

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Avalon School



Reviewed by:	Mrs. J Callaway	Date: 20 th April 2020
Next review due by:	1 st June 2020 or following an incident or change to current legislation or guidance	

Contents

Important contacts	3
1. Scope and definitions	3
2. Core safeguarding principles	4
3. Reporting concerns.....	4
4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements	4
5. Working with other agencies	4
6. Monitoring attendance	5
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	5
10. Contact plans	5
11. Safeguarding all children	6
12. Online safety	6
13. Mental health	7
14. Staff recruitment, training and induction	7
15. Children attending other settings	7
16. Monitoring arrangements.....	8
17. Links with other policies.....	8

Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Mrs. Joanna Callaway	jcallaway@avalon-school.co.uk 0151 625 6993
Deputy DSL	Mr. Martin Ashton	martinashton@avalon-school.co.uk 0151 625 6993
Deputy DSL & Early Years DSL	Mrs. Alison Prandle	aprandle@avalon-school.co.uk 0151 625 6993
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	Mrs. Ann Evans	annevans@avalon-school.co.uk 0151 625 6993
Headteacher	Mrs. Joanna Callaway	jcallaway@avalon-school.co.uk 0151 625 6993
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Ms. Anne King	0151 666 444 Referrals to: anneking1@wirral.gov.uk and kerrywilliams@wirral.gov.uk
Chair of governors and Designated Governor for Safeguarding	Dr. Catherine Kidd	schooloffice@avalon-school.co.uk 0151 625 6993

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners and local authority (LA) Wirral Authority.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), and should be read in conjunction with that policy and the DfE's guidance.

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

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, both for children still attending school and those at home.

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

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely by mobile telephone.

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be Mrs Ann Evans, who can be contacted by email: annevans@avalon-school.co.uk

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure they (the senior leader) can:

- › 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
- › Liaise with parents, staff and external agencies as required and as appropriate.

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

The following guidance from our 3 local safeguarding partners is currently in place and updated as changes occur:

<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/working-arrangements-during-covid-19/>

6. 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 telephone or email.
- › 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 to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible and keep our whole school contacts lists up to date.

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 – about both children attending school and those at home.

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 – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site or remotely.

The LADO will be contacted as per normal procedures and any investigations may be carried out remotely by such means as telephone, video conferencing or email, as appropriate.

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

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, where it may be appropriate to do so. If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10 below.

10. Contact plans

We will have contact plans for any children who have a social worker and for children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

- › They won't be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or
- › They would usually attend but have to self-isolate

As appropriate each child will have an individual plan which sets out:

- › How often the school will make contact – this will be at least once a week
- › Which staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well
- › How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits (in twos), or a combination of both, as appropriate

Any such plans will be agreed with children's social care where relevant, and we will review them on a three weekly basis, or sooner if appropriate to do so. If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care or if necessary the police.

11. 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 line with the procedures set out in section 3 above.

For children at home, they will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to any school systems
- No contact from children or families
- Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

Children are likely to be spending more time online during this period – see section 12 below for our approach to online safety both in and outside school.

See section 13 below for information on how we will support pupils' mental health.

12. Online safety

12.1 In school

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

If IT staff in school are unavailable, our contingency plan is to contact Pro Network at:

support@pro-networks.co.uk or 01244 535 527

12.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff code of conduct policy and IT acceptable use policy

All staff will have read understood and will comply with the acceptable use of technology policy.

Staff/pupil relationships and communication, including the use of social media, will continue to be followed as set out in the safer working practices guidance 2019 and staff code of conduct policy.

With regards to ensuring remote learning safeguarding practices such as using pre-recorded videos to share with children, making video calls or phoning pupils, the guidance from [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) and the school's acceptable use of technology policy, staff code of conduct policy, staff agreement for online teaching from home and pupil agreement for online learning at home and [Safer working practices guidance 2019](#) will all apply.

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 they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

13.3 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 and carers will be kept up to date via our school website and by email

13. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils but where appropriate we may change these to offering support over the phone instead of face-to-face.

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.

14. Staff recruitment, training and induction

14.1 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.

14.3 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

14.4 Keeping records of who's 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.

We will use the single central record to log:

- › Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day
- › Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff or volunteers, as appropriate

15. 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 school's headteacher

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.

16. 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 every 3 weeks by the DSL/ Head teacher. At every review, it will also be approved by the Designated Governor for Safeguarding.

17. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff code of conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Anti- Bullying policy