

# Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Whipperley Infant Academy and Farley Junior School



Ratified by Governing bodies of Whipperley Infant Academy and Farley Juniors

APRIL 2020

Review date

APRIL 2021

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## **1. Scope and definitions**

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from Luton Local Authority

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, both for children still attending school and those at home.

A member of the senior leadership team from (Farley and/or Whipperley) and family worker team (Farley and/or Whipperley) are available 5 days a week at Whipperley Infant Academy Monday to Friday from 8am to 3.30pm 01582 725868. All calls to Farley Junior school are on divert to Whipperley Infant Academy. Out of hours Amelia can be contacted on 07908831097 and April Hurp, Jodi McCallum and Emma Thomas-Sloley are also available on their mobile numbers.

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. Family workers and SLT are coordinating responses to social care.

#### 4: DSL and Deputy DSL

DSL MEMBERS OF STAFF
AMELIA WHITEHOUSE
APRIL HURP
NICOLA O'CALLAGHAN
JODI MCCALLUM
EMMA THOMAS SLOLEY
ALEFA KHANOM
DAWN GROH

Please note that at least two DSL will be on site Monday to Friday. Amelia, Nicola, Jodi and April have access to CPOMS for both Whipperley and Farley.

#### 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 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 call in the first instance and a home visit following social distancing guidelines.

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. We will speak to parents at drop off and update the school systems.

## **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 – about both children attending school and those at home.

## **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 – whether those concerns are about staff working on site or remotely.

Any concerns should be reported to Amelia Whitehouse – 07908831097. Any concerns about Amelia Whitehouse should be reported to the Chair of governors – contact details can be accessed by phoning the Whipperley office and ask for details.

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](mailto: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. Staff should log all contact on CPOMS and if they have any concerns about a child should phone Whipperley and discuss with the DSL on site 01582 725868

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10 below.

## **10. 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

All vulnerable families have been highlighted by the safeguarding teams and the level of contact that staff should be making. All telephone contact is recorded on CPOMS and also unsuccessful attempts. If a family can not be contacted within a 7 day period then on school staff will make a home visit adhering to social distancing rules. If the family are still not available and we can't make contact the police and social care will be alerted.

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them monthly.

## **11. 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 line with the procedures set out in section 3 above

For children at home, they 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

Children are likely to be spending more time online during this period – see section 12 below for our approach to online safety both in and outside school.

See section 13 below for information on how we will support pupils' mental health.

## **12. Online safety**

### **12.1 In school**

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

IT staff are available to support staff and families. David Archer provides onsite support every Monday at Whipperley Infant Academy.

### **12.2 Outside school**

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy, code of conduct and IT acceptable use policy.

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.

### **13.3 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

During telephone contact we will re iterate the online safety messages.

## **13. 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.

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.

Families who need support will be able to access a telephone consultation with our art therapist.

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

### **14.1 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 have taken the decision that we will not be using volunteers at this present time as we have enough staff to cover the needs of the children and families.

### **14.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools**

We currently working with staff from Farley Junior School and Whipperley Infant Academy. As the schools had already been working closely together information on the SCR is already shared between the two schools. If we have staff from any neighbouring schools we will ensure that DBS details are confirmed and we will undertake a risk assessment.

### **14.3 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

#### **14.4 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.

All staff will sign into the registration screen when they enter school and leave.