

COVID-19 Appendix to Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy for Early Years



Trafford Strategic
Safeguarding Partnership

Introduction

COVID-19 (commonly known as Coronavirus) has presented a huge challenge nationally to the normal running of education and child care provision. On 20th May 2020 the Government updated their guidance 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers' which included an announcement that schools are expected to welcome back more students and this policy addendum is written to reflect the government guidance.

Education and child care settings are still expected to remain open to those children who are identified as vulnerable¹ and their needs cannot be catered for at home, or they need to attend the education/child care setting as it is a safe place, irrespective of what year group they are in.

This appendix has been prepared to explain key changes and interim measures being taken within our setting to continue to meet our safeguarding requirements during these extraordinary times.

Status of this document

This is an appendix to the main body of our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and will be effective from **1st Sept 2020** until the setting returns to business as usual, following the COVID-19 pandemic.

It has been formally agreed and signed off by **Partington Learning Partnership**.

Queries about the contents of this document should be directed to:

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Job Title: **Executive Headteacher**

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All staff and volunteers working in school or those working remotely will be provided with a copy of this addendum via **email** and be required to confirm to the DSL that they have read and understand this document.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) arrangements

It is vital that while our setting remains open a suitably trained DSL is available for consultation and advice.

The optimal scenario for our setting and one we will strive to achieve is to have a trained DSL or deputy available on site. Due to staff self-isolating, social-distancing or being physically unavailable for other reasons, it is recognised this may not always be possible, and where this is the case there are two options we will implement, the first being the preferred and second a backup option:

1. A trained DSL or deputy from the setting will be available to be contacted via phone if they are working off site.

¹ Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker, those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plan, and children who the setting have otherwise identified as vulnerable.

2. Sharing trained DSLs or deputies within The Dean Trust until our own trained DSL can return to work or be available.

Where a trained DSL or deputy is not on site, in addition to one of the above options, the setting will have a senior leader who will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This person will update and manage access to child protection files, liaise with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaise with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the setting.

Our DSL, deputy DSL and others with designated roles are identified in the main body of our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. In the event one of the above scenarios is implemented and the DSL changes, this will be communicated to staff by email.

Contacting Trafford Children's First Response

Making referrals into Trafford Children's First Response will continue as usual, with referrals being made via the online referral form, and telephone consultations taking place when advice is required. Where possible the referral will be made by the DSL, however if the DSL is not available in person the senior leader who is co-ordinating safeguarding on site may be required to make the referral after getting advice from a suitably trained DSL.

- Online Referral Form – www.trafford.gov.uk/firstresponse
- Telephone – 0161 912 5125
- Email – FirstResponse@trafford.gov.uk

Contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

In the instance a referral to the LADO is necessary this will be actioned by the **Executive Headteacher** within 1 working day of the allegation coming to light. Should they not be available then **the Head of School** will make the referral.

Contact methods for the LADO will remain the same with all LADO referrals being made via the online referral form. Consultation by phone may be necessary in which case this will be done via Trafford Children's First Response (contact details above).

- Online Referral Form - <https://trafford-framework.egovhub.net/ALLEGATIONOFPROFESSIONALABUSE/launch>
- Email – LADO@trafford.gov.uk

If it is decided that a LADO Meeting is necessary the setting will take part in this via Microsoft Teams which is the software being used by the LADO.

Attendance of Vulnerable Children

The attendance information for vulnerable children will be reported to the local authority on a daily basis. The method for doing this is **through the daily returns to your relevant Liaison Officer.**

Vulnerable children may not be attending school for other reasons including self-isolation, social-distancing or for another reason, these will be monitored by the setting and contact with the child and their family will be maintained via **daily** phone calls. When phone calls are not answered and contact cannot be established with a family, the setting will take the following measures:

- The Vulnerable Children's Daily Log Attendance sheet will be completed and sent to Trafford Children's First Response by email.

Children of concern who do not meet the 'vulnerable' definition

The setting also has students about whom there are concerns, however they do not have a social worker or an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan so do not meet the criteria of a 'vulnerable' child. With these children the setting still feels that contact should be maintained to ensure safety and welfare can be monitored as best as practically possible. The EWO will make daily contact with any families that do not attend school to confirm the reason for absence. Details will be logged on Cpoms. Children whose families cannot be contacted will receive a 'door step' visit to establish reasons for absence and to check the welfare of the absent pupils.

All other Children

The setting continued to take their normal attendance register from 1st June 2020 in line with government requirements however the logistics of children attending school has to be carefully managed. All year groups have returned to setting.

For those students/learners who are not physically attending the setting we still have a duty to keep them safe, including online. The following measures have been implemented to ensure that contact with children is maintained and setting staff can maintain oversight of their welfare as best as practically possible.

- Daily tracking of each child's attendance / absence by the EWO.
- Absence / First Response calls by the EWO.
- Follow-up calls from the Child Protection officer (as required).
- Fortnightly courtesy phone calls from key person/class teacher

If staff have any concerns about children they will follow the standard reporting procedure outlined in the main body of our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Staff Training

When the setting is open it will be staffed appropriately and all staff will satisfy the training requirements of 'Keeping children safe in education, September 2020, in that they will have had copies of the following policies and had them explained to them how they operate in the setting:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding response to Children who go missing from education
- Role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any their deputy/deputies)
- Part one and Annex A of Keeping children safe in education, September 2020.

In addition to the above all staff will have received appropriate safeguarding and child protection training. Further to this, all staff receive regular safeguarding updates, this is done in the following ways:

- Staff meetings (virtually at the moment)
- Appraisal
- Staff briefings / briefing notes
- Emails
- TSSP Safeguarding in Education Newsletter

Allegations against Adults working with Children

Any staff member who works in the setting will be aware of the process for sharing concerns about colleagues or other adults who works with children in regulated activity. In our setting they will report these concerns directly to the **Headteacher** as soon as practically possible, ideally face to face, however during

challenging times that may not always be possible, and a telephone call is also acceptable, but an email or text message is not acceptable as this may not be picked up in a timely manner.

It is made clear to staff in training, induction and in our Whistleblowing Policy that they should not consult or speak of the concern/allegation with other parties, without the expressed permission of the **Headteacher** so as not to damage the integrity of any potential investigation, nor tarnish the reputation of colleagues prior to any due process.