

Annex to King Alfred School Safeguarding Policy – version 1.2

1st September 2020

Phased Return to School during Covid19

DofE Coronavirus Helpline: 0800 046 8687

Context

The way schools and colleges are currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual, however, a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same.

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 1.2 of this annex. It will be reviewed by our 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 on My Concern and in the Essential Safeguarding Folder on all desktops

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 and volunteers can to 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.

The School's Safeguarding Policy remains in place and has been updated with two Addendums to reflect our response to the Coronavirus. This Annex reflects our return to school.

Current school position - Phased Return

From 1st September 2020 there will be the full return of pupils to the school. Students will remain in “bubbles” as set out by the DoFE and remain in these pods with a member for all activities, lessons and lunch. They will not move out of these pods at any time.

Before children return to the school site, all staff will be given a presentation on current Health and Safety Risks to ensure that they are aware of the latest guidance about COVID19.

All staff and volunteers attending on site from outside our school will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of Health and Safety and Safeguarding risks and know how to act if they have concerns.

Safeguarding partners

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 officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need. Our Safeguarding Partners are:

- The Police
- Barnet MASH
- CAMHS

Roles and responsibilities

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

Our DSL and at least one deputy DSL will be available on site during the school day.

The DSL will continue to keep up to date with safeguarding developments via safeguarding partners, newsletter and professional advice groups.

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Tracy Preston Email: tracyp@kingalfred.org.uk Phone 0750698539

Deputy DSL Lower School:

James Griffiths Email: jamesg@kingalfred.org.uk

Deputy DSL Upper School:

Fiona Parsons Email: fionap@kingalfred.org.uk Phone 07506980602

Vulnerable children

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

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend school, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. Where a parent does not want their child to attend school, and their child is considered vulnerable, we will discuss this with the social worker and explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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 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.

We will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, including remotely if needed.

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 on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

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 in school, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

During lockdown staff may have identified new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they will have seen them in person following partial school

closures. These concerns will be followed by during the return to school as a matter of urgency.

Our staff and volunteers 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

Vulnerable children regardless of age group are expected to return to school now that it is now appropriate for them to do so.

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, FaceTime, Skype or by contact 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 the family 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 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 or volunteers attending our school are dealt with thoroughly and efficiently and in accordance with our Whistleblowing Policy.

Staff training and induction

The DSL, Deputy DSLs and Safeguarding Team will receive their Level 3 Safeguarding Training in September 2020 .

On their return to school, all current school staff will receive updated Safeguarding Training and be given Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2020. All new staff, supply staff and volunteers that are recruited will receive a safeguarding induction in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy.

If 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.

For volunteers we will continue to 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/volunteers 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.

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 Peer on Peer Abuse and Safeguarding Policies.

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 safeguarding and support children.

Our staff will follow the process for online safety set out in our Acceptable Use of IT and Safeguarding Policies and the school will continue to ensure any use of online learning tools and systems are in line with privacy and data protection requirements.

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.

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 a communication plan is in place to support that child. Details of that plan will be recorded in the safeguarding file for that child. It will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current during these measures.

Mental Health

We recognise that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of students and their parents/carers.

The Head of Lower School, Upper School Assistant Head Pastoral, Heads of Year and Head of Counselling engage with pupils and their parents regularly to identify a change in a pupils behaviour or emotional state, and are aware that these changes can be displayed in different ways – all of which could indicate an underlying problem. Support for pupils and their parents is available in different ways – by phone, via the counsellor, via KPLs and teaching staff.