

COVID 19 – Addendum Child Protection & Safeguarding policy

Introduction

As we start to enter the next phase of re-opening schools to more pupils, it is highly likely that new challenges will emerge. However, we must ensure that our robust systems to protect and safeguard children do not waiver and continue to remain a key priority throughout this stage.

All staff and volunteers have a legal responsibility to protect and safeguard children and young people, as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)

As schools start to re-open to more pupils, it will become necessary for the DSL to be on-site.

However, if this is not possible senior leaders will need to consider other options such as:

- a trained DSL (or deputy) being available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example working from home
- sharing trained DSLs (or deputies) with other schools or colleges (who should be available to be contacted via phone or online video)

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to one of the above options, a senior leader should take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

All DSL, Deputy DSL and senior leaders **must** inform staff of their contact details, including email address and telephone numbers. Staff should be made aware of who is taking lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection on a daily basis.

Class Bubbles

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all staff working in individual 'Class Bubbles' are made aware of their vulnerable pupils. Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people with education, health and care (EHC) plans, plus other pupils who may be being monitored internally due to welfare concerns. Details of the child's vulnerability will be shared on a 'needs to know' basis, in order for effective monitoring to occur. As children start to return, staff may also see new safeguarding concerns, especially after a significant period of absence. It is, therefore, vital that staff remain vigilant and report any issues or concerns without delay.

What to do if you have a concern?

If staff become concerned that a child may be at risk or possible risk of significant harm, during telephone contact or attendance at school, they **must** inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL) immediately. It is recognised that during this period there may be time when the DSL or Deputy DSL are not on site but this should not prevent staff from taking swift and timely action. Arrangements are in place for staff to contact the DSL or Deputy DSL via telephone or email, but in the event of not receiving a response, staff must inform the on-site senior leader. In the rare event of the none of the designated staff being available, then it becomes staff's responsibility to contact Children's Social Care EHaSH team (tel no: 01482 448879) direct to seek advice, and possibly make a referral. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL or senior leader as soon as practically possible.

When seeking advice or making a referral

Preparing to Discuss Concerns about a Child with Children's Social Care

Try to sort out in your mind why you are worried, is it based on:

- What you have seen;
- What you have heard from others;

- What has been said to you directly.

Try to be as clear as you can about why you are worried and what you need to do next:

- This is what I have done;
- What more do I need to do?
- Are there any other children in the family?
- Is the child in immediate danger?

In the conversation that takes place the duty Social Worker will seek to clarify:

- The nature of the concerns;
- How and why they have arisen;
- What appear to be the needs of the child and family; and
- What involvement they are having or have had with the child and / or family.

Questions Children's Social Care may ask at Initial Contact

- Address and contact details of referrer;
- Has consent to make the referral been gained? Information regarding parents' knowledge and views on the referral;
- Where consent has been sought but refused and child protection concerns persist you will be asked what informed your decision making;
- Where consent has not been sought to make a referral, you will be asked to explain what informed your decision making;
- Full names, dates of birth and gender of children;
- Family address and, where relevant, school/nursery attended;
- Previous addresses;
- Identity of those with **Parental Responsibility**;

It is extremely important that you record all information onto CPOMS, including your concerns, the name of the contact in EHaSH, plus the date, time, and agreed actions by both parties.

Attendance

If any identified vulnerable children offered a place during the crisis does not attend, then the school should follow up their absence with the parent/carers. The school must inform the allocated social worker if the child has not attended or has discontinued to attend.

It may be necessary for the school and social worker to agree a supportive strategy to help either engage or re-engage the family into their child attending school.

All other systems currently in operation, for recording daily attendance, should continue throughout these exceptional times.

If schools are unable to make contact with families, and all available avenues have been exhausted (telephone calls, home visits, checks with known sibling schools and emergency contact numbers etc), schools should refer the matter to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service, as per the locally agreed protocols for Children Missing in Education.

Safe learning environment

It is extremely important that we maintain a safe learning environment for children attending school, especially as there will undoubtedly be a mixture of different age groups, vulnerabilities and need. Therefore, we must ensure that thorough risk assessments are completed for areas in use, plus emergency evacuation/lockdown procedures are well known to all staff and pupils.

If schools are receiving assistance from new volunteers, then they **must** still be vetted accordingly and complete an induction process. As a minimum, volunteers **must** receive a copy of the child protection, interim child protection policy, staff code of conduct, Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1), the E-Safety/Acceptable User policy and Health & Safety policy. For any new staff starters joining the school during this period, all the safer recruitment checks must be undertaken and a comprehensive induction process provided, as per the Trust's agreed Induction policy.

First Aid arrangements

All schools must use their best endeavours and ensure that a Paediatric First Aid (PFA) trained member of staff on-site. If this is not possible, then advice needs to be sought from either the CEO or a senior member of central team to determine the best course of action, which may include, schools running with a first aider on-site instead of a paediatric one, for a limited number of days. The schools PFA arrangements will be outlined in individual school's risk assessments, as per DfE Planning guide for early years and childcare settings, May 2020.

Staffing Ratios

Where possible it is desirable to ensure that 2 members of staff are supervising each group of pupils within classrooms. If this is not possible, then a minimum of one member of staff will be allocated to each group. Should this need emerge, then schools will need to ensure that sufficient provision is in place to support with any injury, accident, behaviour/emotional distress or if a child develops symptoms of the virus and needs isolating.

What to do if you have concerns about another member of staff/volunteer, or unsafe safeguarding practice within your school?

Current working conditions are very different to the norm, and daily school life is not simple. It is, therefore, important that during these challenging times public trust and confidence continues to be upheld and all actions taken are in the best interest of children and young people. However, if staff have any concerns about another member of staff/volunteer's conduct or behaviour towards a child or children, or they are worried about unsafe practice, this must be reported to either the DSL, Deputy DSL or Senior Leader. If staff do not feel comfortable using internal reporting systems then they must contact the Trust's Safeguarding Lead or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO tel: 01482 613372), or alternatively the NSPCC Whistle Blowing helpline tel: 0800 028 0285 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Never rely on anyone else to make a report.

Online Safety

It is extremely important that the school's internet continues to be monitored regularly and that filtering systems are robust, in order to protect children whilst on-site.

If you become aware of an e-safety concern, please seek immediate assistance from the school's IT technician/provider or alternatively from the DSL and/or Senior Leader. Senior leaders should have the contact details for their IT provider, in the event of the usual personnel being unavailable.

For pupils who are accessing remote learning, there needs to be a clear mechanism in place for pupils to report back to the school if there are any concerns. Therefore, if you are setting activities for pupils to complete online then please ensure you include any internal reporting system, plus details of other national organisations where they can seek support (eg Childline, CEOP, UK Safer Internet Centre).

The existing E-Safety and Acceptable User policy and Staff Code of Conduct is still very much applicable during this period. If schools choose to communicate with pupils over the coming weeks/months via Skype, Facetime, Zoom, Teams etc then it is important that this is only carried out with the approval of the Headteacher or Senior Leader. If approval is granted then the following conditions **must** be applied when making contact with families when safeguarding is a concern.

- *Inform the Headteacher or SLT who you intend to contact and why*
- *Only make contact during school hours using equipment and Internet services provided by the school*
- *Speak to the parent/carer in the first instance to arrange a convenient time to contact the child*
- *Before speaking to the child, have a discussion with the parent/carer and ask that they remain in the room during the contact with the child*

- *Staff are forbidden from communicating/making contact or responding to contact with pupils outside of the purposes of work*
- *Staff must not give out any personal details relating to themselves, the pupil or any other pupil*
- *The school's Acceptable Use Policy must be followed*
- *Staff must ensure that use of technologies does not bring the school into disrepute*
- *Record the contact of the conversation and duration on CPOMS.*

Peer on peer abuse

As the majority of schools are operating on a much smaller basis, staff supervision will be greater. However, staff must remain vigilant to any signs of peer on peer abuse, especially if younger children are engaging with the older population throughout the day. If staff have concerns that any child is being targeted by another young person, they must report this without delay to the DSL, Deputy DSL or Senior Leader, and if necessary, seek advice from Children's Social Care and/or the police.

Mental Health

Pupils and staff mental wellbeing may have been severely affected during the Coronavirus outbreak due to various reasons.

In times of uncertainty, it is vital that we support, encourage and guide one another, plus look out and care for everyone in our school community.

Each school has dedicated staff to support children, and staff, if they needed.

As children and staff return to our settings, it is important that they are provided the opportunity to talk openly about how they feel, or are feeling as we adjust, plus offer strategies of how to manage any worries or anxieties.

The Department for Education (DfE) have suggested additional ways of how we can support mental wellbeing, which include:

- opportunities for children to talk about their experiences of the past few weeks
- opportunities for one-to-one conversations with trusted adults where this may be supportive
- some re-focused lessons on relevant topics, for example, mental wellbeing or staying safe
- pastoral activity, such as positive opportunities to renew and develop friendships and peer groups
- other enriching developmental activities

If staff have concerns for the wellbeing of any child, they must inform either the school Emotional Wellbeing Officer, or Designated Safeguarding Lead, if they believe that the child is a significant risk.

Monitoring and review

It is highly likely that these interim procedures will evolve over the coming weeks and months, as new guidance is issued by the DfE and Local Authority. Your designated staff and leaders will update you, as and when needed.

Other related policies

This addendum replaces the previous interim COVID 19 Child Protection policy issued in March 2020. The addendum policy must be used and read in conjunction with policies such as: Anti-Bullying, COVID 19 Behaviour, Bereavement, Health and Safety, Intimate Care, Physical Intervention, Special Educational Needs, plus any associated risk assessments.

Contact details

Key Staff	Name	Telephone Number	Email
Headteacher			
Designated Safeguarding Lead			
SEN Co			
Senior Leader (1)			
Senior Leader (2)			
Trust Safeguarding Lead	Suzanne Wilson	07702 511877	swilson@hcat.org.uk
EHaSH		01482 448879	
LADO	Jacquie Edhouse	01482 613372	Jacquie.edhouse@hullcc.gov.uk
LA Education Officer for Safeguarding	Phillip Painter	01482 614552	Phillip.painter@hullcc.gov.uk