

Child Protection during the COVID-19 school closures

Addendum V1 to the Child Protection Policy of Meadowdale Primary School. This addendum should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy and does not replace it.

This addendum has been written in response to the safeguarding guidance issued by the government on 27.03.2020. It will be reviewed by the Learn-AT Safeguarding Team 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 <http://www.meadowdale.info/> and is made available to staff through MS Teams.

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.

Supporting children who are vulnerable

Meadowdale Primary School is supporting children who are vulnerable during the COVID-19 crisis in the following ways:

- By providing a school place for pupils with a CP Plan and/or a designated social worker this will be in consultation with the child's social worker
- By risk assessing children who fall below the social care threshold for a social worker but about whom staff have legitimate concerns and either:
 - Offering a school place where possible
 - or
 - Making a daily or weekly 'keeping in touch' phone call to speak to the parent *and* the child as appropriate. All phone calls will be logged on MS Teams.

During the phone call use the following prompts to guide the conversation -

- Check on the welfare of the child and wider family
- Ask parents how home learning is going – is any support required?
- If possible, ask to speak to the child directly -

What have you done today? Which of your daily tasks have you managed to complete, what have you enjoyed? Have you read your book today? Can I hear you read part of your book? What have you eaten today?

If there are any concerns arising from the phone call these will be reported according to the procedures outlined in this policy.

Examples of causes for concern include:

- No response to the call (dependant on the risk assessment of the child's needs) Calls home will be monitored by the DSL/DDSL.

- No response from any of the family's emergency contacts
- A disclosure from a member of the family or one of the family's emergency contacts
- A disclosure from the child
- Non-specific reasons for unease

Procedure to follow if parents do not answer phone calls

- Call other emergency contacts
- If child has social worker involvement contact social worker
- Conduct a home visit - must be done by 2 people, robust risk assessment must be completed, do not enter the home, if parents answer the door speak from a distance of at least 2 metres, if possible ask for the child to come to the door, maintain friendly conversation, confirm contact details, ask if support is needed – use LTS services brochure to signpost support if appropriate (Appendix 1)
- Make referral to Early Help if further support is required
- Request 'Safe and Well' visit from police

Absence – follow-up arrangements for children who should be attending school but are absent

The DSL on site or most senior member of staff co-ordinating safeguarding will call parents or other emergency contacts to check on the child's wellbeing and reason for absence.

If phone calls are not answered the procedure outlined above will be followed.

Sharing safeguarding information if vulnerable pupils are attending other schools

All schools will produce a document with the following information (Appendix 2) -

- Child's details – Name, address, date of birth, school attended, DSL contact details
- Brief summary of reasons for vulnerability
- Parent/Guardian details – name, address, contact details
- Other emergency contact details
- Social worker name and contact details
- Virtual School Head name and contact details (LAC)
- Child in Need Plan/Child Protection Plan/Personal Education Plan (LAC)
- EHC plan

These documents will be stored securely on MS Teams in the DSL team 'Vulnerable Children' channel. If local hub schools are attending a Learn-AT site the school DSL/DDSL will be invited to join the Learn-AT DSL team as a guest.

Before a vulnerable child attends another school, or as soon as is practically possible, a DSL from the child's school must discuss the details of the document with a DSL from the host school.

If there are any concerns arising during the time a child is attending a school not their own these will be reported according to the procedures outlined in this policy.

If staff are working online with students, the “code of conduct” must still be adhered to.

<https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Sept%202019.pdf>

This school will not use video calling between school staff and pupils.

If members of staff from other Learn-AT or local hub schools work in our school we will:

- Receive written assurance from their school that all safer recruitment checks have been undertaken and that they are included on their school's Single Central Record
- Sign them into the school site using the school visitor book and verify their identity
- Ensure they have met the DSL working on site that day, or the senior member of staff co-ordinating safeguarding, before they have any contact with children
- Ensure they are aware of procedures for reporting a safeguarding concern
- Ensure ID badges are always worn

Recruitment of new staff

If we are recruiting new staff, we will follow existing safer recruitment procedures e.g. references and DBS checks and complete robust risk assessments.

The Headteacher will lead this process. If the Headteacher is unavailable, then another senior member of staff with safer recruitment training will lead this process. If no such person is available, the trust central team will be consulted before any recruitment process is started in order to access trained personnel from within the trust.

We will not recruit any new volunteers during this time.

DSL arrangements

When staff rotas are organised the Headteacher or Senior Leader responsible will ensure that a DSL or deputy DSL will be available every day either on site, via a phone call or video call through MS Teams.

This information, and contact details if not on site, will be shared with the staff team.

In the event of a DSL or DDSL not being available a senior member of the staff team will be asked to co-ordinate safeguarding.

The flowchart in Appendix 4 of this addendum must be followed to report any safeguarding concerns arising.

Safeguarding concerns will be recorded on CPOMS in the usual way where possible.

If it is not possible due to staff absence (see Flowchart in Appendix 4 of the addendum) then a virtual paper record will be kept securely on the MS DSL Team

in the 'Safeguarding Concerns' channel. The concern will be recorded on CPOMS by the relevant DSL/DDSL as soon as is practically possible.

Reporting concerns about other adults working with children.

- Contact the Headteacher either in person, via a phone call or MS Teams video call.
- If the Headteacher is unavailable contact central trust team – Stef Edwards or Gill Weston. If the concern is about an adult from a local hub school, then the Chair of Governors of that school should be contacted. This information can be found on the DfE site <https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>

Single Central Record

The SCR will be maintained and kept up to date and checked by Helen Austin (Office Manager) and Liz Martin (Head of School).
Learn-AT ID badges show that a member of Learn-AT staff has been placed on a school's single central record.

Reporting and managing peer on peer abuse

Parents will be reminded to be vigilant to the signs of cyber bullying and about the school's responsibility to act on peer on peer abuse that occurs outside of school. They will be encouraged through Learn-AT communications to report any such abuse to their child's school. This will be managed through the school Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Supporting children online

The Learn-AT communication with parents will contain regular weekly information and updates for parents about ensuring children are continuing to be safe online. This will be coordinated by Stef Edwards and Sue Benson.

Supporting children and families with their mental health

Parents and children will be supported with their mental health in the following ways -

- Daily email from class teachers
- Learn-AT comms – signposting useful literature and resources (this will be coordinated by the Learn-AT ELSA group)
- School comms – signposting useful literature and resources
- Keeping-in-touch telephone calls from class teachers where issues have been identified or support requested
- Provide information for staff about warning signs and indicators <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/children-depressed-signs/>
- Ed Psych support