COVID-19 ADDENDUM TO THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Version 2.0	Date January 2021

Safeguarding priority

During these challenging times the safeguarding of all children at our school – whether they are currently at home or in attendance – continues to be our priority. The following fundamental safeguarding principles remain the same:

- the best interests of children continue to come first

- if anyone in our school has a safeguarding concern, they will act immediately

- a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL will always be available

- no unsuitable people will be allowed to gain access to children

- children should continue to be protected when they are online.

Current school position

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our local safeguarding partners and local authority (LA).

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance 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 and care leavers

- Children on the edge of receiving support

> Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

> Those who are young careers

> Those living in temporary accommodation

> Those at risk of being NEET

> Those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education due to a lack of equipment

> Others at the provider and local authorities discretion

Currently we are open as a standalone establishment to support any pupils meeting the criteria above.

Safeguarding partners' advice

We continue to work closely with our three safeguarding partners, and we will ensure this annex is consistent with their advice. This will include expectations for supporting 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. The current advice is below.

We have had feedback from schools with regard to the safeguarding guidance and the frequency of contact necessary with vulnerable children. We are now reviewing the guidance in response to this and in the context of the developing whole partnership offer, which is currently being finalised. This should allow us to issue amended guidance next week after further consultation with schools. Please use the daily phone calls with our school advisor to let us have your views and please bear with us in what is a rapidly shifting situation.

In the meantime we understand that not all schools can facilitate daily contact and advise that the school should use their own professional judgement in determining the frequency of their contact with all vulnerable children, known and unknown to services, where it is known they will not be attending and non-attendance has been agreed with parents/agencies or parents declined the place for family medical reasons. This may require continued daily contact, but should as a minimum be on a weekly basis. This will enable schools to provide differentiated support based on their capacity and liaise with social care and early help where appropriate.

Collection of guidance for educational settings on GOV.UK
All of the Department for Education's coronavirus guidance for educational settings can now be found in one place on GOV.UK at:
> *https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings*

Our main guidance for schools, the 'school closures guidance', will be regularly kept up-to-date. Any new advice for schools on specific issues, such as food, exams or safeguarding, will be linked from it:
> *https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures*

Handwashing advice
The most important thing individuals can do to protect themselves is to wash their hands more often, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and water. Public Health England recommends that in addition to handwashing before eating, and after coughing and sneezing, everyone should also wash hands after using toilets and whenever you return home.

The latest guidance and video on hand washing can be found here:
> *https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public*

Department for Education coronavirus helpline
The Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about COVID-19 relating to education and children's social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline as follows:
Phone: 0800 046 8687
Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday), 10am to 4pm (Saturday to Sunday)

What are local authorities responsible for?
Local authorities are responsible for coordinating a response to the new arrangements. Working with education settings (including academies and the independent sector), they should use the critical worker list and the definition of vulnerable children to support schools and trusts to ensure that there is sufficiency of places for children of critical workers and vulnerable children.

Local authorities are also responsible for monitoring demand and capacity. This may involve working with schools to provide places in alternative settings if necessary, and supporting residential special schools, alternative provision and other special settings to remain open, wherever possible. When you are contacted by an LA Officer for an update with regard to current numbers of children and staff please cooperate; we realise how busy you are but we will need this vital information on a daily basis.
They are also responsible for supporting trusts and schools to assess the risks for children and young people whose education, health and care (EHC) plans they maintain and ensuring those children are safely cared for whether at school/college or at home.

We have allocated key points of contact for each locality. These advisers will be your initial point of contact to discuss school place planning and rationalisation of provision.

In addition and given the turbulence and potential impact on mental wellbeing, we have also designated Senior Educational Psychologists to each of the clusters. They will work alongside the professionals in the clusters as part of our overall approach to supporting children, families and schools.

Educational Psychologists continue to link with their allocated schools, offering:
- *Telephone consultations with parents/ carers and school staff in relation to children and young people already known to the EPs;*
- *Liaison/ guidance to school staff on managing anxiety relating to the current pandemic;*
- *Consultation support to consider organisational arrangements being made in relation to vulnerable children.*
- *Schools can contact their usual allocated EP if they have any queries*
- *Statutory work remains ongoing*

Wakefield Central & North West
Locality Service Manager - *Esther Beresford (eberesford@wakefield.gov.uk)*
Children First Hub Manager - *Jen Smith (jennifersmith@wakefield.gov.uk)*
School Improvement Advisor - *Simon Ashby (simonashby@wakefield.gv.uk)*
Education Psychologist - *Dr Majid Khoshkhoo (mkhoshkhoo@wakefield.gov.uk)*
Dr Rachel Jamieson (rjamieson@wakefield.gov.uk

South West
Locality Service Manager - *Esther Beresford (eberesford@wakefield.gov.uk)*
Children First Hub Manager - *Jen Smith (jennifersmith@wakefield.gov.uk)*
School Improvement Advisor - *Rachel Redfearn (rredfearn@wakefield.gov.uk)*
Education Psychologist - *Dr Majid Khoshkhoo (mkhoshkhoo@wakefield.gov.uk)*
Dr Rachel Jamieson (rjamieson@wakefield.gov.uk)

Normanton & Featherstone
Locality Service Manager - *Jenny Smith (jsmith@wakefield.gov.uk)*
Children First Hub Manager - *Helen Challenger (hchallenger@wakefield.gov.uk)*
School Improvement Advisor - *Sarah Wright (sawright@wakefield.gov.uk)*
Educational Psychologist - *Dr Angela Wright (angelawright@wakefield.gov.uk)*

South East
Locality Service Manager - *Jenny Smith (jsmith@wakefield.gov.uk)*
Children First Hub Manager - *Helen Challenger (hchallenger@wakefield.gov.uk)*
School Improvement Advisor - *Julie Mills (jmills@wakefield.gov.uk)*
Educational Psychologist - *Dr Angela Wright (angelawright@wakefield.gov.uk)*

Castleford & Airedale
Locality Service Manager - *Jane Wood (jewood@wakefield.gov.uk)*
Children First Hub Manager - *Karen Wilkinson (karenwilkinson@wakefield.gov.uk)*
School Improvement Advisor - *Rachel Redfearn (rredfearn@wakefield.gov.uk)*
Educational Psychologist - *Dr David Mann (davidmann@wakefield.gov.uk)*

Pontefract & Knottingley
Locality Service Manager   -   *Jane Wood (jewood@wakefield.gov.uk)*
Children First Hub Manager   -   *Karen Wilkinson (karenwilkinson@wakefield.gov.uk)*
School Improvement Advisor   -   *Sarah Wright (sawright@wakefield.gov.uk)*
Educational Psychologist   -   *Dr David Mann (davidmann@wakefield.gov.uk)*

Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for safeguarding in our school remain in line with our Child Protection Policy.

We will always have a trained DSL on site at all times as well as having:

- have a trained DSL or deputy DSL available by phone and/or online video; or
- ensure we have access to a trained DSL or deputy DSL from another school or college by phone and/or online video.

Where our DSL or a deputy DSL cannot be on site, then in addition to one of the above options we will also ensure a senior leader from the school takes responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for child protection is Mrs Cheryl Louise Eastwood

Contact details: email: ceastwood@airedaleacademy.com Tel: 01977 664555 / 07876 295052

The deputy designated lead is Mrs Claire Holdsworth

Contact details: email: choldsworth@airedaleacademy.com Tel: 01977 664555

Vulnerable children/ Working with Other Agencies

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education or health care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend school, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. Where a parent does not want their child to attend school, and their child is considered vulnerable, we will discuss this with the social worker and explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the local authority and parents to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

We will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

Senior leaders in our school, especially the DSL (and deputies) know who our most vulnerable children are, and they have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

We will continue to work with children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

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

Each child has a 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 – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well

> How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both

If we can't make contact, we will, conduct home visits, contact social workers (where appropriate) or the Police (again where appropriate).

Increased vulnerability or risk

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Staff will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. Where we are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Our staff and volunteers will be aware of the mental health of children and their parents and carers and will contact the DSL or a deputy if they have any concerns.

Attendance

Where a child is expected but does not arrive at school, we will follow our attendance procedure and attempt to contact the family. If contact cannot be made, the DSL or a deputy DSL will be informed.

The DSL or a deputy will attempt to contact the parents through various methods, such as telephone, FaceTime, Skype or by contact a relative in the first instance. If contact cannot be made or if the DSL or a deputy DSL deems it necessary, we will undertake a home visit or ask an

appropriate agency to do so. A risk assessment will be carried out before any such visit is made to ensure staff the family are not put at risk.

Where a vulnerable child does not take up their place, we will notify their social worker.

Reporting concerns about children or staff

The importance of all staff and volunteers acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns remains. Staff and volunteers will continue to follow our Child Protection procedures and advise the DSL of any concerns they have about any child, including those who are not attending school. Both via telephone and by logging any concerns on CEPOM's.

The varied arrangements in place as a result of the COVID-19 measures do not reduce the risks that children may face from staff or volunteers. As such, it remains extremely important that any allegations of abuse made against staff or volunteers attending our school are dealt with thoroughly and efficiently and in accordance with our Allegations Against Staff Policy and 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. 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.

Staff training and induction

For the duration of the COVID-19 measures, our DSL and deputy DSLSs are unlikely to receive their refresher training. In line with government guidance, our trained DSLs and deputy DSLs will be classed as trained even if they cannot receive this training.

All current school staff have received safeguarding training and have read Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education. When new staff are recruited or volunteers join us, they will receive a safeguarding induction in accordance with our Child Protection Policy.

If staff from another setting attend the school site then, in line with government guidance, we will not undertake any additional safeguarding checks if the setting providing those staff confirm that:

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check and, that in the opinion of that setting, nothing resulted from those checks that provided any caused for concern
- there are no safeguarding investigations into the conduct of that individual
- the individual remains suitable to work with children.

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.

When recruiting new staff, we will continue to follow our Safer Recruitment policy.

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.

For volunteers we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to engage in regulated activity.

It is essential from a safeguarding perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers are on our school site and that the appropriate checks have been carried out on those individuals. We will continue to maintain our single central record (SCR) during these measures to ensure we have this awareness.

Peer on peer abuse

We recognise that children can abuse their peers and our staff are clear about the school's policy and procedures regarding peer on peer abuse. All peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. We also recognise that abuse can still occur during a school closure or partial closure and between those children who do attend the school site during these measures.

Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of peer-on-peer abuse and will follow the process set out in our Safeguarding Policy, which can be accessed here.

Online safety

It is likely that children will be using the internet and engaging with social media far more during this time. Our staff are aware of the signs of cyberbullying and other online risks and our filtering and monitoring software remains in use during this time to safeguarding and support children.

Our staff will follow the process for online safety set out in our Safeguarding Policy.

In school we will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place. It staff will be available throughout in and should be contacted in the same way as usual.

Staff who interact with children online will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. If a staff member is concerned about a child, that staff member will follow the approach set out in this annex and report that concern to the DSL or to a deputy DSL. They will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct and IT acceptable use policy.

All live lessons will be recorded for safeguarding purposes and registers will be taken every lesson.

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.

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, where relevant, 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 teaching and resources our school provides
>
> ❯ Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

We will continue to do this through our student wellbeing lessons and also by providing support through the school website or via Facebook.

New children at the school

Children may join our school from other settings. When they do, we will seek from those settings the relevant welfare and child protection information. This is relevant for all children that join us, but it will be especially important where children are vulnerable.

For vulnerable children we will ensure we understand the reasons for the vulnerability and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum we will seek access to that child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible VSH is).

Ideally this will happen before a child arrives but where that is not possible it will happen as soon as reasonably practicable.

Any exchanges of information will ideally happen at DSL (or deputy) level, and likewise between special educational needs co-ordinators/named individual with oversight of SEN provision for children with EHC plans. However, it is acknowledged this may not always be possible. Where this is the case our school senior leaders will take responsibility.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment based on the information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff needs to know the information.

Supporting children not in school

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive additional pastoral support in school, they will ensure that a communication plan is in place to support that child. Details of that plan will be recorded in the safeguarding file for that child. It will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current during these measures.

Mental Health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. For example, contact via phone from members of staff who know the pupils well.

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.

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 normal school procedures.

When children are due to return to school the DSL (or deputy) 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.

Insert if relevant: They will also liaise with the school nurse(s) to gather relevant information about any support provided by school nursing services while children have not been in school.

The DSL (and deputy) will be given time to 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.

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.

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 or video calls

Children attending other settings

Where children are attending another setting (e.g. Alternative provision) 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.

In addition, we will send a member/ member of our own site setting to support the pupils and report back to the DSL any concerns they have.