Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Ash Grove Academy

Contents

Important contacts <mark>Make sure contact details are not personal e-mails or phone numbers</mark>

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Lisa Finnegan	principal@ashgrove.cheshire.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Judith Ceuppens Sally Veale Amanda Thompson Katy Ghorbanian	jceuppens@ashgrove.cheshire.sch.uk sveale@ashgrove.cheshire.sch.uk athompson@ashgrove.cheshire.sch.uk kghorbanian@ashgrove.cheshire.sch.uk
Other contactable DSL(s) and/or deputy DSL(s):		
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site		
Designated teacher for cared for and previously cared for children		
Principal		
Trust CEO for reporting concerns relating to the principal	Kevin Simpson	ceo@aet.cheshire.sch.uk
Deputy Trust CEO for reporting concerns relating to the principal in the CEO's absence	Helen Scott	hscott@aet.cheshire.sch.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)		
Safeguarding Trustee	Chris Dean	cdean@aet.cheshire.sch.uk

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Chair of LAC	Katie Siddall	chair@ashgrove.cheshire.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 Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership and local authority (LA) Cheshire East. 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 guidance.

The information in this addendum is under constant review and it will be updated to reflect changes to government guidance as it is released.

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 is 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 will contact the DSL or Deputy DSLs by telephone in the first instance and report the concern. Staff will then record the concern on CPOMS in accordance with usual practice.

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 telephone or email

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.

During partial school closure, the DSL and their deputies are additionally responsible for:

- Amending this addendum in line with the continual changes to education policy released by the DfE and communicating all changes to staff and volunteers.
- Keeping up-to-date with the local safeguarding partners' information and implementing their updates and guidance.
- Continue to engage with social workers and attend multi-agency meeting, which can be done remotely.
- Identifying vulnerable children and communicating additional safeguarding provisions to pupils and their families.
- Ensuring if school's pupils are attending another school (as part of the hub approach) they communicate the pupil's required support and additional needs with the other school's DSL.
- Working with the Virtual School Headteacher and wider LA to protect vulnerable children.
- Ensuring staff are aware of reporting channels for safeguarding concerns.
- Sharing their contact information with the school community.
- Ensuring there is a consistent approach to safeguarding children throughout the coronavirus pandemic.
- Providing pupils with clear communication channels so they can report any concerns they have, including reports of peer-on-peer abuse.
- Ensuring any pupil who is not formally considered as vulnerable, but who may still be vulnerable, has access to school where required.
- Providing all volunteers and volunteer staff with copies of this policy.
- Adhering to AET safer recruitment policy and procedures, including carrying out risk assessments on new volunteers.
- Seeking written assurances from employers of volunteer staff, to ensure they have up-to-date safeguarding training and are safe to work with children.
- Sharing their time and resources with other schools, where necessary.
- Reporting back to the Trust Safeguarding lead, Board of Trustees and LAC on all safeguarding concerns experienced during the school closure.
- Continue to report safeguarding to the trustees using the trust's Annual Safeguarding Data Return.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be Lisa Finnegan. You can contact them by email or telephone.

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

5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, and with virtual school headteacher 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 about reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need

6. Attendance and attendance monitoring

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 increased risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to school, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, the school or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

A record of these discussions and outcomes will be recorded on the child's safeguarding file.

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 telephone and 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. This form will be submitted by 12:00p.m. each weekday and is completed by Lisa Finnegan.

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. This information is held and accessed centrally through Arbor and Cpoms.

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 and perpetrators of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately.

Reports made regarding peer-on-peer abuse will be risk assessed by the DSL on a case-by-case basis and, where required, investigated immediately and reported to the relevant authority, e.g. the police or Children's Social Care Services where required.

Ash Grove have created a Safeguarding and Wellbeing section of the school website, which contains all relevant safeguarding guidance and support during the time of school closure and includes links to ChildLine.. The pastoral team are also on call to signpost all families to further agencies and avenues of support. Phone calls to all of our vulnerable families are being made 2 or 3 times per week and liaison with social care is daily.

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. Concerns relating to a member of staff or volunteer should be referred directly to the principal. Concerns relating to the principal should be referred directly to the trust's CEO or deputy CEO in their absence.

The trust's HR Manager will support investigations which will be carried out using online or telephone communication.

We will consult with the trust's HR Manager who will 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 consult with the trust's HR Manager who will 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.

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

> How we will record all contact made on the child's electronic safeguarding file.

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant and will review them every week. If we can't make contact, we will contact Jen Atkinson (Head of CIN/CP Macclesfield), Checs or the Police.

10.2 Safeguarding all children

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

We are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children when in school. We will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend. The principal will ensure appropriate staff are on site and staff pupil ratios are appropriate to maximise safety.

School will refer to the Government guidance for education on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow advice from Public health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID 19.

Where the school has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as the DSL or first aiders – they will discuss it immediately with their trust hub leader.

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).

The DSL will ensure every pupil has been given information on how they can talk to them about any safeguarding concern they may have. This has been done through our regular Keeping Safe Curriculum.

Pupils are provided with online safety information by their teacher.

Pupils will be directed to practical online support, such as ChildLine, where they feel unsafe and require support outside of school. This has been done through curriculum provision, posters, twitter and website links.

Parents are provided with the contact details of the DSL, so they can report any concerns they have.

11. Online safety and security

11.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

Any online queries which require the ICT technician will be addressed over the phone or online as much as possible – face-to-face contact is kept to a minimum.

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is to seek IT support from other schools within the multi-academy trust.

All online programmes and platforms used will be checked by the school's DSL and trust DPO to ensure they are reputable, safe for children to use and GDPR compliant.

Staff will adhere to the AET Staff Code of Conduct and Safer Recruitment Consortium's Safer Working Practice Guidance at all times when delivering education online.

Staff will report concerns over a pupil's safety online to the DSL.

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing AET Staff Code of Conduct and AET Technology acceptable use agreement.

The DfE is providing separate guidance on providing education remotely. When this is published the school will ensure it follows the guidance given to review and develop its remote learning strategy.

The DSL will consult 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 to develop a whole school strategy for planning and delivering safe online lessons and/or activities. The DSL will ensure all staff responsible for remote learning are aware of and follow the school's agreed approach to online learning.

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.

Parents are given a list of all websites their child will be accessing and any information of online sessions with staff their child will be participating in during partial school closure.

11.3 Working with parents and carers

Through our regular communications with parents and carers and our website 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

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 through our school website provision.

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 AET Safer Recruitment, DBS and Single Central Record policies, 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 complete the AET Volunteer 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.

All safer recruitment checks must be recorded on the school's AET SCR spreadsheet and the most up-to-date spreadsheet saved to the Access Collaborate site named The Aspire Educational Trust Single Central Record.

13.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools (if applicable)

We will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our school and seek written assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks. The safeguarding team will complete these risk assessments.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

Details of staff 'on loan' should be entered onto the agency and trainees tab of the school's single central record and the written assurances kept on file in the school's safeguarding files.

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 using the AET Induction Checklist

> 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 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.

A staffing rota is in place and included names staff present in the setting on each day. Lisa Finnegan will coordinate this.

14. Children attending other settings (if applicable)

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 MAT overarching policy addendum will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 4 weeks by the Trust's Safeguarding Lead. At every review, it will be approved by the Board of Trustees using Compliance Manager. Once the overarching policy is approved each school will be responsible for ensuring it is localised to reflect their setting's procedures.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following MAT, MAT localised and local policies and procedures:

> Safeguarding and child protection

> AET Staff code of conduct

> Allegations of abuse against staff

> Technology acceptable use agreement for staff and volunteers

> Data protection policy

- E-safety/Online safety
- Health and safety
- Online safety policy
- Uncollected children
- Single Central Record
- DBS
- Safer recruitment
- Whistleblowing
- First Aid
- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Positive handling and restraint