Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Coronavirus (COVID-19) Addendum

This addendum was first added on 10th April 2020, and follows Government Guidance, (most recently updated on 20th May 2020). The procedures outlined below are interim measures, and supercede the usual steps outlined in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (during this period of partial school closure). This addendum is under constant (weekly) review, and will be updated regularly (and urgently upon the release of any further government guidance).

In Sheffield, schools have been opening more widely since Monday 15th June. It is important that we ensure our Coronavirus (COVID-19) Addendum remains applicable to our setting, which from Monday 15th June has been operating both remotely and with some on-site learning. DfE guidance states: 'Schools and colleges should, as far as is reasonably possible, take a whole institution approach to safeguarding. This will allow them to satisfy themselves that any new policies and processes in response to coronavirus are not weakening their approach to safeguarding or undermining their child protection policy.'

The current government plan is to have a full return to school in September for all year groups, and the government has said it will issue further advice on how to do this safely in the coming weeks. Inevitably, it will be important at that point to review and update this addendum, so that it remains relevant and usable when children return to school in September. Once we receive guidance, we will amend this document and re-share via our Parent Portal.

Despite there being a number of interim, procedural deviations from 'business as usual', schools continue to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2019. The following important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- with regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children must always continue to come first;
- if anyone in a school or college has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately;
- a DSL or deputy should be available;
- it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children;
- children should continue to be protected when they are online.
    Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers

Most recent DfE guidance (published 20th May 2020) states that:

The revised child protection policy should reflect the return of more children from 1 June* and this might include, but should not be limited to:

- reflecting that staff and volunteers may identify new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person following partial school closures;
- what staff and volunteers should do if they have any concerns about a child, including new concerns where children are returning;
- the continued importance of all staff and volunteers acting and acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns, including new concerns where children are returning;
- reflecting (where resources allow) that DSLs (and deputies) will have more time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as more children return;
- reflecting the importance of ensuring relevant safeguarding and welfare information held on all children (including returning children) remains accurate. Schools and colleges (led by the DSL or deputy) should be doing all they reasonably can to ask parents and carers to advise them of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before a child returns;
- DSL (and deputy) arrangements;
- peer on peer abuse - given the different circumstances schools and colleges are operating in, a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims (the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE should continue to inform any revised approach);
- what staff and volunteers should do if they have concerns about a staff member or volunteer who may pose a safeguarding risk to children (the principles in part 4 of KCSIE will continue to support how a school or college responds to any such concerns);
- the approach to protecting vulnerable children (see below for further details on vulnerable children);
- what arrangements are in place to keep children not physically attending the school or college safe, especially online and how concerns about these children should be progressed (see below for further details covering online safety);
- any updated advice received from the local safeguarding partners. DSLs (or deputies) should be leading the school or college's input into the local arrangements;
- any updated advice received from local authorities regarding 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 continued importance for school and college staff to work with and support children's social workers, the local authority virtual school head for looked-after and previously looked-after children and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners.

> *Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers*
> [*Westbourne, along with other Sheffield schools, has been open more widely since 15th June]

All staff and volunteers are aware of this addendum and are kept up to date as it is revised. The revised policy is available publicly.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

A member of the safeguarding team (the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy) will always be available to talk to during the period of restricted access due to COVID-19 and upon the return of more pupils. On most days, a member of the safeguarding team will be present on site, but that may not always be the case. Where there is no DSL or DSD on site, a member of the safeguarding team will always be contactable via phone. All staff have the relevant phone numbers in order to make this contact, and parents and pupils have been advised to email a member of the safeguarding team if they wish to discuss a possible safeguarding matter, so that a member of the team can then contact them to discuss it.

Attendance

Schools have been asked to resume their normal attendance registers now that school is open to more pupils than to vulnerable children and the children of key workers.

From Monday 15th June 2020, we have resumed taking our internal register each day, and are no longer required to upload a daily attendance form to the Local Authority. Pupils not eligible to come into school (for example, pupils in Year 9) will be marked with an 'X' code. Pupils who are eligible to attend but **do not come in** will be issued with the following codes:

- 'Y' - for pupils who are unable to come in despite being eligible because they are shielding, shielding a vulnerable member of their household, a risk assessment deems it is not safe for them (this list is not exhaustive)
- 'I' - for pupils who become ill - this includes those with suspected or confirmed Coronavirus / COVID-19
- 'D' - dual registration (children who are on our roll but are being educated at another facility)
- 'C' - those absent for other circumstances **(all school absences are to be authorised at this time, the DfE has confirmed that no absence should be deemed 'unauthorised' in the current circumstances).**

We are also asking that pupils who are learning remotely (from home) continue to 'check-in' with their form tutors each day between 8.30 and 9.00am, so we know they are safe and well and ready for a day of learning. Please see below for information regarding schools monitoring of this, and what action school will take if pupils are absent from their online classes.

What constitutes a 'safeguarding concern' during the COVID-19 crisis?

Staff should continue to be vigilant to any signs of possible abuse or neglect of children, as per the usual guidance and advice laid out both in KCSIE and in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. However, with the majority of children still being off-site rather than in our classrooms, staff should be particularly aware of the following possible issues (this list is not exhaustive, and staff are encouraged to talk with a member of the safeguarding team should they have a separate concern):

- **Pupils not being present in online classes -** All pupils engaging in daily Google Classroom lessons should also make contact with their Form Tutor during registration time (8.30-9.00am) each weekday morning of term time, although we do understand that circumstances at home may mean this is not always possible. Where it is not possible, parents are encouraged to make the Form Tutor aware. Form Tutors should follow up any pupil not present during registration *if they are not already aware that the pupil is unable to attend the session*. Likewise, class teachers should be informing Form Tutors if any pupils are not completing tasks or being present in their Google Classrooms. Teachers are asked to fill in a spreadsheet on an ongoing basis, which reports information to the Form Tutors regarding the level of communication teachers are having with pupils, the quality and quantity of their work, and the frequency with which the children are attending online lessons. We are aware there may be a good reason for online absence (illness, inability to access ICT etc), but the concern should be raised nevertheless. The Senior School Form Tutors will conduct fortnightly welfare phone calls home to speak both with parent(s) and pupils, but these phone calls can happen at any time should concerns arise which are urgent. During the fortnightly phone calls home, the Form Tutors will refer to the spreadsheet containing information from the teachers. However, as of 15th June it is no longer necessary for the form tutors of Junior School to make these phone calls as they are having a lot of contact with children through Google Meet. However, it is good practice to continue to make the phone calls if there are concerns about a child's wellbeing. Form tutors of pupils in Year 10 also no longer need to make these phone calls **except the families of those children who are not accessing provision on-site.**
- **Illness -** Pupils themselves, or family members may become seriously unwell during this time, and may need support in dealing with the emotional aspect of illness. More than ever, close links with home and a supportive approach from school is crucial. Parents are encouraged to keep school informed of any illness, and the Form Tutor remains contactable by pupils if they are worried. In the Senior School, pupils can also make contact with a member of the pastoral team via worrybox@westbourneschool.co.uk should they feel the need to talk to a teacher about anything that is worrying them.
- **Domestic abuse -** During the COVID-19 crisis, children already living with domestic abuse are at increased risk. Also, families with no history of domestic abuse may develop difficulties of this nature. It is crucial that school retains links with more vulnerable pupils and continues to follow guidance from Sheffield Children's Safeguarding Partnership regarding this matter. Despite the increased pressures on local authorities during this time, it has been made very clear that abuse will continue to be dealt with as a matter of priority by the police and relevant services. Staff are encouraged to share any concerns about a child or family with the DSL immediately.
- **Mental health concerns -** As above, children with mental health difficulties may be experiencing heightened levels of anxiety during this time. Again, Form Tutors should be engaging with all children on a regular basis, and checking in with parents at least fortnightly (via email if no longer needing to make phone calls). Staff will still receive briefings and pastoral updates, so will be aware of particular children who need our support. Parents will be regularly signposted to external sources of support and advice via our weekly Friday Flyer.

What to do if a member of staff is worried about a child

The usual practice of completing a 'pink form' (raising a Cause for Concern) is not appropriate during this period. Instead, the member of staff should phone the DSL and discuss their concern directly. It may sometimes be appropriate for the member of staff to speak to a Deputy DSL (for example Jon Clark, Head of Junior School) instead of the DSL, but the DSL must be made aware of all concerns raised.

The safeguarding team member will log the concern directly onto the school's secure CPOMS account, and will take next steps in accordance with standard procedure as outlined in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

It may be appropriate for the DSL to speak directly with a pupil when dealing with a safeguarding concern, and so the DSL has the Headteacher's permission to speak with the pupil via Google Meet or on the phone if the situation arises. However, if it is felt that doing so would place a child at further risk, the DSL would instead go straight to Sheffield Safeguarding Hub to refer the concern to the appropriate authorities.

If a member of staff has tried to contact home but does not receive a response, they should inform the DSL or a DSD immediately. The member of staff should then try to make contact again the following day (unless the DSL/D feels it is appropriate to escalate the matter more urgently). It is advisable for the member of staff to try an alternative phone number / means of communication if using the number tried the previous day is still unsuccessful. They should inform the DSL/D again if contact is still not possible. The DSL/D (in consultation with the safeguarding team) will then decide if a home visit is appropriate. If it is, the DSL/D will conduct a home visit in accordance with local guidance / risk assessments regarding such events. The home visit would allow the school to satisfy itself that a child is safe (and appropriate social distancing measures would be adhered to throughout) or would lead to school escalating the concern to Sheffield Safeguarding Hub or the Police as appropriate. Any action taken would, of course, be putting the child(ren)'s safety and wellbeing first.

Peer on peer abuse

The principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE continue to inform our approach when it comes to managing any reports of such abuse. Parents are encouraged to be vigilant and monitor their children's online activity, as it is likely at this time that any peer on peer abuse would take place online. Parents are still encouraged to report any concerns to the Form Tutor, who would then liaise with the pastoral and safeguarding teams as appropriate. Pupils and parents are given regular guidance and updates regarding how to keep children safe online (see below for further details), and children in the Senior School have constant access to the worrybox email address where they can raise any concerns immediately with the pastoral and safeguarding teams (worrybox@westbourneschool.co.uk).

As school is now open to more children, we must be especially vigilant to ensure peer on peer abuse does not occur in school. Our Anti-Bullying and Behaviour policies continue to be applicable, but we must ensure that social distancing is observed within school. Additional supervision during break times

and when pupils are moving around school is crucial to ensure social distancing is adhered to, and also to ensure good behaviour of pupils.

How will school ensure the safe transition of pupils to and from the school to other educational settings?

When new pupils start at Westbourne during the coronavirus pandemic, we will continue to contact their previous settings to ask them to securely share any safeguarding-related information. Our DSL will contact the DSL of the new setting of any pupils leaving us, and will arrange for the safe transfer of any safeguarding-related information.

What should staff / volunteers do if they have concerns about a staff member or volunteer who may pose a safeguarding risk to children?

The principles in part 4 of KCSIE will continue to support how school responds to any such concerns, and staff should report these concerns to the Headteacher (or the Chair of Governors if the concern / allegation is regarding the Headteacher) as they would be advised to in usual circumstances. School will continue to safeguard against such instances by recruiting new staff safely, following guidance from part 3 of KCSIE.

Any new staff or volunteers should continue to receive a safeguarding induction from the DSL, although this will need to be conducted remotely, either on the telephone or via Google Meet.

What is done to support those pupils who staff have concerns about, but do not fit the government's 'vulnerable' criteria?

All staff should continue to raise any concerns about specific children with the relevant member(s) of the pastoral and/or safeguarding teams. In most cases, the Form Tutor will be best-placed to raise concerns. Maintaining close communication with families during this period is vital in ensuring children's wellbeing is monitored. Those pupils about whom staff have concerns will be monitored more closely than others, with a key member of the pastoral team also staying in close contact with the family and liaising with the safeguarding team as appropriate. Ongoing concerns will be logged by CPOMS to enable a picture of need to be built up, and the DSL will seek advice or refer to Sheffield Safeguarding Hub should they feel further specialist advice is required.

A pupil who may not have been deemed to be 'vulnerable' at the start of the lockdown period may well begin to meet the criteria as time goes on, and school will be vigilant to this via our regular communication with children and families.

Children in Year 10 returning to school are being offered 1 to 1 'Return to School' interviews with the DSL, so they can talk about their own personal experiences during lockdown, and can be signposted to any appropriate support if required. Those pupils requiring more than an initial 1 to 1 return interview will be offered it.

What arrangements are in place to keep children not physically attending the school safe, especially online and how concerns about these children should be progressed?

Any concerns about the safety of children should be raised with the DSL, verbally, who will make a decision on appropriate next steps. As mentioned before, close contact with home remains crucial in order to monitor the safety and wellbeing of children, as it can be harder to notice the signs that something is wrong when a child is not physically in school on a daily basis. The Form Tutor, again, is crucial to this process, as they should be making regular contact with pupils and their families.

School has created a Remote Learning Policy, which is reviewed, updated and shared with staff, pupils and parents on a fortnightly basis. This sets out the expectations of pupils, including clarification on how lessons will be taught remotely.   We also send out regular surveys, to elicit feedback on parents regarding the success of this and any questions they may have about our systems and processes. Our delivery of online teaching is under constant review, taking into account advice from the DfE, Learn Sheffield, e-safety advisors and the advice drawn on by external experts in digital communication with whom the school has links. Our Online Safety Co-ordinator also provides regular, relevant updates to staff on e-safety during this time.

All learning for pupils is shared with them via their school accounts (which they can access remotely) rather than on personal accounts - this ensures there is additional security for children when they are working remotely. We also set a considerable amount of work which does not need to be completed online, to reduce pupils' exposure to the virtual world and unnecessary risks. Pupils should take regular breaks away from their screens, and it is important that they continue to take plenty of physical exercise where possible.

On 19th April 2020, the DfE published guidance on [Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19)](#) . This was last updated on 21st May. The school adheres to this guidance in the practices it is undertaking during this period. Please see our Remote Learning Policy (which is reviewed fortnightly and remains publicly available at all times) for further detail regarding our procedures.

Addendum written by: Natalie Day (DSL), in consultation with Senior Management Team and Safeguarding Governor, Alison McKinna, on 10th April 2020
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