



THE DISTRICT

CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Chair of Governors	Mr F Maguire
Headteacher	Mrs L Shelford
Date adopted: April 2020	Review Date: Four weekly Review

The caring path to achievement, reflecting the values of Christ.

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Important Contacts		
Role	Name	Contact Details
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Sue Swift	01744 678250 07516112006 sue.swift@sthelens.org.uk
Deputy DSL	Lavern Shelford	01744 678250 lavern.shelford@sthelens.org.uk
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site		
SLT	Claire Ryder	01744678250 claire.ryder@sthelens.org.uk
SLT	Tracey Seaman	tracey.seaman@sthelens.org.uk
SLT	Cath Clarke	Cath.clarke@sthelens.org.uk

1. Introduction

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our three local safeguarding partners, Merseyside Police, St Helens Clinical Commissioning Group and St Helens Local Authority. 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) 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. 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. There may be times when staff are required to work from home i.e due to self-isolation or when operating a staff rota system, it is vital at these times that recording of any concerns continues to be robust and timely. The school has developed a COVID-19 Case recording support document for on-site SLT members to use in the event of the DSL and deputy DSL not being on site.

LADO Referrals

All referrals should be made in the usual manner using the LADO referral form and by sending it directly to sthelenslado@sthelens.gov.

- Calls should only be made to the unit for urgent matters 07717366904

Children and Young Peoples looked after reviews

These will now take place as virtual meeting the following processes will be adopted:

- The school will continue to submit a report for the review meeting three days prior to the meeting date
- The independent reviewing officer (IRO) will contact the school to discuss the report if further clarification of any information within the report is needed
- The IRO will also contact school if they feel that school needs to be part of the virtual meeting
- The IRO will contact the child, the placement and the social worker to participate in the virtual meeting.
- People may be spoken to separately rather than be called to attend a meeting together
- The IRO will continue to ensure that the outcomes and minutes of meetings will be sent. This practice remains the same

Child Protection Conferences

These will now take place as a virtual meeting. Agencies will be requested to be available by telephone during the meeting.

- The social worker will prepare the family for the virtual meeting, including the checking to up-to-date telephone numbers
- The school will ensure that reports continue to be submitted to the safeguarding unit two days prior to the conference meeting date, however where ever possible sooner.
- The safeguarding unit will share reports from agencies to those who will be in attendance
- The safeguarding unit administrative officer for the conference will ring all participants for the meeting
- The child protection plan and the minutes of meetings will be sent to all partners.

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 (see details page 3 important contact details) We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by e-mail and by telephone as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them. 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 will

take responsibility for coordinating safeguarding. This will be (see page 3 important contacts). You can contact them by: (see page 3 important contacts)

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 using My Concern
- 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 update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our three 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, our process is as follows:

- If the attendance call is successful and there are no concerns, the call and actions will be logged using our safeguarding electronic recording system 'My Concern'
- If there is an allocated social worker the above process will be used, in addition an e-mail will also be sent to the social worker recording details of the call
- If the call is not successful, three attempts will be made to contact the family, if on the third attempt there is still no contact, the allocated social worker will be contacted for further advice and support

We are using the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school. We are also using the COVID 19 Vulnerable children support plan daily, returning to the Local Authority Safeguarding Unit to ensure that an accurate record is obtained by the local authority of those vulnerable children who may need additional support by social care. 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. Updated information is requested on-site from parents when children are left at the school, any additional or changes to contacts are recorded using the SIMS system.

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, and continue to follow the processes as dictated within the child protection policy.

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. (see LADO guidance) 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

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

- Children who have been previously looked after
- Children who have previously been supported by social care but are now closed
- Children who are currently supported by Early Help processes
- Children where there may be concerns regarding parents 'parenting capacity' 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 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 these plans set out:
 - How often the school will make contact
 - Which staff member(s) will make contact
 - How they will make contact

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them in accordance with local authority guidance. If we can't make contact, we will for those children with an allocated social worker:-

- Contact the social worker immediately to inform them that contact can't be made and to seek guidance as to next steps
- If we are unable to contact the social worker and concerns remain, a 'door stop' welfare visit will be conducted if there are sufficient numbers of staff to complete this. If the school is unable to conduct a door step welfare call, contact will be made with the Community Support Officers to complete a welfare visit on the school's behalf. If it is felt that children are at risk the Police will be called using the emergency contact number 999

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 pupils' mental health that are also Safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately. In particular, children are likely to be spending 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 that we continue to access support from the council IT service remotely.

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing code of conduct and IT acceptable use policies. Pupils and their parents/carers can contact teachers via class dojo or via the class emails. Teachers will reply via those channels rather than using their personal work email or other forms social media. 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
- Details of websites that offer support for keeping children safe can be found on the school's website: <http://www.district.st-helens.sch.uk/useful-links/>

12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. We will signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time. 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.

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 aren't 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. [Add who will do these risk assessments.] 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'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

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 coordinator (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.

15. 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 Sue Swift, Head of Safeguarding. 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 policy
- Staff behaviour policy/code of conduct
- IT acceptable use policy • Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy • Attendance policy

- Safeguarding COVID-19 Case Recording Support Document for on-site SLT •
- Case management guidance and supervision policy