

Safeguarding Arrangements during the COVID-19 outbreak

Addendum to The King Alfred School Safeguarding Children in Education Policy
(September 2019)

Introduction

This document outlines the safeguarding arrangements at The King Alfred School during school closure due to the COVID-19 outbreak. This document is an addition to the arrangements set out in the business-as-usual policies including: Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019) and The King Alfred School Safeguarding Children in Education Policy (September 2019) which can be found here:

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/836144/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_part_1_2019.pdf
- <https://www.kingalfred.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/2-9-Safeguarding-Children-Policy.pdf>.

Due regard for these policies should continue alongside the additional arrangements set out in this document.

This addendum policy is in line with government guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is fit for purpose and remains in line with any changes to governmental advice.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, the school remains committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children whether staying at home or continuing to attend school. It is therefore important that all staff are aware of the arrangements in this addendum so they are able to continue to effectively carry out their safeguarding duties during this period.

The way the school is currently operating in response to COVID-19 is fundamentally different to business-as-usual, however, a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- staff will remain vigilant to the signs of all types of abuse (including peer-on-peer abuse)
- the best interests of children will continue to come first
- if anyone in the school has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- the DSL or a deputy will always be available
- vulnerable children will remain protected
- the school will continue to provide a safe environment including online
- it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children will continue to be protected when they are online
- we will continue to work with and support local authority organisations to help protect vulnerable children

The school will, as far as reasonably possible, take a whole institution approach to safeguarding. This will mean that any new policies and processes in response to COVID19 are not weakening our approach to safeguarding or undermining our child protection policy.

Availability of Designated Safeguard Leads and reporting concerns

Designated Safeguard Leads/Deputies are:

Offsite

DSL: Tracy Preston-email: tracyp@kingalfred.org.uk phone: 07506 980539

Fiona Parsons - email: fionap@kingalfred.org.uk - phone: 07506 980602

James Griffiths - email: jamesg@kingalfred.org.uk

Onsite Senior Leader

Karen Thomas - email: karent@kingalfred.org.uk – phone: 0208 4575243

The DSLs and Deputies can be contacted remotely using the above emails or phone numbers. They will be available at any time during working hours and should be contacted if staff have any concerns.

A member of SLT will be on site every day during school hours (Karen Thomas) and will lead on any safeguarding concerns in school.

The DSL or Deputies will update safeguarding records and liaise with social care when a statutory assessment maybe required. The DSL or Deputies will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

It is imperative that staff continue to act on any safeguarding concerns immediately as would always be the case in normal circumstances. If staff have a safeguarding concern, they should report this to the DSL or a deputy immediately by contacting them directly using the above contact details. After that they should record their concern on My Concern as is the normal procedure.

Barnet MASH operates as normal and staff can make a referral to MASH themselves if they have any safeguarding concerns: 020 8359 4066 (emergency duty team during out of hours: 020 8359 2000).

Concerns regarding staff conduct should be reported to the headteacher immediately who will discuss concerns with the Barnet LADO. Concerns related to the headteacher should be reported the Chair of Governors (Annabel Cody: acody@kingalfred.org.uk). The school will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

Concerns about the school's safeguarding procedures can be reported to the NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline as normal: 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk

Arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable children

The school remains open for key worker and vulnerable children (children with social worker involvement or who have an EHCP). However, not all vulnerable children will continue to attend school. Due to medical concerns making children more vulnerable to COVID-19, certain children with an EHCP may stay home – this has been decided on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with health workers such as the school nurse. Some children with social worker involvement may also be staying at home – as agreed by the school and relevant social worker.

For these children a robust communication plan is in place. These children who are classified as vulnerable but are staying home will be contacted by the school on a weekly basis so they are being closely monitored by the DSL or Deputy. Home visits will be considered if concerns arise and concerns will be communicated with the relevant social worker. A record key communication will be recorded on My Concern. These arrangements are also in place for children who do not meet the 'vulnerable' definition but the school has concerns about. These children have been identified and will be contacted weekly alongside the vulnerable group by the DSL or Deputy and any key communications will be recorded on My Concern.

Communications with parents/ carers will reinforce keeping children safe, discussion of issues relevant to each family and online safety.

Schools have flexibility to offer school places to children on the edges of receiving social care support or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school. School will review weekly who should be allowed to attend school depending on the outcomes of weekly telephone calls to families.

The DSL or Deputies will continue to liaise with the allocated social worker when required and attend meetings (such as CIN meetings) which can be conducted remotely.

Safeguarding children who continue to attend school

The school will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish.

The school currently has no plans to cluster with other settings in the local area so no additional arrangements are required such as checking the suitability of staff from other settings. This document will be adjusted accordingly if a cluster model is adopted.

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. The school will be staffed by permanent members of staff who have already had the relevant suitability checks carried out as detailed on the Single Central Record. No volunteers will be used during this period and no new members of staff will be appointed.

No visitors will be permitted on site during this period unless for safeguarding reasons (such as a social worker) or personnel providing essential services such as therapists.

The school will refer to the government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID-19. A risk assessment of measures has been conducted.

School will follow up the attendance of children expected to attend school but do not. The school will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their children and the children subsequently do not attend. To support the above, the school will take the opportunity when communicating with parents and carers to confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available. In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, the school should notify their social worker.

The DfE daily online attendance form ([link](#)) should be completed by the school recording the number of children who attend school each day.

Support for children's mental health who attend school is in place as appropriate through the relevant Head of Year, School Counsellor or Assistant Head Pastoral who continue to be available on a regular basis.

The headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety. At least 1 senior leader will be on site when the school is open at all times.

Arrangements for keeping children safe online while at school remain as usual. Appropriate filtering and monitoring systems remain in place and are managed by the school's IT Support Team remotely.

Safeguarding children who remain at home - arrangements for home learning

Parent/ carers have been issued guidance regarding online safety at home which includes information on reporting any concerns to the school or Barnet MASH relating to issues such as cyberbullying.

Staff should continue to adhere to the Acceptable IT Use Policy (<https://www.kingalfred.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/2-9-Acceptable-Computer-Use-Policy.pdf>) and Keeping Children and Staff Safe (Staff Code of Conduct), which is available on the Staff Shared Area, regarding online interaction with children. However, these will be kept under review if changes are made staff will be given guidance on appropriate online interaction (separate addendum to these documents are attached). Children are not permitted to contact staff online including on social media, other than approved channels such as Canvas and school email. If this occurs this should be reported to the DSL or a Deputy especially if safeguarding concerns are indicated. The DSL or Deputy will deal with the situation in line with the safeguarding policy.

Children are aware of clear reporting routes if they wish to raise a concern (e.g. ChildLine, CEOP).

The school will have regular contact with parents and carers. These communications should be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Parents and carers may choose to supplement the school online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors. In their communications with parents and carers, the school will emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children. Parents/ carers have been provided with a range of websites providing information about online safety such as Thinkuknow.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and in emails to parents/ carers.

When changes are made, staff will be issued with an updated version of this addendum which they must read so they are familiar with any new requirements.

Addendum issued: 19.04.20202 (Version 2) by James Griffiths and Fiona Parsons