

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Forest Park Primary School

Woodall Street

Cobridge

Stoke-On-Trent

ST1 5ED



Approved by:

G.Howell

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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Hayley Sutton	01782 234979 hsutton@forestpark.org.uk
Deputy DSL	Louise Irving	01782 234979 sirving@forestpark.org.uk
Other contactable DSL(s) and/or deputy DSL(s) at Forest Park Primary School:	Sherin Vorajee Sophie Cox Nicola Bloor Lucy Patten	01782 234979
Other contactable DSL(s) and/or deputy DSL(s) available from other Trust Schools:	HT - Lee Nicholls St.Mark's Primary School HT - Sandra Clarke – Etruscan Primary School	01782 234411 01782 235711
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	Sherin Vorajee Sophie Cox	01782 234979
Headteacher	Louise Irving	01782 234979

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Stoke City Council LADO is located within MASH	01782 235100
Local Authority Safeguarding/ Children's Social Care	Stoke Children and Families Services	01782 235100
Chair of governors	Gill Howell	ghowell@forestpark.org.uk

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners (Staffordshire Police, Stoke on Trent City Council Children's Services and Stoke on Trent Clinical Commissioning Groups) and Local Authority (LA) Stoke-City-Council.

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.

There are no significant changes to methods of reporting. At the time of writing a DSL/ SRT will be on site at Forest Park Primary School every weekday morning. Once they have left site they will be available by phone and will call in to onsite staff members at the end of every day. In the unlikely event you cannot reach that person to report a concern you can contact any of the DSLs identified at the start of this document.

Staff will continue to use the CPOMS system for all recordings.

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

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely by telephone or email (non urgent)

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email unless the matter is urgent in which case staff will be phoned as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them.

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be Louise Irving Head Teacher (Deputy DSL) or Hayley Sutton Deputy Head Teacher (DSL Lead). You can contact them by: see first page contact details.

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with the 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
- Understand what actions need to be completed each day for relevant identified children

- All safeguarding processes remain in place as per usual practice and all staff will continue to follow these processes. All staff continue to have a duty to safeguard children
- A member of the SLT/DSL will be onsite at the start of every school day and available by phone throughout the day and will call staff on site at the end of the day if they do not see the staff in person
- Social care workers including social workers and family practitioners are continuing their duties and the Local Authority Children and Families services continue to function
- The school safeguarding team will liaise with each other, sharing any relevant information and updates
- The school safeguarding team are in contact with relevant social care workers and arrangements are in place in the event a school representative is required to attend a Strategy Discussion on any live or new cases. The LA has mobile numbers of the DSL and deputy DSL if contact is necessary.
- The school maintains its responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns through relevant channels
- Every effort must be made by staff to support and encourage vulnerable children to attend where it is safe for them to do so and there is no known coronavirus risk
- All contact/ non-contact with social care is to be recorded on CPOMS as usual

A member of the safeguarding team will escalate any issues regarding lack of contact or lack of action using the Stoke escalation policy only if they have had no response from the emergency helpline, ie.

This includes details of the direct line number set up to discuss schools concerns – 01782 237074.

This is in addition to the email address available: Education2020@stoke.gov.uk

Sian.Hudson@stoke.gov.uk

Mobile number 07767 179950

- Children who are sent to school with signs of coronavirus or parents/ carers who attend with signs of coronavirus must be sent home and this recorded on CPOMS and relevant staff/ professionals informed
- The Local Authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is making contact with the school on a daily basis to get updates of the children who do/ do not attend and will complete home visits where required
- Each school has been assigned a designated LA officer who will telephone the DSL/Head teacher each day to discuss the RED pupils in terms of who is attending and not attending school. In addition information and concerns can be shared with the pupil's social worker (we will have these contact details on file) and the social care team who are manning the Education 2020 email – education2020@stoke.gov.uk

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 3 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

The following guidance is currently in place:

Pupils known to social care have been RAG rated, by the LA according to safeguarding needs. Pupils who are RAG rated red have been prioritised and where possible should be attending school. Where the decision has been made for RED rated pupils to remain at home, discussions have taken place with parents/carers, social care and the school to ensure that this is a safe option. This may be due to medical vulnerability, the medical vulnerability of family members or where there are no safeguarding concerns and a pupil can be safely cared for at home (e.g. looked after children).

Expectations upon attendance (as per guidance from Stoke City Council and the Government):

The Department for Education and Public Health England Guidance: Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on vulnerable children and young people (updated 25th March 2020) states the following:

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at severe risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and education setting should explore the reasons for this, directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting the virus, the school or social worker should talk through these anxieties with the parent following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Providers may also want to consider how to encourage children and young people to attend an education setting. Social workers will remain in contact with vulnerable children and families, including remotely if needed.

Information we have received from Stoke City Council states that all families have been subject to 'RAG' (Red, Amber, Green) rating with the following guidance:

- In most cases it is considered that at this time the best place for children is at home, including children with disabilities and EHCPs (subject to RAG status)

- Children vulnerable through disability, especially those with multiple or complex needs are best cared for at home however where attending school will offer support then parents/ carers can use their discretion unless also categorised as Red (CP or ICO)
- Early Help families are not included in the 'social care' category therefore not invited to attend school
- Children with a social worker who are Children in Need (CIN) are generally assessed as Amber risk and are being offered the opportunity for these children to attend school, but it is not compulsory
- Children who are looked after (LAC) have the opportunity to attend however, it is up to the carers to use their discretion
- Children on an Interim Care Order (ICO) at home are classified as Red and required to attend school
- Children subject to Child Protection Plans are classified as Red and required to attend school
- Children's Services have no legal mandate to enforce children attending school, including children classified as RED. However, every effort must be made by school staff to support and encourage vulnerable children to attend where it is safe for them to do so and there is no known coronavirus risk

In addition to the above, social care staff will continue to complete their duties and this includes visiting and monitoring. We do have to be aware that some workers may be struggling to see children for various reasons and we cannot assume that all children are being seen regularly by social care workers. It is imperative that we continue to communicate regularly and with any updates with social care workers and vice versa

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 phoning them – staff in school will do this and then notify the DSL/SLT
- Notify their social worker, where they have one – the DSL/SLT on shift that day will do this
- Record all communication and information pertaining to the absence on CPOMS – DSL/SLT to do this

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. Office staff are contacting all parents/ carers to establish email addresses and in doing so will establish working contact numbers. In the event we cannot reach a parents/ carers by phone and there is an emergency, if we cannot reach the alternative contacts on the system we will go to the home address, while obeying Government coronavirus advice regarding social distancing and safety. This will be done in pairs.

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.

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.

Staff will adhere to the school Safeguarding Policy in reporting concerns of this nature. Further information is available through the Stoke Safeguarding Board

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/safeguarding-children/education/procedures.en>

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.

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. The Safeguarding Team hold a meeting every Monday morning where all vulnerable children (RAG rated or not) are identified and discussed. Plans for how these children will be contact and/ or invited in to school are also established for the week ahead.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10.1 below.

10. Safeguarding for children not attending school

10.1 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

These plans set out during term time:

- How often the school will make contact
- Which staff member(s) will make contact
- How they will make contact

What will happen in the event these children cannot be contacted for any reason

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them every week in the Monday morning meeting or beforehand where necessary if it is clear the plans are not working

If we can't make contact, we will report this to relevant social workers/ family practitioners/ social care staff by phone and follow up email. In cases of concern where there is a concern for the immediate safety and wellbeing of a child(ren) then the child's worker (or an available colleague in their absence) will be called immediately and where necessary the Police or other relevant emergency services will be called. Staff will contact a member of the DSL/SLT in relation to any concerns they have and the DSL/ SLT will lead decision making. In the event a staff member becomes aware of an immediate concern that requires emergency service intervention, that staff member must not delay in calling relevant service and can do this before contacting a DSL/SLT if contacting them first would delay implementation of a service.

10.2 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 particular, children are likely to be spending more time online (see section 11 below).

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

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

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan and IT support is provided through our IT provider RM Education <https://www.rm.com/what-we-do/school-management-solutions>

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing Safeguarding processes and adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy. We do not have any direct contact online with children at this time other than in relation to home learning.

Pupils access home learning through the school website, which also has links to policies and internet safety websites. Staff will adhere to safe working principles and report any concerns. Staff will not engage in any online communication with pupils beyond that required via home learning and any inappropriate communication from pupils will be reported and recorded.

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.

11.3 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

The school website has a designated section for online safety information that can be found here <https://forestpark.org.uk/parents/e-safety>

12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils via phone calls where appropriate, phone support to parents/ carers and signposting to relevant agencies.

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.

13. Staff recruitment, training and induction

13.1 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 will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

13.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

We will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our school, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information. The admin team will be responsible for ensuring these checks are completed.

13.3 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

13.4 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.

We will use the single central record which the SLT have access to, to log:

- Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including staff 'on loan'
- Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers on loan from elsewhere
- A daily log is provided to the Department for Education and the Local Authority on a daily basis

14. Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, 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.

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 3-4 weeks by the school governing and The Trust Board. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child Protection Safeguarding Policy
- Staff handbook/ code of conduct
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Prevent and Extremism
- Acceptable Use
- Safer Working Practices
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Government Guidance For Schools, Childcare Providers, Colleges and Local Authorities in England on Maintaining Educational Provision 2020