

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

St Mary's CE Primary School



Approved by: Governors, **Date:**
Last reviewed on: 25.9.20
Next review due by: In line with main policy or any significant changes

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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	P Hartley	head@stmaryscecrompton.oldham.sch.uk 0161 770 8309 07905 144588
Deputy DSL	S Day	s.day@stmaryscecrompton.oldham.sch.uk 0161 770 8309 07890 751794
Deputy DSL	J Hardman	j.hardman@stmaryscecrompton.oldham.sch.uk 0161 770 8309 07778 652846
Other contactable DSL(s) and/or deputy DSL(s): S Healey at Buckstones Primary School	S Healey	s.healey@buckstones.oldham.sch.uk/ 0161 770 5847 0797 3912907
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	S Corless S Ernest	s.corless@stmaryscecrompton.oldham.sch.uk s.ernest@stmaryscecrompton.oldham.sch.uk 0161 770 8309
Headteacher	P Hartley	head@stmaryscecrompton.oldham.sch.uk 0161 770 8309 07905 144588
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Colette Morris	Colette.morris@oldham.gov.uk 07583 101863
Chair of governors	G Benson	grahame.benson@gmail.com 07796 330023

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 Oldham Council • Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) • Greater Manchester Police.

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:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from

continued full-time attendance, this might include:

- ❖ children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
- ❖ adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
- ❖ those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
- ❖ those living in temporary accommodation
- ❖ those who are young carers
- ❖ those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
- ❖ care leavers
- ❖ others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health.

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. They should continue to report using the usual procedures.

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: P Hartley 07905 144588 / S Day 07890 751794 / J Hardman 07778 652846

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be Mrs S Ernest or Mrs S Corless.

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 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

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 telephone by 10:00am
- 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. This has been checked on the weekly calls made to parents.

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.

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.

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. The children we will continue to support who aren't vulnerable but we have concerns about are:

- Children who have been previously known to social care or early help
- SEND children.

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

All our pupils who are learning at home will be invited to 2 Teams sessions per week. Consent from parents has been gained before the pupils join these meetings.

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 – twice a week
- Which staff member(s) will make contact – class teacher and/or their teaching assistant.
- How they will make contact – telephone.

For our other 'vulnerable' children, including those pupils on our SEN register where:

- They won't be attending school or
- They would usually attend but have to self-isolate

These plans set out:

- How often the school will make contact – once a week
- Which staff member(s) will make contact – class teacher and/or their teaching assistant.
- How they will make contact – telephone.

All contact is recorded

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).

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

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

Fingertips Solutions will support school throughout the period and are available to contact throughout the day.

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is to contact the LA IT team.

11.2 Outside school

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
- › Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

We achieve this through our website, letters and tweets.

12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. We have set up a section on the website with support and links for children's emotional health and well-being. We are also hosting 2 teams meetings where the children can see each other and so the children can feel connected.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time. These have been posted on our website.

The Government have set expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, however 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.

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. The School Business Manager will complete the checks.

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 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 signing in device to log:

- Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including staff 'on loan'

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 each month by the DSL. At every review, it will be approved by the Lead Safeguarding Governor and Chair of Governors

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff code of conduct/ Safer Working Practices
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy