

Addendum to Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy due to the circumstances of COVID-19

Published 02 April 2020

Background

This interim safeguarding guidance updates some safeguarding principles within our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and is enforced during the period of COVID-19 measures. Once these measures are relaxed and school's are re-opened as normal this update will cease to be in force. At all times the principles in [Keeping children safe in education \(KCSIE\)](#) and any updated GOV guidance will continue to apply.

Help and support

The school will follow all advice published by the government in its [Advice for the education sector](#). We will also follow any advice given to us by the local authority and Local Safeguarding Board.

Keeping children safe in schools and colleges

It remains essential that as far as possible we will continue to be a safe place for children. This guidance shows how we are considering our safeguarding policy and processes differently when compared to business as usual.

The way we are 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:

- with regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children will always continue to come first
- if anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy will be available at school or 'on call'
- unsuitable people will not be allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online when working on the school's online facilities

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy – revised processes

The revised processes include:

- **Everyone remains responsible** for safeguarding learners at HHS – there is no change to this principle
- staff and volunteers should immediately contact the Safeguarding Team via email if they have any concerns about a child. Unless on school site – staff should speak to the duty DSL or SLT if the DSL is 'on call'
- a member of the safeguarding team will be on site or available on call during school hours. The Safeguarding Team email is monitored continually as normal.
- vulnerable children include children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, or have a social worker as well as those that the school deems vulnerable, have been invited to attend school if their family are not self-isolating. The children of key workers are also able to come into school under current Government advice. Further information on this is in the [guidance on vulnerable children and young people](#).
- there is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to HHS, and their child is considered vulnerable, the relevant social worker will be informed.
- the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds have not changed and remain as normal
- Local authorities have the key day-to-day responsibility for delivery of children's social care. Pastoral and Safeguarding staff will continue to work with and support children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children
- peer on peer abuse - given the very different circumstances we are operating in the process for reporting any concerns should be through our online Anti-Bullying See It Report It button on the school website. These reports will be followed up as reasonably as possible through contact home of the alleged perpetrator and victim. The principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE will continue to inform our approach)
- if staff and volunteers should have concerns about a staff member or volunteer who may pose a safeguarding risk to children they should continue to follow our normal procedures and alert the Headteacher immediately. (the principles in part 4 of KCSIE will continue to support how we respond to any such concerns)

- we will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

Attendance monitoring

Local authorities and schools do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. Along with social workers, we will be agreeing with families whether children in need should be attending education provision – and the school will then follow up on any child that we were expecting to attend, who does not (Register of Expected Learners). In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, the school will notify their social worker.

The Department for Education has introduced a [daily online attendance form](#) to keep a record of children of critical workers and vulnerable children who are attending school. This allows for a record of attendance for safeguarding purposes and allows schools to provide accurate, up-to-date data to the department on the number of children taking up places.

Pastoral teams will be checking attendance of all learners by checking if they have logged on remotely onto ShowMyHomework. Their follow up emails and/or phone calls checks engagement with learning activities and also 'remote attendance'

Weekly attendance will also be provided for Harrow Social Services notifying them, as per their instructions, of Harrow learners with social workers who have or have not attended during the week.

Staff training and safeguarding induction

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of KCSIE. The important thing for these staff will be awareness of any new local arrangements so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter the school, they will be provided with a safeguarding induction. The revised Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (described above) will support this process as will part 1 of KCSIE.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:-

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

Upon arrival they will receive our own Level 1 training from a DSL as per normal.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, we will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for our setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of KCSIE. In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its [guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking](#) to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

Where our school is utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances should a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

The school will continue to follow their legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE, in line with advice from the LADO where appropriate.

The school will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's '[Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral](#)'. During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current environment, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school or college is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the

school, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, the school will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Online safety in schools and colleges

The school will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. We will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children when they are online on the school's IT systems or recommended resources.

The school will be guided by advice from [guidance on what "appropriate" looks like](#) . Also the [UK Council for Internet Safety provides information to help governing boards and proprietors assure themselves](#) that any new arrangements continue to effectively safeguard children online.

The [UK Safer Internet Centre's professional online safety helpline](#) also provides support for the school's workforce with any online safety issues they face.

Children and online safety away from school and college

All schools and colleges are expected to be doing what they reasonably can to keep all of their children safe. In most cases, the majority of children will not be physically attending the school or college. It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the revised Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (described above) and where appropriate referrals should still be made by the Safeguarding Team to children's social care and as required the police.

Currently work online away from school is in the form of homework set through platforms such as ShowMyHomework and Seneca. These have been used for a long time and are a familiar resource for our learners.

School emails will be used if there is any contact between staff and learners so contact is kept away from staff personal emails.

If the school considers using more interactive video platforms it will follow government guidance on providing education remotely. It has set out 4 key areas that we will consider as part of any remote learning strategy. This includes the use of technology. Recently published [guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning](#) and from the [London Grid for Learning on the use of videos and livestreaming](#) will help us plan online lessons and/or activities and plan them safely.

An essential part of the online planning process will be ensuring children who are being asked to work online have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns whilst online. As well as our 'See it Report It' reporting route back to the school there are a number of websites that give age appropriate practical support from the likes of:

- [Childline](#) - for support
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - to report and remove harmful online content
- [CEOP](#) - for advice on making a report about online abuse
- [Kooth.com](#) – online support for mental health concerns

We will be in regular contact with parents and carers. These communications will reinforce the importance of children being safe online and make parents and carers aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Parents and carers can and may supplement the school's online offer with support from online companies or individuals. We emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children. Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes:

- [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers