

# **COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at All Saints' C of E Primary School**

From January 2021 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible.

Schools were asked to remain open for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable or who have an EHCP and children whose parents are critical to

the COVID-19 response and who absolutely cannot be cared for at home.

This addendum of All Saints' C of E Primary Schools Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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## Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Mr Philip Brown	<a href="mailto:Mr.brown@allsaintsprimaryschoolmaldon.co.uk">Mr.brown@allsaintsprimaryschoolmaldon.co.uk</a> Or <a href="mailto:parentfeedback@allsaintsprimaryschoolmaldon.co.uk">parentfeedback@allsaintsprimaryschoolmaldon.co.uk</a> 07793592742
Deputy DSL	Mrs Corrinne White	<a href="mailto:Mrs.white@allsaintsprimaryschoolmaldon.co.uk">Mrs.white@allsaintsprimaryschoolmaldon.co.uk</a> Or <a href="mailto:parentfeedback@allsaintsprimaryschoolmaldon.co.uk">parentfeedback@allsaintsprimaryschoolmaldon.co.uk</a> 07736650663
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	Mrs Margot Spurling	<a href="mailto:mrs.spurling@allsaintsprimaryschoolmaldon.co.uk">mrs.spurling@allsaintsprimaryschoolmaldon.co.uk</a>
Headteacher	Mr Philip Brown	As above
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Essex Safeguarding Children Board	03330139797
Chair of governors	Mr Dan Doherty	<a href="mailto:mr.doherty@allsaintsprimaryschoolmaldon.co.uk">mr.doherty@allsaintsprimaryschoolmaldon.co.uk</a> 07976413294

### 1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects advice from our Local Authority and the Essex Safeguarding Children Board.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

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' states:

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and 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.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place 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 EHC plans can safely remain at home. Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability. Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

We will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority. 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 risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, we will work with the social worker to explore the reasons for this directly with the parent, talking through anxieties following the advice set out by Public Health England. We will work the social worker and parent to determine the best course of action for the child.

## 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.

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely. In the event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This will ensure that the concern is received and recorded. Staff can also phone the DSL for support and advice. If Phase leaders receive concerns from their team they should bring this to the attention of the DSL via email or CPOMS. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the headteacher, via email or verbally. Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Mr Dan Doherty.

## 4. DSL and Deputy DSL 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. In the exceptional circumstances where the DSL or Deputy cannot be contacted then a member of the SLT, detailed in the 'Important contacts' section will assume the DSL duty and should be contacted instead.

If our DSL or Deputy can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely by using the contact details in the 'Important contacts' section.

We will ensure that the DSL and Deputy, wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

On occasions where there is no DSL or Deputy on site, they should be contacted at home using the contact details given. Members of staff in school will be directed to contact the DSL or Deputy at home with concerns and to re-direct any communications with social workers and other agencies to the DSL or Deputy.

It is important that all staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL or Deputy. On each day staff on site will be made aware of who the DSL is and how they can contact them. The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

## **5. 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 phone
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

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 of these children to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible.

## **6. Peer-on-peer abuse**

We recognise that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims. 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.

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person. Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

## **7. 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, reporting concerns to the DSL or Deputy via a phone call/email or verbally if on site. Should the concern be about the Head teacher, the Chair of Governors should be contacted.

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](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk) for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

Where parents or children have a concern regarding the conduct of a member of staff they should report these to the HT via the school office or the email address given in the Important Contacts section. If their concerns are in regard to the HT then they can contact the Chair of Governors.

## **8. 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 serious safeguarding concerns about. We will work with parents/carers to do this. These may be children who have previously had a social worker, who are working with family solutions or other services or who haven't quite met the threshold for a referral but where staff have raised concerns.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 9 below.

## **9. Safeguarding for children not attending school**

We are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our children. Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child. These children will fall into the Tier 1 level of support which will be delivered by a Pastoral TA who knows them and works with them in school. The frequency of contact will be determined by the needs of the child and their family and in consultation with the DSL. It will be at least weekly contact but for many will be more.

All other children will fall into the Tier 2 level of support. These children will be supported by a TA who knows them well and will be contacted at least once a week.

A record of contact with all children will be kept securely where all staff can have access. Phase leaders and the DSL will review these regularly to monitor the safety and wellbeing of the children in both Tier 1 and Tier 2.

All Saints' Primary and its DSL will continue to work closely with all professional agencies to ensure the safeguarding of all children. They will continue to attend safeguarding meetings.

Staff are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk. We recognise that our school is a protective factor for children and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Staff at All Saints' Primary are aware of this and will be mindful of this impact when contacting children learning remotely. Concerns regarding the mental health and well-being of a child will be shared with Phase leaders and the HT as appropriate.

Staff 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 10 below).

All Saints' Primary School will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety. We will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement measures that limit the risk of spreading COVID19 and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England.

Where we have concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss these as a SLT via video calling systems and seek Local Authority advice as appropriate.

## 10. Online safety

### 10.1 In school

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

If IT staff are unavailable, members of our SLT, supported by the computing subject leader, will monitor this. The IT technician will be able to support remotely.

### 10.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct/IT acceptable use policy. When recording a lesson staff should try to find a quiet or private room and consider what will be in the background.

When communicating online with parents and pupils, staff should communicate within school hours as much as possible and through the school channels approved by the SLT. Staff should use their school email accounts and should not share their personal information.

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.

Where children or parents are concerned about upsetting online content or online bullying and abuse they should inform the phase leader via their phase email address or contact the school. They can also visit <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

for advice.

### 10.3 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

## 11. Mental health

Support for pupil mental health for all pupils will be achieved through phone calls from staff at least weekly, a weekly class zoom meet with the children and adults from their class and daily collective worship.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time such as Five to Thrive resources and a range of quality PE videos via our website.

## 12. Staff recruitment, training and induction

### 12.1 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. Volunteers will not be in school during this time.

### **12.2 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. This will be completed by the Head teacher and admin staff on site.

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

### **12.3 Safeguarding induction and training**

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff 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

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus. For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL or Deputy who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL or Deputy even if they miss their refresher training. All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child. Safeguarding training and updates will be shared with staff as appropriate.

### **12.4 Keeping records of who's on site**

We will keep a record of which staff 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 to log:

- Everyone working in our school each day, including staff 'on loan'
- Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff on loan from elsewhere

## **13. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from Essex Safeguarding Children Board, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, every 3-4 weeks by either Mr Philip Brown/Head Teacher and DSL or Mrs Corrinne White/Deputy Head Teacher and Deputy DSL. The Governor with responsibility for safeguarding will also monitor the impact and effectiveness of this policy.

