Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 School re-opening addendum

MARSWORTH C E INFANT SCHOOL

Approved by:	[Giles Monks. Angela Polatci]	Date :22nd June 2020
Last reviewed on:	[22nd June 2020]	
Next review due by:	[September 2020]	

Contents

Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Angela Polatci	aurban@bucksgfl.org.uk Office@marsworth.bucks.sch.uk 01296668440
Deputy DSL	Jan Stevens	Office@marsworth.bucks.sch.uk 01296668440
Headteacher	Angela Polatci	01296668440 Office@marsworth.bucks.sch.uk aurban@bucksgfl.org.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)		01296 382070 secure-LADO@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Chair of governors	Mr Giles Monks	Office@marsworth.bucks.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 chief of police
- a clinical commissioning group
- the local authority (LA) Buckinghamshire 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 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.

The following procedure should follow:

- If the school is open then normal reporting should be followed.

- If the school is closed/partially closed please record concern/disclosures including the date, time and in exact wording. This then needs to be forwarded on to DSL (Angela Polatci) or DDSL (Jan Stevens) immediately. The DSL /DDSL can be contacted via phone and/or email. When sending a concern via email please do so with high importance, read receipt and delivery receipt. Please mark this as confidential. The DSL /DSL will acknowledge concern and follow it up.

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 (or deputy) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely by: 07876193314.

If our DSL (or deputy) is unavailable, we will share a DSL with Dagnall CE School. Their DSL Mrs Kay Gobby can be contacted by: 01442 842473

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email 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.

They should be able to:

> 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

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 3 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

The following guidance is currently in place with the support from Buckinghamshire County Council and BCSP

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 phone or 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. The school sends out regular information asking parents to notify and check contact details are current and correct.

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 to the DSL/DDSL

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 to the DSL/DDSL

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 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. These may be pupils and families who need support wither we'll being and parenting support.

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 all children

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:

> Teachers will contact the families once a week to monitor and provide support where needed.

> The Headteacher will contact them every other day to monitor and provide support where needed.

> FSM will be delivered following the social distancing rules. FSM vouchers will be provided throughout the Easter holidays following government guidance.

> Regular contact will be via email and phone calls.

> Resources will be provided to support these families at home for well being, remote learning, and parenting support. E. G. Timetables, reward charts, activities, etc

If we can't make contact, after several attempts on the same day we will contact children's social care or the police.

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).

10.3 Children returning to school

The DSL (or deputy) will do all they reasonably can to find out from parents and carers whether there have been any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before the child returns.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to any new safeguarding concerns as they see pupils in person.

10.4 Children at home

The school will maintain contact with children who are not yet returning to school. Staff will try to speak directly to children at home to help identify any concerns. They will use school phones and devices to make calls home. Or, if necessary they will use personal phones but they will withhold their personal number.

Staff and volunteers will look out for signs like:

> Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems

> No contact from children or families

> Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

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 use the remote support provided by Updata and Turn it On. The use of online resources and learning will not be used until the problem has been resolved.

11.2 Outside school

Staff have been advised to not use social media or online platforms to speak or liaise directly with pupils. For further information refer to Marsworth CE Infant School's Code of Conduct policy.

Acceptable use of technology to communicate with pupils and parents should be for setting work or links to educational and well-being resources only. These need to be approved by the headteacher, DSL or DDSL. This applies to teachers only. TA's and LSA's should not be in contact with pupils or their families, unless this has been incorporated and approved in a support plan. If they have been, this needs to be reported to the headteacher, DSL or DDSL immediately.

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

12. Mental health

12.1 Children returning to school

Staff and volunteers will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have had on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed.

12.2 Children at home

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

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.

Similarly, temporary measures allow right to work checks to be carried out by verifying scanned documents on a video call. If we need to take this approach, we will follow Home Office and Immigration Enforcement guidance.

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. These will be carried out by the headteacher and office manger.

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 DSL training

The DSL (and deputy) may not be able to take part in training during this period. If this is the case, the DSL (and deputy) will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

The DSL (and deputy) will do what they reasonably can to keep up to date with safeguarding developments, such as via safeguarding partners, newsletters and professional advice groups.

13.5 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 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 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 month by Angela Polatci, headteacher /DSL. 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 code of conduct policy

> IT acceptable use policy

> Health and safety policy

> Online safety policy

> Whistle blowing policy