

# Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

## Sir William Stanier



Approved by: Governors

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### Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) Vice Principal	Mrs Anna Norton	<a href="mailto:anna.norton@sws.cheshire.sch.uk">anna.norton@sws.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
Deputy safeguarding lead	Mrs Tracey Hutchings	<a href="mailto:tracey.hutchings@sws.cheshire.sch.uk">tracey.hutchings@sws.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL cannot be on site	Mr Jason Fraser	<a href="mailto:jason.fraser@sws.cheshire.sch.uk">jason.fraser@sws.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
Principal	Mr Jason Fraser	<a href="mailto:jason.fraser@sws.cheshire.sch.uk">jason.fraser@sws.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
Chair of governors	Mr Dave Cooper	

## 1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19 and reflects updated advice from the Department of Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education, Cheshire East and SCIES team.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection and safeguarding 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 and safeguarding 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 is essential that unsuitable people do not 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.

If a concern is raised by a student on site staff should report this to the DSL or the member of SLT on duty in school. If a concern is raised online, through Show My Homework (SMHW) or other social media, this needs to be reported to the DSL.

Staff should continue to report any concerns via our welfare concern form and email to the safeguarding team so that concerns can be logged and monitored in the usual manner.

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 is not in school, they can be contacted remotely by: email or mobile phone.

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed on the rota as to who will be the member of SLT on any given day and how to contact them.

We will ensure that DSL, SLT and the Safeguarding Team, wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

On occasions where there is no DSL on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be Mr Jason Fraser, Principal. You can contact them in person or by using the contact details listed in 'The Important Contacts' section of this document.

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL 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
- Take appropriate follow-up action regarding any concerns raised

## 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. Both the Deputy Safeguarding Lead (THT) and Lead Officer for Looked After (COS) will work remotely with agencies for all relevant areas.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our 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 does not attend or stops attending. In these cases we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by contacting them by phone and email
- 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 information has been requested through phone calls with parents and carers.

## 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.

Information regarding how to stay safe on-line and clear routes for reporting any abuse has been issued to students via the school bulletin and the school website. Students have been signposted to various organisations such as: Kooth.com, Childline.

## 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.

Staff should continue to report any concerns about a staff member or volunteer to Jason Fraser, or a member of the SLT. Our normal procedure for dealing with concerns will continue.

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](mailto: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 do not 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. This may include children who have previously had a social worker; students who are subject to a social care assessment; students with significant social and emotional health challenges; students who we have safeguarding concerns about. 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 will not be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this would not 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

The procedure for reporting safeguarding concerns following these calls are as set out in Section 3.

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant and will review them at least weekly.

If we cannot make contact, we will follow appropriate safeguarding procedures.

### 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 students' 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 seek guidance from the MAT and local authority.

### 11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff code of conduct and acceptable use of ICT guidance.

Staff will continue to follow our school policy for safeguarding students and maintain appropriate relationships with students, as outlined in the staff code of conduct.

Staff will not communicate with students by using personal social media platforms or personal email accounts. All communication with students, including our approach to remote learning, is made via school social media and Show My Homework.

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

Information below is shared with parents and carers through our school bulletin and website:

- Talk openly with your child about their on-line activity
- Keep screens and devices where you can see them
- Know your parental controls
- Make sure you know who your children's on-line friends are
- Be 'share aware' to protect their privacy
- Make sure your child is keeping their location and personal information private
- Keep track of their on-line time
- Be aware of how to report any concerning material or contact
- Remember that the positive aspects of the internet outweigh the negatives

## 12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for mental health for all students.

Weekly phone calls are being made to our most vulnerable students and guidance on maintaining positive mental health in this current climate has been given through our school bulletin. Our most vulnerable students have been given a Well-being pack before closure, and also been signposted to Kooth.com and this mental health support service has been shared on the school website.

We will also signpost all students, parents/carers and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for students' 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.

### **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 are not 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 when and if this applies to us. These checks will be carried out by Human Resources and SLT.

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

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 is 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

#### **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

Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO cannot 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.

#### **15. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 3-4 weeks by Anna Norton, Designated Safeguarding Lead. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

#### **16. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection and Safeguarding policy
- Ready to Learn Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Attendance Policy
- Complaints Policy