



Woodlane High School

achieving success in a nurturing environment

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Annex – Covid-19 Closure

Updated: 16th June 2020

Next Update: 23rd June 2020

Context

The way schools and colleges are currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual. Most children are no longer in a school setting and staff numbers have been affected by the outbreak.

Schools have been asked to provide care for children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

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

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Version control and dissemination

This is version 1.0 of this annex. It will be reviewed by our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or a deputy DSL on a weekly basis as circumstances continue to evolve or following updated Department for Education advice or guidance. It is available on the school website [here](#) and is made available to staff by email.

We will ensure that on any given day all staff and volunteers in attendance will be aware of who the DSL and deputy DSLs are and how staff can speak to them.

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

General

- In efforts to ensure pupils have access to curriculum material and are positively engaged throughout periods of closure, we will be posting daily homework tasks on Firefly and offering live learning sessions.

Details are as follows:

- Tasks are currently set, where possible, in line with pupil timetables, please refer to your child's timetable in their diaries.
- Tasks are usually set by 10.30 each morning.
- Tasks are differentiated, therefore, you and/or your child can select the task most appropriate to their ability.
- A live learning timetable will be issued each week.
- **During holidays/breaks, the school will set weekly project-based tasks.**

Parents/carers have been asked to:

- Encourage their child to complete at least some of the set tasks on a daily basis.
- Encourage their child to complete a range of activities and subject areas.
- Where possible, set a routine for their child, including homework and leisure time.
- Praise their child for completion of each task.

Please note, there is no pressure from the school to complete each and every task set by teachers. We understand that each child and their parent/carer will have their own very unique set of circumstances at this challenging time.

- The school answerphone message indicates that the school is closed, stating that senior managers can be contacted on admin@woodlane.lbhf.sch.uk. Remote access to answerphone is set up to retrieve messages. The SBM will check messages.
- Details regarding access to the foodbank has been sent on the school website, inviting parents in need of support to contact the foodbank directly or contact us for support.
- Parents/carers of pupils in receipt of free school meals have been emailed/sent supermarket vouchers. **The school now uses the government Edenred system.**
- Tutors will call parents/pupils in their tutor group once weekly on a Wednesday. Tutors will record brief notes and send to the DSL and deputy DSL on the same day. DSL and deputy DSL will follow up where required. Staff must ensure they call on a withheld number, leave a message and call back if necessary. **This continued over the Easter and half term break. Calls will be made to pupils not attending school, this has been explained to pupils and parents.**
- Parents/carers are kept up to date, through telephone calls, letters, newsfeeds, website posts and texts to ensure they know what to expect.

Support for pupils on a Child Protection/Child in Need/Early Help Plan

- Social workers have all been informed of closure.
- Twice weekly calls (Monday and Thursday) by DSL and deputy DSL, who must speak with the pupil directly. DSL and deputy DSL must ensure they call on a withheld number. Brief notes made.
- Reminders given regarding foodbank if required and supermarket vouchers provided for free school meals.
- Liaise with social workers as required based on feedback. If an emergency report to duty social worker/Front door service as per usual practice.
- DSL/deputy DSL to attend planned review meetings, unless otherwise directed, video conferencing used if required.
- Continue to use the school CP reporting system.
- **This continued over the Easter and half term break. Calls will be made to pupils not attending school, DSLs have explained to parents and pupils.**

We are currently not inviting volunteers or staff from outside our school, if this were to change all will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of safeguarding risks and know how to act if they have concerns.

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 officers and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need.

The DSL or deputy DSL attend a weekly phone meeting with the home LA LBHF.

Roles and responsibilities

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

Our DSL or at least one deputy DSL will be available on site during the pupil day. Outside of these hours they are available via email, phone or video call.

In exceptional circumstances, where our DSL or a deputy DSL cannot be on site, 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 Claire Maynard.

Contact details: email: head@woodlane.lbhf.sch.uk tel: 0208 753 5668 (mobile given to all staff)

The deputy designated lead is Rob Morgan.

Contact details: email: rmorgan@woodlane.lbhf.sch.uk tel: 0208 753 5668 (mobile given to all staff)

The deputy designated lead (MNU) is Maureen Hill.

Contact details: email: mhill@woodlane.lbhf.sch.uk tel: 0208 753 5668 (mobile given to all MNU staff)

The deputy designated lead in absence of the above is Tim Heapy.

Contact details: email: theapy@woodlane.lbhf.sch.uk tel: 0208 753 5668 (mobile given to all staff)

Vulnerable children

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.

As we enter Phase 2 wider opening, those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the local authority and parents to decide whether they can be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether it is safer for them to be cared for at home e.g. if they are in the high risk category etc. 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. Following risk assessment, we will encourage our red level vulnerable children and young people to attend school. During Phase 2 we are able to offer up to 25 places, prioritising those pupils deemed in greatest need.

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 they deem at risk.

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

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 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, via social worker or by contacting 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 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 [Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures](#) and advise the DSL of any concerns they have about any child, including those who are not attending school.

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 are dealt with thoroughly and efficiently and in accordance with our Allegations Against Staff Policy, detailed in our [Safeguarding and Child Protection](#) policy.

Staff training and induction

For the duration of the COVID-19 measures, our DSL and deputy DSLs 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, they will

receive a safeguarding induction in accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

If (currently not the case) 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.

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.

The school does not currently use volunteers. However, if we did we will 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 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.

All visitors to school will sign in using the school's Inventory sign-in system, to ensure a live record of pupils/staff/visitors is always available.

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, [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 safeguard and support children.

Our staff will follow the process for online safety set out in our [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#).

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.

Additional and targeted 'keeping safe online' activities have taken place with individual/groups of pupils.

Remote Contact with Pupils

Some aspects of our school code of conduct and expectations around remote contact with pupils have now been reviewed due to the unique circumstances around the Covid-19 pandemic. This is particularly due to an expected increase in remote 'live learning'. Staff are being asked to make proportionate contact with pupils remotely, they have done so through:

- Weekly planned tutor phone calls from withheld numbers.
- Additional phone calls to pupils where staff have the ability to make a significant difference, e.g. Computing Subject Leader calling named pupil to support with E-Safety.
- Contact with vulnerable pupils, an additional 2 x calls per week from SMT.
- Microsoft Teams live learning, where at least 2 staff will be present.

To ensure staff are supported with this communication and safeguarding practices remain clear and strong, the following guidelines have been established. Staff are expected to follow these guidelines. The school's Staff Code of Conduct has now been updated to reflect changes in practice related to 'live learning', the Staff Code of Conduct remains a key document that all staff should incorporate as part of their essential practice.

Remote contact guidelines:

The approved school platforms for remote communication with pupils during closure for Covid-19 are:

- Microsoft Teams.
- Telephone calls.
- The learning platform Firefly (to ensure meetings have an added layer of security).

Only these platforms should be used.

Communication should only occur at a planned time and must be agreed with SMT. This will consist of:

- A small number of live learning opportunities per week with responsibilities shared between staff; parents will be aware in advance of planned communication.
- Staff 'tutor phone calls' taking place weekly on Wednesday.
- Occasional additional phone calls to pupils where a specific need is identified, e.g. E-Safety support.
- Additional phone calls to vulnerable pupils taking place on Monday and Thursday.

Staff who are going to use Teams/Firefly need to be confident doing so. Training will be made available to all staff using the platform, e.g. sharing their screen.

Prior to communication, staff will consider:

- Their location, including the room they are in, objects present in the room etc. If in doubt staff should use an appropriate 'background' from the selections available.
- Other people which may enter the room, sessions should take place in a quiet room which will remain undisturbed, data protection requirements must be adhered to.
- Anything that may be on their computer if they are sharing their screen – e.g. background, web pages they may have open etc.

Staff must ensure the following:

- All telephone calls should be made from a withheld phone number.
- No recordings will be made of pupil 'live learning' or telephone calls.
- A second member of staff (ideally three) will always be present during 'live learning' to support with teaching and learning, as a safeguarding measure and in case of a loss of connection.
- Pupil technology is a barrier, so support should be available prior to the meeting to help pupils get set up if required.
- Staff should arrive early to 'live learning' to greet pupils and help pupils and parents test their technology.
- Staff will begin sessions with a fun activity to engage pupils and to 'break the ice'.
- 'Live learning' would not normally be seen as an opportunity for 'new learning' but can be used to consolidate, engage and provide specific support around research/homework. The role of 'live learning' is as much about maintaining relationships and enthusiasm for learning as it is about teaching and learning.

The staff code of conduct should be read in conjunction with this updated guidance and this annex does not supersede any of the expectations around professionalism of staff and legal requirements.

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 need 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 regular communication is in place to support that child. Details will be recorded and reviewed regularly by the DSL and deputy DSL.

Protecting staff and pupils from Covid-19 while attending school (guidelines):

Please refer to our Woodlane High School Covid-19 Risk Assessment Phase 2/3.

Please note, the above is subject to change, based on government advice and guidelines.