policy and only through visible and official school systems – school email, Google Classroom.

Guidance has been produced and shared with parents regarding video conferencing with classes. Settings have been created to best ensure safety. These are monitored by an additional teacher at all times. Acceptable Use Policy has been updated and sent to all parents again during the week beginning 23.3.20

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

All Google Classrooms and streams are monitored by the Leadership team and posts can only be made related directly to their child's learning tasks. Google for Education has been used and has excellent safety records across a large number of educational institutions.

12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. The best way we feel to do this with pupils of our age is to be visible and in regular contact with classes of children.

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. With this in mind, we have put together a 'well being' document with staff related to current working conditions with clear expectations about the amount of work being produced and responded to. This has also included parents through communications about our expectations from them – keep it manageable and if they cannot complete all learning set due to conflicting priorities, this is fine.

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 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 will be checked by a member of the Office staff and either the Deputy Head or Headteacher (whoever is on site).

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, which they will sign to show they have read and understood. This will be kept centrally.

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.

We will use the DfE provided spreadsheet and 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 (the Headteacher at this point)

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 every 3-4 weeks by Andrew Stear, Headteacher and a Chair of Governors. At every review, it will then be approved by the full governing board remotely at the earliest opportunity. Due to the constantly changing nature of arrangements at this unprecedented time, we reserve the right to put arrangements in place if urgent in conjunction with consulting at least one of the Co-Chairs of Governors.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Staff code of conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Anti-bullying policy

As with anything during this uncertain time, the school leaders will keep up to date with changing advice and guidance and will make adjustments as and when necessary.