

# Appendix to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Safeguarding Policy in effect during the COVID-19 pandemic

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## **Version Control**

<b><u>Ver.</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Comment</u></b>
1	April 2020	Initial appendix
2	December 2020	Update to reflect current position.

This policy will be subject to ongoing review and may be amended prior to the scheduled date of the next review in order to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance, or best practice (where appropriate).

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## 1. Introduction

This is to be read in conjunction with the main policy and incorporates guidance published by the Department of Education which is constantly reviewed and published on their website.

There are a number of scenarios where this guidance will be relevant. For example, it is expected that a number of pupils may be unable to attend school as they may have symptoms of COVID 19 or may be self-isolating as they may have had contact with someone who has been tested positive, or a family member is displaying symptoms. A small minority of pupils may not be able to attend as they have been identified as extremely critically vulnerable. It may also be necessary for schools to partially close due to a confirmed case or if the school does not have the capacity to remain fully open due to staff absence. Finally, there may be a possibility that whole schools will have to close as a result of the pandemic.

Schools are expected to provide remote learning for all pupils unable to attend school due to the pandemic. It is, therefore, essential that robust safeguarding procedures are in place. This guidance will be reviewed regularly by the safeguarding hub. Further guidance can be found in the Trust's reopening strategy and risk assessments. All schools will also have a COVID secure implementation plan.

## 2. The Role of the DSL

As far as possible as long as there are pupils in school there should be at least one DSL on site. There may be rare occasions when this is not possible particularly if all DSLs are self-isolating. If this is the case, then a DSL must be available to contact immediately by telephone or video conference. If it is not possible for a DSL to be on site, then another Senior Leader may also fulfil this role. The senior leader must be able to contact a DSL at short notice. If a DSL is not going to be on site for more than a short period, then the school should consult with the Safeguarding Hub to see if a DSL from another school can be available. Schools should consider measures where DSLs in a school have little physical contact to avoid two or more DSLs coming into contact with a COVID-19 carrier at the same time therefore meaning both having to self-isolate at the same time. Schools should consider whether any additional DSLs can be trained in the event of staff shortage.

Those who are working from home also need to know who to contact in the event of a safeguarding concern. This may be a DSL at school or one working from home. Schools should ensure they have published this information and flow charts are amended accordingly. DSLs will need to keep in regular contact with families to review welfare information and should be doing all they reasonably can to ask parents and carers to advise them of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of.

### **3. Supporting Children Returning to School following shielding, sickness or self-isolation**

Staff and volunteers will need to be alert that they may identify new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person following an absence from school. As stated above schools will need to inform staff about procedures for reporting any new safeguarding concerns that come to light. Schools should be particularly alert to peer on peer abuse - given the different circumstances schools are operating in. Schools will need to review any updated advice received from the local safeguarding partners. DSLs (or deputies) should be leading the school's input into the local arrangements.

Schools also need to keep abreast of any updated advice received from local authorities regarding children with education, health and care (EHCP) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need.

### **4. Supporting Children and Young People at Risk who are not in school due to the pandemic**

DSLs and school leaders will review risk assessments to identify those at risk. The following categories will be used to risk assess pupils;

- Purple – pupils on a child protection plan, or those in significant danger of being made subject to a child protection plan
- Red - those pupils where there are serious concerns and they may move to the purple category without significant intervention. These may include pupils where families have limited capacity to safeguard their children, particularly during an extended period of school closure. This category may also include those Looked After by the Local Authority.

- Orange – these may be pupils on Children in Need Plans and have an allocated social worker. This will also include LAC children who have such a high package of care that the risks are only moderate.
- Green – those pupils where there are minimal concerns; the majority of pupils will be in this category.

The school will keep in regular contact with all pupils. For pupils in the green category this would normally be carried out by the child's class team through the setting and monitoring of work; however, schools will have their own arrangements for this. Pupils rated as purple need to be contacted daily. For pupils rated as red the DSL should keep in regular telephone contact at least twice a week with the pupil's family. They should also keep in regular contact with the pupil's social work to ensure the pupil is safe and supported. For those rated as orange a member of the school's safeguarding team, family support worker (in schools that employ them) or another member of staff should make weekly contact with the pupil's home. Regular contact should also be made with the child's social worker. Schools need to keep logs of all contact.

Senior Leadership Teams and DSLs will discuss pupils at risk regularly. Any concerns should be escalated accordingly. Staff who are unable to contact a child's family must inform the DSL who will make every attempt possible to contact the family, including emergency contacts held by the school. Advice should be taken from social care if the family cannot be contacted.

## **5. Communicating with Local Authorities**

During periods where pupils are unable to attend school, Heads, DSLs and trust leaders will keep in regular contact with Local Authority Safeguarding Teams, SEND teams and Social Services. Schools need to ensure that there are clear communication channels with Local Authorities to ensure they are up to date with safeguarding advice and able to implement this within their settings. Local Authorities need to be informed of contact details of the DSLs and of the safeguarding leads within the trust.

These categories should be reviewed regularly, and schools must be alert those who may move into a higher or lower category. Social care teams should be notified of each child at risk and should be aware of who to contact when there are concerns.

A check list is attached to this document for schools to use during their regular meetings when discussing children on their risk registers.

## **6. Access to Contact Details**

Schools will need to make adequate provision so that DSLs not in school have access to pupil contact details during school closure. These details need to be kept confidential according to GDPR guidance. Teachers, Therapists and Family Support co-ordinators will also need access to contact details of those families they need to stay in touch with.

## **7. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns for Children and Young People not yet attending school**

DSLs should ensure that all staff have access to the schools' online reporting system. Safeguarding concerns should be logged as normal by school staff and DSLs will need to ensure that automatic notifications are set up so that they are notified immediately a concern is logged. This will include any concerns identified during contact with young people and this should include any peer on peer abuse detected. Contacts for DSLs should be published and available to parents and carers who should also be aware of how to report safeguarding concerns. Any allegations concerning staff should be reported immediately to the DSL or the Head in accordance with the main policy. All allegations should be dealt with in accordance with the Trust's "Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff".

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## **8. Online Safety**

Online learning should be beneficial and should be encouraged, particularly during temporary school closures. However, staff, pupils, parents and carers need to know how to ensure safety when conducting online learning. Staff should follow the reporting procedures described above if they identify any safeguarding concerns while working online.

### **8.1. Video Conferencing**

Staff in the Eden Academy Trust will be carrying out video conferencing during periods when pupils cannot attend school. DSLs may also be using video conferencing to check on pupil welfare. There are numerous platforms available; Skype, Microsoft Teams, Gsuite and Zoom. If video conferencing is conducted

outside of systems schools subscribe to, then staff need to ensure that they sign up using their work email address. Staff should check with DSLs or the Senior Leadership teams that online platforms employed are safe to use.

Staff should not conduct online conferencing on a one to one basis. This can be avoided by asking parents to be present, involving another member of staff in the conference, or broadcasting to a group rather than an individual. Consent must be sought from parents / carers if you are broadcasting to a group of pupils. This can be gained by asking parents to send consent by email or written form or by sending them a link to a video conference with a statement to say that they give consent by joining the conference. All members of staff taking part in the conference call should introduce themselves.

While conducting online conferencing staff should be suitably dressed. If they are broadcasting from home they should be in an appropriate place in their home (e.g. not in the bathroom). Members of their household should not join in with the conference call and should be advised of appropriate conduct while the broadcast is taking place. (e.g. wearing appropriate clothing and not using offensive language). All parties on a conference call should be reminded of confidentiality and family members should not be present in the room when conversations are confidential.

Always keep a log of the conference using the appropriate recording systems.

## **8.2. Contacting Families by phone**

If staff are calling families while working from home and are using a personal phone, they should withhold their number. Logs should be recorded of all conversations. If you are conducting the phone call with another member of staff, please let parents know who else is on the call and ensure you have their consent to continue.

## **8.3. Video Sharing and Live Streaming**

These includes platforms such as YouTube or Facebook. Schools should set up school wide pages for Facebook and school channels for YouTube.

Administrators and moderators should use accounts associated with their professional email address. Social networking groups should be private and by invitation only. Members need to be hidden. When sharing videos, ensure backgrounds and clothing are appropriate. Many online systems have age limits

where children under a certain age cannot sign up. When a sign up is necessary, advise parents to do this and that they should ensure their children are supervised.

## **9. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff**

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. Schools or Central services recruiting new staff should continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for the Trust, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of KCSIE. In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

Where schools and colleges are utilising volunteers, they should continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances should a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

New staff should continue to be provided with safeguarding induction.

Staff working with pupils online should be subject to the same checks as those working face to face.

Schools and colleges must continue to follow their legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

Schools should continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral.

Schools and colleges must continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

## **10. Temporary Staff**

In the event the school has to recruit temporary staff or volunteers, schools will need to ensure the relevant checks have been carried that adequate safeguarding training has been provided. Safeguarding induction should also be provided for all temporary staff.

## **11. Mental health**

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. This will be especially the case for young people with SEND. Teachers should be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home or as they are returning to school. There should be support in each school for young people with mental health difficulties and schools should be aware of how to refer to mental health services.

## **12. Safeguarding Advice**

DSLs who need specialist advice can contact Andrew Sanders or Lisa Hatcher by email at any time.

