



# **Child Protection and Safeguarding:**

**COVID-19 addendum  
22/01/2021**

This addendum of Highfields Academy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:-

- Important Contacts
- Scope and Definitions
- Reporting Concerns
- DSL (and deputy) arrangements
- Working with other agencies
- Monitoring attendance
- Peer on peer abuse
- Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer
- Contact plans
- Safeguarding all children
- Online safety
- Mental health
- Staff and volunteer recruitment
- Safeguarding induction and training
- Monitoring arrangements

## Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Simon Dyson	head@highfieldsnantwich.cheshire.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Adam Strefford	deputy@highfieldsnantwich.cheshire.sch.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)		01606 288934
Chair of Start Academy Trust Board	John Mann	j.mann@highfieldsnantwich.cheshire.sch.uk
Chair of Local Advisory Board	Sarah Matthews	chair@highfieldsnantwich.cheshire.sch.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Jennifer Aspinall	j.aspinall@highfieldsnantwich.cheshire.sch.uk

### 1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies from the start of the autumn term 2020.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of Covid-19, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

This addendum is subject to change, in response to any new or updated guidance the government may publish. We will keep it under review as set out in section 15 below.

In this addendum, where we refer to measures to protect pupils who are at home, this means those who are learning at home for reasons to do with Covid-19 – for example, due to clinical and/or public health advice, such as if there's a local lockdown or if they need to self-isolate.

In this addendum, where we refer to vulnerable children, this means those who:

- Are assessed as being in need, including children:
  - With a child protection plan
  - With a child in need plan
  - Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- Have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or LAs, for example those who are:
  - On the edge of receiving support from children's social care services
  - Adopted
  - Living in temporary accommodation
  - Young carers

- Considered vulnerable by the school and/or LA

## 2. Core safeguarding principles

We will follow the statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2020 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/912592/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_Sep\\_2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/912592/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_Sep_2020.pdf)

We will always have regard for these important safeguarding principles:

- › The best interests of children must come first
- › If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should 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 at school and those at home.

Staff must report any concerns by using CPOMS as the recording method.

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 key contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be on site, they can be contacted remotely.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding.

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with our 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, with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and with any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners, to help keep children safe.

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**

We will resume taking our attendance register. We will also follow [guidance](#) from the Department for Education on how to record attendance and what data to submit.

All pupils of compulsory school age will be expected to attend school unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is unable to attend because of clinical and/or public health advice, is absent for a necessary religious observance).

Where any child we expect to attend school doesn't attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, through a phone call. If we are unable to make contact after 3 days (or sooner if we have concerns) then we will make contact with the Education Welfare Officer.
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

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.

## **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, supply teacher 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/supply teachers/volunteers working on site or remotely – following The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Whistleblowing policy.

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. Contact plans**

We have contact plans for children with a social worker, and other children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where the child is at home.

Each child has an individual plan, which sets out :

- How often the school will make contact – this will be at least once a week
- Which staff member(s) will make contact
- How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them as necessary. If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care and together agree a course of action.

For our vulnerable children who may not have an allocated social worker, we will follow the same steps as above regarding contact. In the event that we were unable to make contact and had concerns regarding the children's welfare then a referral to Checs will be made.

## **10. 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.

### **10.1 Children returning to school**

The safeguarding lead 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 children return.

The Senior Leadership Team will support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as children return to school.

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

### **10.2 Children at home**

The school will maintain contact with children who are at home. 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. If absolutely 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

## **11. Online safety**

### **11.1 In school**

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

### **11.2 Outside school**

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing policies (code of conduct, safeguarding policy etc)

We continue to use Microsoft Teams (KS2) and Tapestry (Foundation and KS1) to set work and receive work from pupils/parents. This is monitored by the class teacher daily and any issues arising from this, the teachers are fully aware of DSL reporting policies.

School will ensure that parents and carers are aware of the importance of children being safe online.

The following may be of use to parents and carers in ensuring that the children are safe whilst online at home:

- Internet matters - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online [www.internetmatters.org/](http://www.internetmatters.org/)
- Net-aware - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC [www.net-aware.org.uk](http://www.net-aware.org.uk)
- Think u know - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online <http://www.highfieldsacademytrust.co.uk/page/ceop-think-you-know-website-staying-safe-online/2515>
- UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carers [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)
- Childnet - offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support <https://www.childnet.com/>

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.

## **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/carers and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time. These are available on the school website in the Covid-19 section.

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.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to mental health concerns in children who are at home, and act on these immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum

## **13. Staff and volunteer recruitment**

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that staff 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.

When carrying out DBS checks and right to work checks, we will follow the latest guidance from the DBS, Home Office and Immigration Enforcement as appropriate (for example, with regards to the process for verifying documents). We will inform candidates about the intended process as soon as reasonably practicable.

#### **14. 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 in line with the expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

#### **15. Monitoring arrangements**

At the present time things continue to change and evolve daily and in the coming days advice from Central Government may change again. We will continue to keep this policy under regular review and consult closely with the local authority regarding these arrangements to ensure they continue to provide an effective and helpful response for children and families in our school.