**Keeping Children Safe in Education**

Interim Safeguarding & Child Protection Arrangements for Schools & Colleges- Coronavirus (Covid-19)

## Context

Whilst acknowledging the pressure that all schools and colleges are under as a result of the required responses to addressing coronavirus (Covid-19), we understand it remains essential that we continue to be a safe place for students.

This guidance is designed to support us a whole school/ college community to ensure we continue to have appropriate regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2019) and promote the welfare of all our students.

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:

- With regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children must always continue to come first.

- If anyone in a school or college has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act immediately in line with existing expectation

- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy must be available.

- Safer working practices must be maintained -it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children.

- Children should continue to be safeguarded when they are online.

Schools are therefore being asked to continue to **provide care** for a limited number of children - children who are **vulnerable**, and children whose parents are **critical** to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

Vulnerable children include those who are supported by a social care (have a social worker), those with **safeguarding and welfare needs,** including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Additional information is available by following the link below.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people

As well as safeguarding those children who are attending our setting, thought must be given to how we safeguard those children at home who are also deemed to be vulnerable. Safeguarding principles remain unchanged. How we escalate and manage them is communicated here and will be shared with all Governors and staff

to ensure they are understood by the whole school community. This document is  an annex to our more detailed safeguarding policy which still contains relevant details and information on recognising and responding to abuse and continues to be a source of reference.

As a school and in line with guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) we are committed to working in partnership with Stockport Local Authority and Stockport Safeguarding Children Partnership. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all should make sure their approach remains child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. We work in a multi-agency way understanding no single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

## 1 Safeguarding vulnerable* Students remotely

We remain committed to supporting our vulnerable students and will take the following steps:

- Where vulnerable students are not in school/college we will ensure that phone contact is maintained by the school with all vulnerable pupils at least once per week.

- Where it is identified that a child or family are in need of additional support or guidance we will ensure that this is in place. This may include extra phone calls, signposting and referring to other services. All interactions will be recorded and stored confidentially.

- All vulnerable children and families should be provided with a point of contact for support this should be a school mobile/phone number or an actively monitored email account. Sharing of personal phone numbers and emails is to be avoided.

*Described in appendix 1

**2 School provision for students currently supported at Team Around the Child (TAC) Level 3 or subject to a Child Protection Plan**

Children and families who have an allocated Social Worker will **continue** to be supported by them. A set of working principles has been devised and is included in the last section of this document.

Schools continue to be a potential key source of additional support to this group. The established relationships between school and family are of great value and may be key to them feeling confident in seeking and engaging with help when it is needed.

Going forward we recognise these children may need to **access school** and engage in the **daily care offer**. Where these children need to attend, we will work with Social Workers to offer such a placement. Where families inform us of a need for help, by way of a placement, we will work with them and Children's Social Care (as appropriate) to agree a plan of support. Where we believe a child is at risk of significant harm or danger, we will refer our concerns (by **phone** in the first instance) to Children's Social Care – as described in our full Safeguarding Policy.

*The contact system outlined section 1 is a crucial component to the proactive safeguarding this group.*

*Child protection referrals to the Multi-agency Safeguarding and Support Hub (MASSH) will be made via telephone.*

We will ensure that a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is available* to support staff where they have concerns about a child.

This includes:

- Children attending the setting.

- Those children and their families being contacted by school staff as part of a support package.

- Children who cause concern through other contact or interactions with staff e.g. through remote learning offers etc.

**3 Reporting a concern**

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 the safeguarding note of concern and contacting a DSL on site or off site.

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 This should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Karen Southwick.

The Headteacher/Principal will offer support in the process of managing allegations.

For further information on how to contact the DSL & DDSL please use your telephone or walk to their office.

The full responsibilities of the DSL and their deputy are covered in our main Safeguarding Policy.

If staff cannot reach the DSL/DDSL, and they consider a child to be at immediate risk of harm they will contact the Multi –agency Safeguarding and Support Hub (MASSH)  tel. (0161) 217-6028 or 6024 or the Police -999 as they feel appropriate.

The DSL/DDSL & other pastoral staff will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

*KCSiE 2019 states " Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to define what "available" means and whether **in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable."**

## 4 Young carers

We understand that at this current time students who are young carers may benefit from additional contact and support. We are committed to working with other agencies to support their wellbeing and will take the following steps:

- Once a week phone contact with the young person.

- Make sure the young carer knows how to access advice for the person they are caring for.
- Awareness of help and support through Stockport's website for guidance.
- Offer of food support if needed
- Recorded and report concerns in the appropriate way.


- If support and guidance are required, please contact: Katy Franklin Signpost for Young Carers in Stockport https://www.signpostforcarers.org.uk/

## 5 Children with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)

Stockport LA has issued separate information on how Children with an EHCP will be supported – See Advisory notes.

We keep in contact with all children with an EHCP who are not attending through telephone calls and updating the local authority register. We also send out additional learning resources via post weekly to support targets in individual plans.

## 6 Supporting children in school

Dial Park Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.


We 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 social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on hand washing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.


We will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, appropriate support is in place for them. This will be tailored to each child as needed and recorded on CPOMS.

Where there are concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we work with Stockport Local Authority.

### 7 Safeguarding Children (off school site)

As a school/college we recognise that our students may face challenges and be exposed to risks whilst away from school/college for this extended period. School staff will still have contact with students, and we will use this time as an opportunity to offer support, advice and guidance, applying the principles of the school environment to offer suitable pastoral support.  Everyone has a role to play and we expect staff to be vigilant in their interactions with students. Staff should take steps to safeguard pupils by contacting the DSL/DDSL or by making a direct referral
 (**in line with usual expectations- see school safeguarding policy and as described in section 2 above**).

### 8 Online safety

It is likely many students are accessing internet enable devices more frequently whilst families follow the advice of the government to 'stay at home'. This is also currently our primary source of contact with most of our students. It is therefore of the utmost importance that we continue to create as many opportunities as we can to support and educate children on how to stay safe online. Staff should be mindful of existing  polices and the details described by the DfE in KCSiE19 -teaching-online-safety-in-schools .

Dial Park Primary School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Regard should be given by staff to how they use technology to engage with pupils safely- an advisory note is attached to this document.

**Further advice and guidance is available from:**

**James Clark is the computing and DSL. Simon Doughty is the PSHCE lead.**

## 9 Peer Abuse

Dial Park Primary School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing students on and off site and providing support to any report of such abuse**.**

Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in the main safeguarding policy and in  part 5 of KCSIE.

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on notes of concern and appropriate referrals made.

## 10 Attendance

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

If Dial Park Primary School has any children in attendance (e.g. because they are vulnerable or their parent(s) / carers are critical workers) we will submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE by 12 noon - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings

The DfE and Stockport LA have shared guidance on recording and reporting pupil's attendance- see advisory notes.

## 11 Emotional wellbeing

We recognise the complexities and challenges of the Covid-19 crisis and the potential impact it may have on the emotional wellbeing of our staff and pupils. We will continually review guidance and cascade information across our workforce. We ask staff to be vigilant for signs of distress and to respond to them in line with our usual working practice.

https://www.gov.uk/education/health-safety-and-wellbeing-in-schools

LA information and guidance are attached in the advisory note section.

## 12 Encompass

As an Encompass school we received notifications from the Police informing us when there has been an incident of domestic abuse or violence at a child's home. This process is to continue, and we will actively monitor notifications, risk asses them in conjunction with other information we hold and escalate our concerns. We will make assessments on a case by case basis of the need to contact families following a notification.

## 13 Safer recruitment & safer working practice

Any new staff, visitors or volunteers will be risk assessed and inducted in line with existing practice and in compliance with part 3 KCSiE.

Staff should continue to apply the principles of our safer working practice standards and general code of conduct.

It is particularly important that staff pay regard to previous advice and guidance on safer worker practice, **especially in relation to any online activity**.

 An additional advisory note is attached.

## 14 Staff training & safeguarding induction

All existing school/college staff have completed statutory safeguarding training and have read part 1 of KCSIE, safer working practice and the school's safeguarding policy. Staff should adhere the principles of these key documents and this supplementary guide. Staff should also be aware that there may be further updates and guidance. Individuals will need to vigilant and ensure that they read all new guidance and ask for clarity or support if required.

The existing Stockport school and college workforce may move between schools and colleges on a temporary basis in response to COVID-19. Any staff arriving at this school/college from another establishment will be given a tailored induction and copies of the school safeguarding and safer working practice policy.

# Appendices

**Definitions**

The DfE states "Attending education settings is known as a protective factor for children receiving the support of a social worker. It is right that we prioritise support for those who will benefit the most. We are balancing this carefully with the urgent need to reduce social contact right across society to support our work to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Leaders of educational settings and designated safeguarding leads know who their most vulnerable children are and will have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edges of receiving children's social care support."

## Vulnerable children (DfE definition)

The definition of and information on vulnerable children can be found by following the link below.

Please pay particular regard to Paragraphs 1, 3, 4, 6, 13 and 14

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people

# Advisory Notes & Additional Information

**<u>Advice on the use social media by education colleagues- Covid19 arrangements</u>**

During this period of disruption, we are seeing some truly creative approaches to engaging young people, particularly from the education sector. It is important that we do not lose sight of safeguarding practices and standards, or the reasons we have them in the first place. When using Social media or other platforms we need to risk asses continuously.  Although these are unprecedented times and we do not have a 'map' for many of the unfolding challenges. We can support our colleagues to work safely and continue to apply safer working standards.

As a starting point it may be useful to refresh on the specific age limits that are applied to platforms.

Most social media services require users to be at least 13 years of age to access and use their services. This includes Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram, Musical.ly and Skype.  WhatsApp has an age restriction of 16 years and older.

Using social media as a learning platform is not recommended, because of the age restrictions in place and also because there is opportunity to create informal relationships between students and staff.

Whilst there is no age restriction for watching videos on YouTube, users need to be 13 or older to have their own YouTube account (enabling them to subscribe to other channels, like videos, post comments, share their own content and flag inappropriate

content). As a sector we have worked consistently to ensure that these messages are repeatedly shared with parents and carers as part of our approaches to safeguarding. As role models in the community I am sure you all agree that we must follow our own advice and respect the guidelines.

Obviously, it is important we have routes to interact and exchange information with young people as it is a key way to safeguard their physical and emotional wellbeing; as well as offering informal opportunities to learn and maintaining a sense of identity and belonging. If you have existing mechanisms such as virtual learning environments it would be better to use these creatively and ensure staff continue to apply the expected risk assessments. Staff can of course use and promote appropriate sites and where possible encourage children to share their work and experiences, but this has to be in a safe and controlled way. Using external platforms will potentially remove a lot of safeguards.

Staff need to continue to maintain their professional standards in these more informal times, and you may wish to remind them of your respective standards and acceptable user agreements. This should help avoid momentary lapses in judgment and encourage colleagues to reflect on language, dress, environments and any materials or videos before they publish content.

**Using a learning platform to set assignments.**

The next level is setting work remotely via a learning platform. Many schools will already have access to Google Classroom or Microsoft Teams (part of Office 365) or both. If staff are familiar with using Google Docs or Google Drive then starting to use Google Classroom should be quite simple. It is cleanly laid out and intuitive to use. Here is a link to a 16-minute tutorial video which covers the key points.

You should contact your IT provider if you wish to use Google Classroom for support on adding individual pupils.

School ICT Services (AVA) also have a series of useful guides they have provided to clients previously- https://www.sseln.org.uk/how-to-guides

You may also find the following useful-

Google Classroom Tutorial (16 minutes) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6L-nZGIUTE

Lots of useful tips for Google Classroom (19 minutes) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCNImsWUxZA&t=581s

There are a number of benefits of using these platforms including:

- Being able to set and schedule assignments.

- Setting tasks for groups of pupils.

- Pupils can submit work.

- Quizzes can be auto-marked.

- Pupils can ask questions

- Staff can provide feedback and grading.

**Safeguarding note: If pupils are being asked to share photos of their work with their teacher, the teacher should remind them about key messages around online safety and the school's usual policy around photographs should apply. The school's online safety coordinator should be consulted for advice.**

## Use of personal phones and use of email

It may be helpful remind staff of the need to withhold their telephone number if they are using a personal phone to contact pupils. If staff are emailing students, this should only be from their work account.

It may be useful to consider and remind staff of the contents of your safer working practice guide, sections 11 and 12 are particularly relevant. A copy is attached for reference.

GSWP Sept 2019.pdf