

Annex to Safeguarding and Child Protection policy 1 June 2020

Safeguarding and Child protection during COVID-19

This Annexe to our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy sets out details of our safeguarding arrangements for:

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1. Context

Schools and colleges are currently operating in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) in a fundamentally different way to *business as usual*. Many children are no longer in a school setting, but from 2 June we are inviting pupils from our classes in Nursery, Reception, Years 1 and 6 (the "Returning Year Groups") as well as the children of key workers to attend school on a half day basis. Full day places will remain available for children who are vulnerable and deemed to require a full time place in school together with children where both parents are critical to the COVID-19 response (key workers). The attendance of these children will be monitored on our Extraordinary Roll (ER).

2. Version control and dissemination

This is version 2 of the annexe. It will be reviewed by our DSL or Student Safeguarding Lead or a member of the SLT on an as needed basis, as circumstances continue to evolve or following updated Department for Education or LSCP advice and guidance. It is available on the school website, and is made available to staff via email.

We will ensure that, on any given day, all staff and volunteers on site are aware of who the onsite DSL is and how staff and volunteers can to speak to her. In addition, the school's DSL will be available from home via email or by mobile phone.

3. Safeguarding priority

During these challenging times the safeguarding of all children at our school – whether they are currently at home, part of our extraordinary roll and attending lessons either full time or part time – 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 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;

4. Current school position

School is open every weekday between 08.45-15:30 hours for children on our extraordinary roll. Children in the Returning Year Groups will be attending school between the hours of either 9 and 12 or 12.30 and 3.30. Some of our ER pupils where only one parent is a key worker will be asked to attend from 9 to 12 from 2 June.

Pupils not attending school are expected to log in to the school's Google Classroom provision to engage with remote learning facilities provided there. Limited resources will continue to be placed on Google Classroom for those year groups who are invited back to school from 2 June to be accessed by those children when they are not in school and for those children whose parents elect not to send them in to school.

Each pupil who is not attending school (either because they are not in a Returning Year Group or because their parents have elected not to send them back to school) has been allocated a member of staff who will telephone them twice a week. The purpose of these calls is to monitor the pupil's mental health and levels of engagement with their distance learning in Google Classroom. It is also an opportunity to talk with parents.

5. Safeguarding partners' advice

We will continue to work closely with Camden's Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CSCP), as well as Islington's equivalent, and to ensure that this annexe is consistent with their advice. This will include meeting expectations for supporting children with education, health and care plans (EHCPs), liaising with the local authority designated officer and children's social care, utilising reporting mechanisms, meeting referral thresholds and dealing with children in need.

The CSCP's Coronavirus page (<https://cscp.org.uk/resources/>) will be updated regularly with the latest advice and guidance as well as details of any changes to local safeguarding and support services. As this is a fast-moving situation, the information contained may change at short notice. Please visit the website and/or follow **@CamdenSCP** <https://twitter.com/CamdenSCP> to keep up-to-date with any new announcements.

6. Roles and responsibilities

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

The DSL or Deputy DSL will be on site. In the event that the DSL or Deputy DSL are not on site, then, in addition to one of the above contact options, we will also ensure a senior teacher from the school takes responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

The DSL is Kate Frood email: head@eleanorpalmer.camden.sch.uk

The Deputy DSL is Sally Hill email: sally@eleanorpalmer.camden.sch.uk

7. Vulnerable children

In our setting, vulnerable children include those who have a social worker, Looked After Children or Previously Looked after Children, those with a family support worker, families who have been referred to Early Help and those children and young people up to the age of 11 with an EHCP.

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 as part of the Extraordinary Roll, 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.

Decisions for those with an EHCP will be made in consultation with parents and the Local Authority, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place, and whether that place needs to be part time or mornings only, 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 EHCPs can safely remain at home.

We will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, including part-time, if appropriate.

Leaders in our school, in particular the DSL and Deputy DSL, 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.

In reviewing our ER and list of vulnerable children, 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.

8. Increased vulnerability or risk

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of students and their parents. Staff will be aware of this in setting expectations for student work where they are at home. Where we are providing for children of key 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.

9. Attendance

Where a child is expected because they are on the ER or are in one of the Returning Year Groups, but does not arrive at school, we will follow our attendance procedure and attempt to contact the family or emergency number. If the child is in a Returning Year Group and their parents inform us that they have elected not to send their child in to school, we will record that as a permitted absence in line with current guidance from Camden. If contact cannot be made, the DSL or a deputy DSL will be informed.

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, such as our Safer Schools Officer, PC Tracey Sadler, or one of her colleagues to do so. Appropriate social distancing will be adhered to in carrying out these tasks.

Where a vulnerable child does not take up their place, we will notify their Social Worker.

The school will monitor levels of engagement of pupils in their remote learning on Google Classroom, and follow up with that child's parents if it becomes apparent that they are not engaging in online learning in order to identify barriers to learning that the school can assist with.

10. Reporting concerns about children or staff

The importance of all staff and volunteers acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns remains of the utmost importance at this time. Staff and volunteers will continue to advise the DSL of any concerns they have about any child, including those who are not attending school, directly or through the school's Child Protection online monitoring system (CPOMS).

Should any member of staff not be able to access CPOMS they should email the DSL or Deputy DSL directly.

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

11. Staff training and induction

For the duration of the current phase of COVID-19, our DSL and deputy DSL will keep abreast of developments through the DfE guidance and any webinars offered by safeguarding organisations. They have both received their refresher training this academic year.

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 *Safeguarding and 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 cause for concern;
- There are no safeguarding investigations into the conduct of that individual;
- The individual remains suitable to work with children.

12. 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 paragraphs 167 to 172 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019*. 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.

13. 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 and Child Protection Policy*.

14. 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 safeguard and support children.

Staff who interact with children online and by telephone will continue to look out for signs that 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 annexe and report that concern to the DSL or to a deputy DSL, in person or through CPOMS.

Families will receive advice and reminders on online safety regularly through school newsletters.

15. New children at the school

We are not open to children from other settings. If, in exceptional circumstances a child did, 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.

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

16. Supporting children not in school

Where the DSL/Deputy 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 they are added to the inclusion register and receive targeted support during their regular phone calls to support that child and their family. Details of those conversations will be recorded and will be reviewed regularly.

Appendix

SCHOOLS AND SAFEGUARDING: COVID 19 CONTINGENCY PLAN Camden Social Services

Schools play a vital role in all aspects of safeguarding and therefore it is important to maintain this communication and liaison to the greatest extent possible, despite the obvious challenges posed by COVID-19 and associated school closures.

Consequently, practice will continue to uphold the values of London Child Protection Procedures, whilst following a different course in terms of process in cases where usual approaches are no longer practicable.

In this context, schools are requested to adhere to the following principles:

Strategy Discussions and Section 47 Enquiries

- Where strategy discussions and child protection enquiries are undertaken on new cases, information shared by schools is particularly valuable, particularly since the families concerned may not be previously known to Children's Social Care;
- School knowledge is also important where strategy discussions and child protection enquiries are undertaken on cases that are already open to Children's Social Care;
- Therefore, schools are requested to be available for dial-in conversations to assist the assessment of risk;
- The DSL should be the primary point of contact for Children's Social Care, but a list of back-up options from each school is also needed, given the unpredictability of who and when individuals may be impacted by COVID-19.

Child Protection Conferences and Core Group Meetings

- Every effort will be made to continue to hold initial and follow-up child protection conferences in the usual way, where this is possible for the chair and participants concerned;
- Where this is not possible, conferences will no longer be a single meeting but will be a series of meetings or discussions running over a period of no more than 2 working days;
- Reports from each agency remain a requirement and should be emailed to CSF-SSCNorthCP@camden.gov.uk 48 hours in advance of an initial or pre-birth and 5 working days in advance of a review;
- Reports must make clear whether the agency assesses the child to be at on-going risk of significant harm, whether a child protection plan (or other plan) is needed and what should be included in the plan;
- The chair of the conference will read all reports and speak with involved professionals by phone/skype where necessary;
- The DSL should be the primary point of contact for this purpose, but a list of back up options from each school is also needed, given the unpredictability of who and when individuals may be impacted by COVID-19;
- The chair will call parents/carers/young people to seek their views;
- At the end of the conference process, the chair will define the content of the harm and safety statement, make a decision as to whether a child protection plan (or other plan) is needed, and draw up an outline plan where required;
- The chair will share the decision and recommendations directly with the family by telephone or, if this is not possible, by email;
- The chair will ensure that members of the professional network are updated;
- Core group meetings are governed by the same principles i.e. where it is not possible to convene a face to face meeting, a 'virtual' meeting should take place instead.

Referrals

- If school staff become aware of a new safeguarding concern, then this should be referred to the MASH in the usual way – the MASH will continue to operate a service;
- The LADO referral system also remains operational, so the usual process should be followed for any LADO referrals.

Contacts

- If school staff have any queries regarding the above contingency plan, then please contact one of the following Heads of Service:
 - Looked After Children – Sally Joseph
Sally.Joseph@camden.gov.uk
0207 974 6798

- Children in Need – Michelle O'Regan
Michelle.O'Regan@camden.gov.uk
0207 974 1905
- Child Protection Conferences, Looked After Children Reviews and LADO – Sophie Kershaw
Sophie.Kershaw@camden.gov.uk
020 7974 3828
- Children and Young People Disability Service – Crina Popa
Crina.Popa@camden.gov.uk
0207 974 4867
- Virtual School – Natalie White
Natalie.White@camden.gov.uk
0207 974 2359

These measures will remain in place and may be reviewed in the eventuality of further change, until it is determined that the COVID-19 crisis is over and normal business can be resumed.

Parents retain their right to complain about agencies using Camden's Complaints Policy (which can be viewed [here](#)) and to apply the CCSB Escalation Policy (accessible [here](#)).