

Child Protection and Safeguarding

COVID-19 addendum



The Discovery School

Approved by:	C Stringer - Chair of Governors	Date: April 2020
Last reviewed on:	1 st April 2020	
Next review due by:	1 st May 2020	

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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Tina Gobell	01732 847000 tgobell@discovery.kent.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Jenny Baker Jane Wilce	jbaker@discovery.kent.sch.uk jwilce@discovery.kent.sch.uk
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	Amanda Lihou	07380230291 alihou@discovery.kent.sch.uk
Headteacher	Tina Gobell	As above
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Robyn Windibank	03000410888 robyn.windibank@kent.gov.uk
Chair of governors	Catriona Stringer	cstringer@discovery.kent.sch.uk

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; the Police, Kent Clinical Commissioning Group, Kent Social Work Services and Kent 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:

- Children who have a social worker
- Children with a child protection plan
- Children assessed as being in need
- Children looked after by the local authority
- Children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

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.

Staff should continue to consult with a DSL who will assist in completing a green concern form if you do not have access to one which can be securely stored e.g. when working from home.

Staff should be mindful of their duty to protect sensitive data when working or transferring data online.

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 designated DSL (or deputy) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely by calling this number: 07380230291.

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email. In addition, this information will be displayed daily on the staff noticeboard for those in school. The information will detail which DSL (or deputy) will be in school on any given day, together with any relevant contact information.

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 co-ordinating safeguarding. They will take responsibility for liaising with the designated DSL.

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
- Where necessary, make same day welfare calls to vulnerable children not on site.

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 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 same day calling
- Notify their social worker, where they have one
- Request a police welfare check should it be deemed necessary

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.

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 by following the steps set out in Sections 3.) and 4.) of this addendum.

We will collate the details of any staff member from a visiting school using our school to host their children. Their details will be added temporarily to our Single Central Record. 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.

We will continue to refer potential cases of reported abuse (staff) to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). We will do this using the email address KentChildrensLADO@kent.gov.uk for the duration of the COVID-19 period.

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.

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
- Who to contact should the school have a concern
- Requesting a police welfare check if deemed necessary

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 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 become unavailable due to ill health, our contingency plan is to contact our collaborative schools for support.

11.2 Outside school

Our staff will not interact with children directly online. Staff will continue to follow our existing Acceptable Use (ICT) Policy. 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 advice and support will also be made available on our web-site.

12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils – details will be updated on our website throughout the COVID-19 period.

We will also 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 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

13.3 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.

14. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from our local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, at the start of each calendar month by the DSL. At every review, it will be approved by the Chair of governors who has delegated authority from the full governing board.

15. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy

Reviewed: 1st April 2020

Next review due: 1st May 2020