

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum



Approved by:

Victoria O'Farrell

Date: April 2020

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by:

Every 4 weeks up to September 2020 (or as circumstances change in response to Government directives)

Contents

Important contacts	2
1. Scope and definitions	3
2. Core safeguarding principles	3
3. Reporting concerns.....	3
4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements	3
5. Working with other agencies	4
6. Monitoring attendance	4
7. Peer-on-peer abuse.....	4
8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer	5
9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns	5
10. Contact plans	5
11. Safeguarding all children	6
12. Online safety	6
13. Mental health	7
14. Staff recruitment, training and induction	7
15. Children attending other settings.....	8
16. Monitoring arrangements.....	8
17. Links with other policies.....	8

Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Victoria O'Farrell	01524 32636 07919 864 965 Victoria.ofarrell@lancasterhigh.lancs.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Lee Mackie	01524 32636 07909 357 279 Lee.mackie@lancasterhigh.lancs.sch.uk
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	Dave Chapman	0152432636 dchapman@lancasterhigh.uk
Headteacher	Dr Nick Walmsley	01524 32636 Nwalmsley@lancasterhigh.lancs.sch.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Tim Booth	01772 536694 Tim.booth@lancashire.gov.uk

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Chair of governors	Bill Dellar	chair@lancasterhigh.lancs.sch.uk

Overview:

The way school is currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual, however, a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same. This document outlines guidance and procedures to be followed in line with Central Lancaster High Schools current Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners Children's Social Care, Health, Police and local authority (LA) Lancashire 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, both for children still attending school and those at home.

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 by the email addresses and phone numbers listed in the 'Important Contacts' section.

If our DSL (or deputy) is unavailable, we have several other Deputy Safeguarding Leads who will be available by email or school mobile. These staff members and contact details are listed below:

Lisa Maudsley – 07444 153 173 lisa.maudsley@lancasterhigh.lancs.sch.uk

Julie Kelly – 07950 451 027 julie.kelly@lancasterhigh.lancs.sch.uk

Becky Ashton – SENCO – rashton@lancasterhigh.lancs.sch.uk

The main points of contact for safeguarding issues on a day to day basis will be 1) Victoria O'Farrell 2) Lee Mackie. These staff members will be available to contact during normal school hours. 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 who is based on site will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding by instruction of the DSL remotely working. You can contact the Senior Leaders on site by phoning 0152432636.

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 attend virtual core groups, Child in Need, Strategy Meetings and RCPCs as and when required. Where the allocated DSL or Deputy DSL is unable to attend, another DSL/ Deputy DSL will be deployed.

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 phone in the first instance, text, then follow up email if there is no reply.
- 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 – about both children attending school and those at home.

All instances of this nature must be reported to a DSL immediately and logged in the usual way on CPOMS. The DSL will make a decision of the course of action which could include contacting parents and reporting to the Police and Children's Social Care.

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 – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site or remotely.

All instances of this nature should be reported immediately to Victoria O'Farrell who will liaise with the Headteacher and Tim Booth the LADO and take appropriate action.

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 pupils could have had previous involvement with Children's Social Care, be at risk of CSE, have been supported through Student Support or who have, or parents have, mental health difficulties. These could also include pupils who do not meet the threshold for Children's Social Care, but we have concerns about.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10 below.

10. Contact plans

We have a contact plan 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

We currently have 80 pupils identified as vulnerable.

- Each pupil/family has been allocated a point of contact.
 - A list of contacts and allocated staff has been shared with ELT/SLT and the group of contacts.
 - In the case of staff illness, contact will be resumed by other staff members within the group until the illness has passed.
 - Each family has been sent out a school mobile number for the member of staff they have been allocated. These will be staff members with whom they have already had contact with and been supported by in the running of a normal school day, to maintain consistency of relationship.
 - The families will be contacted at least once per week by their key person, on the school mobile that has been provided.
 - All calls are logged on the school's CPOMS recording system.
-

- If parents/pupils cannot be contacted after 3 attempts, a welfare check will be carried out by the DSL/Deputy DSL.
- Safeguarding procedures will be followed in the normal manner if concerns are raised.
- Parents/pupils will be encouraged to ensure they answer the phone or return calls when they are contacted to prevent further visits if there are no concerns.
- Staff contacting parents at any point should maintain professionalism at all times.

11. 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 line with the procedures set out in section 3 above.

For children at home, they will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
- No contact from children or families
- Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

Children are likely to be spending more time online during this period – see section 12 below for our approach to online safety both in and outside school.

See section 13 below for information on how we will support pupils' mental health.

12. Online safety

12.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

12.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and The Trusts' Information and Communications Systems Policy and Social Media Policy.

Staff should not have any one to one or live video calls with pupils to safeguard themselves from potential allegations.

If pre-recorded video lessons are shared, staff must ensure that they are dressed appropriately. There should be no identifiable landmarks in sight and no identifying features of your residence in view. Where possible, blur the background to prevent these features being shown.

Contact with children should only be via school email.

Staff who are maintaining contact with the most vulnerable children during the period, are to use school mobile phones.

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.

13.3 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
- › Information on online safety can be found on the school website under the 'Our School' and 'Safeguarding' section [CLHS Safeguarding Webpage](#) or under the 'Home Learning' section Guidance for Parents [Guidance to Parents](#); Advice for Students [Advice for students](#); or there are advice and guidance documents at the bottom of the webpage from Lancashire Mind under the Covid-19 Mind Advice for Schools section <https://www.lancasterhigh.lancs.sch.uk/home-learning>

13. Mental health

- › Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. Information on mental health can be found on the school website under the 'Our School' and 'Safeguarding' section [CLHS Safeguarding Webpage](#) or under the 'Home Learning' section Guidance for Parents [Guidance to Parents](#); Advice for Students [Advice for students](#); or there are advice and guidance documents at the bottom of the webpage from Lancashire Mind under the Covid-19 Mind Advice for Schools section <https://www.lancasterhigh.lancs.sch.uk/home-learning>

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time that is sent out to schools on a weekly basis.

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.

14. Staff recruitment, training and induction

14.1 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.

14.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

It is unlikely that we will have staff on loan from another school. If we do, 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 carried out by SLT leads in school. If appropriate checks cannot be completed, 'loan staff' will not be allowed on the school site until they can.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

14.3 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 child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

14.4 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 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

15. 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.

16. 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 4 weeks by Victoria O'Farrell and Lee Mackie. At every review point, the Chair Governors will be informed and asked for remote approval.

17. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding and Child protection policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- SEND Policy
- Parent/Carer Code of Conduct
- Information and Communications Systems Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy

- › Social Media Policy
- › Trust Safeguarding Policy
- › Whistleblowing Policy

Links to all school and Trust policies are below:

[CLHS Policy Documents](#)

[Bay Learning Trust Policies](#)