

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Gipsy Hill Federation

Paxton Primary School



Approved by: David Okoro

Date: 8th March 2021

Last reviewed on: 8th March

Next review due by: June 2021 or when new government guidance is issued

Contents

Important contacts	2
1. Scope and definitions	2
2. Core safeguarding principles	3
3. Reporting concerns.....	3
4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements	4
5. Working with other agencies	4
6. Monitoring attendance	4
7. Peer-on-peer abuse.....	5
8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer	5
9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns	6
10. Safeguarding for children not attending school	6
11. Online safety.....	6
12. Mental health	7
13. Staff recruitment, training and induction	7
14. Children attending other settings.....	8
15. Monitoring arrangements.....	9
16. Links with other policies.....	9

Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Headteacher (DSL)	Mr Jeff Muhammad	020 86702935
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) Family Services Officer	Ms Charlotte Newman	020 86702935
Deputy DSL	Ms Clare Spencer Ms Katherine Wilmot Ms Sarah Gee	020 86702935
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site		
SENCO	Ms Rachel Young	020 86702935
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Andrew Zacharides	

1. Scope and definitions

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

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance on actions for schools during the Coronavirus outbreak (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>) and should be read in conjunction our Safeguarding 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
- Have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full time attendance, this might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
 - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
 - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those living in temporary accommodation
 - those who are young carers
 - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
 - care leavers
 - others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

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.

In the case of a local lockdown, all staff will be reminded of the phone number on which they can reach a designated safeguarding lead covering their school within the Gipsy Hill Federation. All staff have details of safeguarding mailboxes for each school within the Gipsy Hill Federation. Provision is in place to ensure these safeguarding mailboxes are monitored appropriately by a designated safeguarding lead. All staff will be made aware of any changes in provision for safeguarding in a timely manner so that any concerns can be acted on accordingly.

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

If a trained DSL cannot be on site, we will work together with other schools within the Gipsy Hill Federation to arrange cover from a trained DSL familiar with the key processes. This trained DSL will have access to all electronic records for vulnerable children including details of social workers. At all times, a trained DSL can be contacted via the safeguarding mailbox, the details of which are listed in the 'important contacts' section at the start of this addendum. Automatic replies will be set up from this mailbox with details of how to contact Designated Safeguarding Leads by phone and this will be updated to reflect any changes to contact details in real time.

In the case of a local lockdown, we will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email 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.

All our senior leaders have Designated Safeguarding Lead training and can therefore cover this role where necessary and can support in coordinating safeguarding. They will work in partnership with the Designated Safeguarding Lead team to:

- 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
- Respond to any concerns that have been shared by staff, parents or members of the community in line with our normal safeguarding procedures
- Manage the safeguarding mailbox
- Update the vulnerable tracker where necessary
- Liaise with other professionals and senior leaders to ensure working together practices are followed

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

6. Monitoring attendance

From 1st September 2020, attendance in school will be mandatory other than during periods of the implementation of the contingency framework. Please refer to the school's attendance policy and attendance covid-19 addendum for more details.

In case of self-isolation or local lockdown restrictions, attendance registers will be completed in line with DfE guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>). During periods of school closure due to the implementation of the contingency framework, attendance for the children of critical workers, vulnerable children and other children accessing remote education, attendance will be recorded in line with the guidance in the Contingency Framework Implementation Guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19->

[contingency-framework-for-education-and-childcare-settings/contingency-framework-education-and-childcare-settings-excluding-universities\)](#)

We continue to have a safeguarding duty to all our pupils and will therefore maintain and monitor our contact with all pupils, including for those pupils who are not able to attend school. Where children are accessing remote education, engagement in online learning will be monitored daily and parents will be contacted on an at least weekly basis where pupils are not engaging or not able to engage in online learning. Please refer to our attendance policy addendum for more details.

Where any child we expect to attend school, including during a closure/partial closure period, doesn't attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by telephone. Where we are not able to establish contact, we will contact parents by email to ask them to contact us. Where we still do not establish contact, we will carry out a 'doorstep' home visit stringently following social distancing guidelines to ensure the safety and welfare of the child
- Notify their social worker, where they have one
- 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. Parents are being regularly asked to update their contact details and where contact details are not accurate (e.g. email bounce-backs), Senior Administrative Officers are establishing contact with alternative emergency contacts in order to obtain the most up-to-date emergency contact information.

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.

If concerns are raised, we will work in partnership with parents/carers to speak with possible victims and perpetrators to carry out any investigation remotely and will follow our normal safeguarding procedure in response to this. We will work in partnership with parents, school staff and social care (where appropriate) to establish a safety plan for all children involved and, where appropriate, will liaise with external therapists to provide additional support if needed.

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. When raising a concern about a staff member or volunteer, the person raising the concern should be advised to contact the headteacher via email in the first instance or in their absence the executive headteachers. The headteacher/executive headteacher will contact them by phone as soon as possible to discuss their concerns. In the absence of headteachers or executive headteachers, they should contact a deputy headteacher of their school or a headteacher from one of the other Gipsy Hill Federation schools. A named member of the Senior Leadership Team is on site, wherever possible, each day who will be able to provide advice.

Where a concern has been raised, the local authority designated officer will be contacted following normal procedure and an action plan to carry out an investigation remotely will be put in place. Any risk assessment following a concern raised will reflect the current situation and actions identified to safeguard all involved will reflect the current provision in place. Our first priority in these circumstances will always be to safeguard any child and any risk assessment will reflect this. All investigations will be carried out within reasonable timescales taking into account the current circumstances.

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

In the case of a local lockdown or school closure in line with the contingency planning framework, 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. These children might be children who have previously had a social worker, who currently have an Early Help Worker or who haven't met the threshold for a referral but where staff have raised concerns. We will work with all school staff to identify children who might need additional support.

Where a child is not able to attend school, a contact plan will be put 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 due to the advice from their medical specialist; or
- › They would usually attend but have to self-isolate

These plans set out:

- › How often the school will make contact
- › Which staff member(s) will make contact
- › How they will make contact
- › How records will be kept of these phone calls and where they will be saved for Designated Safeguarding Leads to access.

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them every month or where there is any change in circumstance.

If we can't make contact, we will contact social care or, if we feel the child is in immediate danger we will contact the police.

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).

In the case of a local lockdown or school closure in line with the contingency planning framework, we will ensure we have contact with all children on an at least weekly basis, either through engagement with online learning and class catch-ups or via phone calls.

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 is to work with TurnITOn (our IT partner) to provide additional IT support and to contact the local authority and LGFL for additional support.

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff code of conduct and acceptable use of technology and online safety policy. A safeguarding protocol for online learning for staff has also been put in place.

If phone calls are made to pupils, these will be made from school phones or by withholding numbers. Any email communication with parents/carers will take place through mailboxes that are accessible to a range of staff. Any communication via an online learning platform will be monitored by link deputy headteachers who are also trained designated safeguarding leads.

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, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

Parents/Carers will regularly receive reminders of how to keep their children safe online and will be asked to share any safeguarding concerns they have for their own child(ren) or for other pupils using identified office phone numbers or the safeguarding mailbox. Parents/Carers will be regularly informed how to share safeguarding concerns.

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

Parents/Carers will regularly receive reminders of how to keep their children safe online and will be asked to share any safeguarding concerns they have for their own child(ren) or for other pupils using identified office phone numbers or the safeguarding mailbox. Parents/Carers will be regularly informed how to share safeguarding concerns.

12. Mental health

We will offer support for pupil mental health for all pupils. We will share resources to support pupil mental health as part of our home learning offer. In case of local lockdown restrictions, school closure/partial closure, or need for self-isolation, where children are on the SEN register and have SEMH as a primary area of need remote pastoral support will be put in place by our trained staff or by the external therapists whose support we commission. All members of staff providing pastoral support will also receive support.

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

As a family of schools, the Gipsy Hill Federation will work in partnership with each other to support each other where services need to be amalgamated to continue to offer provision or where staff have to support on other sites - this support might be for both on-site and online provision as required to support the needs of our service. As a federation, our recruitment, checks and induction processes are consistent and therefore no additional risk assessment would be needed for this process.

In the very unlikely instance that we have staff 'on loan' from outside the Gipsy Hill Federation, 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. These risk assessments will be carried out by a headteacher or Executive Headteacher.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

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
- A copy of our child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements
- 13.4 Across the Gipsy Hill Federation of schools our safeguarding and induction training is consistent. If a member of staff is working on a different site we will ensure they receive the individual DSL arrangements for the site they are working on. In the very unlikely case that we have a member of staff 'on loan' from another school, we will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:

Keeping records of who is 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.

Where staff from the Gipsy Hill Federation are working on a different site, we will cross-reference the SCR form from the site that the member of staff is currently based. The SCR for all schools is held centrally.

We will use the single central record 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

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 termly by the Executive Headteachers and Headteachers. 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:

- Safeguarding (Child protection) policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Acceptable Use of Technology and Online Safety Policy
- Health and safety policy
- School re-opening risk assessment
- Anti-bullying policy
- Behaviour Policy