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# Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

## Addendum due to Covid -19

### September 2020

Reviewed January 2021

#### Scope and Definitions

This addendum to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy dated September 2020 applies from the period of the schools full reopening following the COVID-19 arrangements.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance Covid-19 Guidance for full opening: schools (DfE 2nd July 2020, updated 28 August 2020) and Coronavirus (Covid-19) - Safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers guidance. (DfE updated on 20th May 2020).

Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply. The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those children who:

- Have a social worker
- With a child protection plan
- Are assessed as being a Child in Need (CiN)
- Looked after by the local authority
- Has an education, health and care (EHC) plan

#### Safeguarding principles

We welcome all our children back into school and although due to Covid-19 we are operating in a different way, we will still have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, and will follow these important safeguarding principles:

- 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 on it immediately.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy should be available at all times.
- It is essential that unsuitable people do not enter the school workforce or gain access to our children.

- Children should continue to be protected when they are online and accessing remote learning online.

### **Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL arrangements**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy will be on the school site and will have as much time as needed to support children and staff regarding any new concerns as children return to school.

In the event, our DSL (or Deputy) cannot be in school, they can be contacted remotely by email or phone. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy (DSL) will keep up to date with safeguarding developments and training. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy will identify and monitor the attendance and wellbeing of vulnerable children.

### **Reporting concerns**

All staff and volunteers must continue to report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy immediately if they have concerns about a child. It remains vitally important to do this, both for children that are attending school and those not attending for any reason including self-isolation.

All staff will continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

### **Safeguarding children**

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time has potentially put all children at greater risk of physical and emotional harm. Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health and wellbeing that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on those concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

For children not able to attend school for any reasons including self-isolation, staff will be alert for signs including:

- not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems;
- no contact from children, families or carers; and
- seeming more withdrawn during any class or video calls.

### **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

We will continue to offer our current support for the mental health and wellbeing for all children at our schools. We will also signpost all children, families and staff to other resources offering good mental health and wellbeing support available at this time. When setting expectations for children unable to attend school and accessing remote learning at home, staff will consider the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health and wellbeing.

### **Online safety: In school**

School will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place for online access. IT Services (Ark) can be contacted via email at: [support@ark.me.uk](mailto:support@ark.me.uk)

### **Online safety: Outside school**

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing Staff Code of conduct and IT Acceptable Use Policy. 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 Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police. Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the staff code of conduct. Uppingham C of E ICT provider, Ark, will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. When delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are used, staff will:

- ensure that they wear suitable clothing.

- use professional and appropriate language.
- only use Microsoft Teams and Class Dojo to communicate with pupils.

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.

### **Contact plans**

There are a small number of children about whom the schools and/or Early help workers have particular concerns. These children have a specific contact plan which details:

- How frequently the school will make contact.
- The name of the staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the child and family well.
- How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both.

If we are unable to make contact, we will follow our usual child protection procedures and seek the support of other agencies such as the Early Help team or the Social Care team.

### **Working with other agencies**

We will continue to work with children's social care and early help. We will continue to update this Addendum to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy regularly and where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from the Local Authority with regards to children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need (CiN).

### **School Attendance**

Our children will be returning to school for the Autumn term and we will be completing required attendance registers and following our usual procedures to follow up on non-school attendance. It is parents' and carers' duty to secure regular attendance for their child(ren) at school. We expect all children to attend school every day unless they are unwell or self-isolating. We will:

- communicate with parents and children to encourage their return to school and will provide reassurance about the measures taken within school to minimise the risks.
- immediately follow up on any absence with parents or carers.
- notify their social worker/early help worker, where they have one.
- liaise with the school nursing service as appropriate.

In the event of poor or non- school attendance we have the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with the Local Authority code of conduct.

### **Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers**

We will communicate with parents and carers to:

- ensure all information is kept up to date and available on the school website and Class Dojo;
- ask if there are any changes regarding the welfare, health and wellbeing that the school should be aware of before a child returns to school;
- be aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online;
- know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online.

### **Staff recruitment, training and induction**

#### ***Safer recruitment***

We remain committed to robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our schools are safe to work with children. We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020. We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers and complete risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity

should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020. We will keep our Single Central Record up to date.

### ***Safeguarding induction and training***

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- Safeguarding induction / training
- A copy of our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (including Covid-19 addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 (2020)

### ***Concerns about a staff member or volunteer***

We will continue to follow the procedures as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020. Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have about a member of staff or volunteer immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site, working remotely or providing access to remote learning. 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 COVID-19 in line with government guidance.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or DfE is updated.

### **Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- School Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff Handbook
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Health and safety Risk Assessment
- Whistleblowing Policy