

Yaxham CE VA Primary School

Online Safety Policy Addendum in response to School Closure April 2020

Context

The DfE website page relating to safeguarding arrangements in schools during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic says “Whilst acknowledging the pressure that schools and colleges are under, it remains essential that as far as possible they continue to be safe places for children.” This addendum is intended as a temporary supplement to the Yaxham CE VA Primary School Online Safety Policy

Overview and purpose

This document has been written in response to the addendum to the non-statutory ‘guidance for safer working practice’ 2019, an adaptation by the Safer Recruitment Consortium of a document previously published for schools by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). *The document seeks to ensure that the responsibilities of senior leaders of educational settings towards children and staff are discharged by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour.*

The current pandemic with its associated closure of schools to most means Government, local authorities, school leaders and staff are having to review and amend guidance rapidly.

Now more than ever before, professional judgements may need to be made in situations not covered by existing guidance, or which directly contravene the guidance given by the employer. In such circumstances, staff will always advise their senior colleagues of the justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

All staff have a responsibility to be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding and any temporary amendment to these should be explained to them by senior managers. This includes the school’s child protection policy, staff code of conduct and online safety / acceptable use agreement.

Agreed Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way
- Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from the headteacher if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation
- Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or

other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)

- Staff and leaders should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed
- Staff should be aware of and understand the school safeguarding and child protection policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, staff code of conduct, whistle blowing procedure and the procedures for CADs.

Responsibilities

Governing Body	Staff	Headteacher
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ensure that the safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are distributed, adopted, implemented and monitored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ understand the responsibilities which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ promote a culture of openness and support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ amend the safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in the light of DfE guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID pandemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ understand how to raise a concern and contact designated staff or partner agencies if they have a concern about a child, particularly if the normal arrangements have been amended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ensure that systems are in place for concerns to be raised
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ensure that if there is no trained DSL on site, a senior member of staff is identified to lead on safeguarding issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ensure that adults are not placed in situations which render them particularly vulnerable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ensure that all adults are aware of expectations, policies and procedures
<p>This means that staff should not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a child's or family's detriment ▪ use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine children ▪ use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with children which are of a sexual nature or which may become so 		

Power and positions of trust and authority

Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others. Any such incidents should be reported any such incident to the headteacher.

This is as relevant in the online world as it is in the classroom; staff engaging with children and parents online have a responsibility to model safe practice at all times

Use of technology for online / virtual teaching

When selecting our technology for home learning we continued with our current providers/ platforms because we could be satisfied that they provide the appropriate level of security. Staff will use school devices where possible and contact children only via the school email address / log in. This ensures that the setting's filtering and monitoring software is enabled.

When planning lessons initially, teachers took into account accessibility within the family home and provided alternatives where access is limited. Staff also considered the mental health and wellbeing of children, including screen time

Whilst we are not providing virtual lessons, recordings and video may be used to communicate. Any 'meeting' of classes will be agreed and timetabled to ensure senior teachers may have access as they would in school.

Staff engaging in online sessions must display the same standards of dress and conduct that they would in the real world; They continue to act as role model to pupils and parents

When taking part in online activity from home staff are asked to think about the background; photos, artwork, identifying features, mirrors – backing could be blurred

- staff and children should be in living / communal areas
- where staff have a home office in a 'spare room, this should take place in the 'office area' not the bedroom
- Resources / videos must be age appropriate

Staff and parents are reminded that filters at a child's home may be set at a threshold which is different to the school. Staff understand that children may not have support immediately to hand at home if they feel distressed or anxious about content

Communication

If staff need to contact a parent by phone and do not have access to a work phone, they always use 'caller withheld' to ensure the parent is not able to identify the staff member's personal contact details.

Continued safeguarding awareness

Staff should refer to the school whistleblowing policy should any concerns arise. All staff have been provided with relevant contact details during the pandemic.

For further information please consult the complete guidance [safer working practice guidance](#)