



# Safeguarding Policy Covid-19 Addendum

## Annex to Child Protection Policy

COVID-19 changes to our Child Protection Policy

June 2020

### Response to COVID-19

There have been significant changes within our setting in response to the coronavirus outbreak. Many children are learning from home; teachers are managing learning remotely and leading provision for key workers' children; and staffing has been and is likely to continue to be affected by illness, self-isolation and shielding.

Despite the changes, the school's Child Protection Policy is fundamentally the same: **children always come first, and staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and contact the DSP in line with our established safeguarding procedure.**

This annex sets out some of the adjustments we are making in line with the changed arrangements in the school and following [advice from government](#) and local agencies.

### Reporting arrangements

The school arrangements continue in line with our child protection policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Person is:

Stuart Whiteland  
01438 812381

The Deputy DSP is:

Ali Browne  
01438 812381

The school's approach ensures the DSP or a deputy is always contactable while the school is open. All staff have the contact details for the DSP and Deputy during school closure and should report any concerns face-to-face and written record of concern or via telephone and e-mail with the DSP in line with the current policy. This will ensure the DSP has all concerns flagged.

Staff will continue to follow the Child Protection procedures and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child, whether in school or not. COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and children, rather than a reduction in our standards.

Children's services may be affected by the impact of the virus on staff and an increased demand for services. Where a child is at risk of significant harm there may be a need to be persistent in referring concerns to the local authority. The arrangements for contacting the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) are:

**(Consultation Hub)**

**or to make an urgent referral:**

**(Children's Services)**

Further details can be found at **Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:**  
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/childrens-social-care/child-protection/hertfordshire-safeguarding-children-partnership/hscp.aspx>

Should a child in the school's view be at risk of significant harm and local agencies are not able to respond, the school will immediately follow the safeguarding children escalation procedure:

7.2 Escalation of Concerns and Professional Disagreements About Decisions, Including Convening an ICPC

[https://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_resolution\\_disagree.html](https://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_resolution_disagree.html)

## **Identifying vulnerability**

Schools relationships with the community mean we have identified children who may be classed as 'vulnerable.'

We have put in place specific arrangements in respect of the following groups:

- Children Looked After – none presently.
- Children who have previously been Children Looked After – individual agreements with carers and Social Worker.
- Children subject to a child protection plan/ Child in Need plan – none presently. School places offered to those accessing the Early Help Module via Families First.
- Children with an EHCP – none presently.
- Other children the school considers vulnerable. More children may be added to this group in response to concerns raised with the DSP. Contact arrangements will be agreed with parents/carers, SLT and DSP.

Where appropriate school will liaise with other agencies involved in their care, including where appropriate their social worker and the Virtual School Head for Children Looked After and those who have previously been Children Looked After.

In addition, the following groups have specific arrangements around contact and support from the school.

- Children of critical workers who may attend school if no safe alternative arrangements can be made.
- Children at home – work packs sent home with regular updates for remote learning tasks provided via the school's admin e-mail.

The plans in respect of each child in these groups will be reviewed regularly.

## Holiday arrangements

The school has been available for Key Workers' children over Easter and May Half Term but this provision has not been required.

## Attendance

The school is following the [attendance guidance issued by government](#). Where a child is expected and does not arrive the school will follow our attendance procedure and make contact with the family. If contact is not possible within half an hour of registers closing, the school secretary should be informed. The school secretary will attempt a range of methods to contact the parent and, if still not possible, they should inform a member of the SLT/DSP or Deputy. If necessary, the DSP will arrange a home visit by the school or another appropriate agency. A risk assessment will be undertaken to consider how best to manage the implications of COVID-19 alongside other risks perceived to the child. The risk of COVID-19 **does not override** the duty on the school to ensure children and young people are safe.

These arrangements will only be in place for children who have enrolled and are eligible for Emergency Childcare or for those who have chosen to return to school in the wider opening phase (currently for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6). For all other children school is closed.

## Staff will be aware of increased risk

The pressures on children and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, poverty, and financial or health anxiety. These areas should be considered in the setting of any work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below). Staff will be aware of the mental health of both children and their parents and carers, informing the DSP about any concerns.

Incidences of domestic abuse are expected to increase significantly during the period of isolation as perpetrators will use this time as a “tool of coercive and controlling behaviour”, and victims and their children are consistently more vulnerable during periods of societal stress (see [government guidance](#)). Guidance is available via the link below:

[https://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_domestic\\_abuse.html](https://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_domestic_abuse.html)

Referrals for domestic violence and abuse can be made via the [Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference \(MARAC\) referral form](#).

## Risk online

Children will be using the internet more during this period. The school may also use online approaches to deliver training or support. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and other risks online and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when children were learning at the school.

- The school and HfL ICT Services continue to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place.
- Our governing body will review arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate.
- The school has taken on board guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning, the DfE's guidance '[Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)' and their guidance for parents and carers '[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): support for parents and carers to keep children safe online](#)'.
- Staff have been reminded of the school's code of conduct, professional boundaries and the importance of using school systems to communicate with children and their families during this exceptional period.
- Children accessing remote learning receive guidance from their teachers. Parents and carers have received information via e-mail about keeping children safe online with peers, the school, other education offers they may access and the wider internet community. We have set out the school's approach, including the sites children have been recommended by the school. *Parents have been offered the following links:*
  - [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and carers 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
  - [www.childnet.com](#) - advice for parents and carers
- Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the [Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre](#).

## **Allegations or concerns about staff**

With such different arrangements, children could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

Any staff or volunteers from outside our setting will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to take action if they are concerned.

We confirm that the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged and a concern should be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer:

Children's Services – 03001234043

SOOHS (Out of Hours Service-Children's Services) – 03001234043

If necessary, the school will continue to follow the duty to refer to DBS any adult who has harmed or possess a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, and to the Teacher Regulation Agency in line with paragraph 166 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 using the address [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk).

## **New staff or volunteers**

New starters and the use of volunteers will be extremely limited during this period as the school endeavours to minimise the number of visitors allowed on site.

New starters must have an induction with the DSP or Deputy DSP. They must read the school child protection policy, the behaviour policy, the whistleblowing policy and the code of conduct. The DSP or deputy will ensure new recruits know who to contact if worried about a child and ensure the new starters are familiar with the child protection procedures.

If staff or volunteers are transferring in from other registered education or childcare settings, we will seek evidence from their setting that:

- the member of staff has completed relevant safeguarding training in line with other similar staff or volunteers,
- they have read Part I and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and
- where the role involves regulated activity and the appropriate DBS check has been undertaken by that setting we will undertake a written risk assessment (see flowchart on Page 40 of KCSiE 2019) to determine whether a new DBS would need to be undertaken. It may be in these exceptional times we can rely on the DBS undertaken by their setting.

Our child protection procedures remain the same:

- Volunteers may not be left unsupervised with children until suitable checks have been undertaken. People supervising volunteers must be themselves in regulated activity, able to provide regular, day to day supervision and reasonable in all circumstances to protect the children.
- The school will undertake a written risk assessment on the specific role of each volunteer to decide whether to obtain an enhanced DBS check (with barred list information) for all staff and volunteers new to working in regulated activity in line with [DBS guidance](#).
- When undertaking ID checks on documents for the DBS it is reasonable to [initially check these documents online](#) through a live video link and to accept scanned images of documents for the purpose of applying for the check. The actual documents will then be checked against the scanned images when the employee or volunteer arrives for their first day.
- The school will update the Single Central Record of all staff and volunteers working in the school, including those from other settings. This will include the risk assessment around the DBS. A record will be kept by the office of who is working in the school each day.

The DSP will undertake a risk assessment in respect of any new information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know about the information. This will be recorded in our safeguarding recording systems.

This policy addendum has been approved remotely by Governors on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 for implementation during the coronavirus outbreak.