

Covid-19: Addendum to Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy - March 2020

This addendum has been completed in response to Covid-19 to ensure the high level of safeguarding in our school continues.

The Department for Education COVID-19 helpline is available to answer questions relating to schools and other educational establishments in England.

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Telephone: 0800 046 8687

Lines are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm and weekends 10am to 4pm.

Guidance can be found via the link below:

<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>

Role of local authority

Daily guidance is sent to schools from the Department for Education. There is also daily contact/advice available from Steve Compton, Principal Education Improvement Adviser at Shropshire Council.

Principal Education Improvement Adviser

Education Improvement Service

Learning and Skills Group

Shirehall

Abbey Foregate

Shrewsbury

Shropshire

SY2 6ND

01743 254444

Rosemary Hooper, Shropshire Virtual School for Looked After Children is also available to provide support and guidance to schools regarding PLAC and LAC children.

Head Shropshire Virtual School for Looked After Children

Mt McKinley Business Park

Shrewsbury

01743 250124

virtualschool@shropshire.gov.uk

Designated safeguarding leads/deputies continue to liaise with social workers as required.

Keeping children safe in education

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 and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy should be available
- 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 protected when they are online.

At Woodside School we continue, as far as is reasonably possible, to continue our whole school approach to safeguarding. Our policies and processes continue to be followed to ensure we have a robust approach to safeguarding and child protection.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (and deputy) arrangements

At Woodside School there will always be a designated lead on site. This will be Claire Bennett (Heateacher), Karen Williams or Louise Jones (Associate Headteachers). Deputy designated leads, including Lindsay Morris (Social Inclusion Manager) and Simon Clay (Early Help and Attendance Officer) are all available by phone, email or online conferencing. Safeguarding processes will continue to be followed as set out in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Staff are expected to be vigilant and report any concerns to DSLs immediately. DSLs will make referrals to FPOC if necessary.

Vulnerable children

At Woodside School all designated and deputy leads know who our vulnerable children are and work flexibly to cater for those children that need support. Staff and trustees recognise the continued importance for school staff to work with and support children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. Lindsay Morris continues to liaise with social workers regularly to ensure children with a Child In Need plan, Child Protection plan or those under social work assessment are safe and monitored. Weekly contact is made, via email, to check-in on Looked After/Previously Looked After children as necessary.

Other children considered as vulnerable by the safeguarding team at Woodside are either monitored in school (if attending) or through emails to families as necessary. We will signpost local groups, organisations and support available to our families. For example, food parcels available via contact with Shropshire Council.

We do not have any EHCP children attending school as these families have chosen to keep their children at home. We have contacted all EHCP families to ensure they have the support they need and they know they can contact us if needed.

We are also mindful of peer on peer abuse. Any remote working recommended by Woodside School is via platforms and applications that we use within school and/or know to be safe. Parents/carers are reminded of the importance of online safety when remote recommendations are emailed out to families. Any reports of online or other peer-on-peer abuse reported to staff at Woodside School will be dealt with by Claire Bennett, Karen Williams or Louise Jones via phone contact with relevant parents/carers.

Any concerns raised about staff working who may pose a safeguarding risk to children (the principles in part 4 of KCSIE will continue to support how a school or college responds to any such concerns) will be dealt with by DSLs using the same process as outlined in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Attendance

Local authorities and schools do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. Woodside School is working with social workers to agree with families whether children in need should be attending education provision. We have a daily register of children expected and follow our attendance procedures as always. We will seek to contact the parents/carers of any child that is expected at school but does not arrive. If we are unable to make contact we will make a home visit (if two staff members are available) and/or request a 'Safe and Well' visit from the police to ensure the child and their family is safe and well.

The department has introduced a daily online attendance form to keep a record of children of critical workers and vulnerable children who are attending school. This allows for a record of attendance for safeguarding purposes and allows schools to provide accurate, up-to-date data to the department on the number of children taking up places. This is completed by Claire Bennett.

Staff training, safeguarding induction and safer recruitment

All existing school Woodside staff and trustees have had safeguarding training and read part 1 of KCSIE.

We have not recruited and new staff or new volunteers so have no unknown adults entering our school. Any recruitment has been suspended for the foreseeable future.

The existing school workforce may be required to move between schools on a temporary basis in response to COVID-19. The receiving school or college should judge, on a case-by-case basis, the level of safeguarding induction required. In most cases, the existing workforce will already have received appropriate safeguarding training and all they will require is a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

Any staff member coming to Woodside will be given a copy of our Safeguarding and Child protection Policy and will receive a briefing from one of the Woodside safeguarding team before beginning their duties. Woodside staff will request the same from any other school they may be asked to work in.

Children moving schools

It will be important for any school whose children are attending another setting to do whatever they reasonably can to provide the receiving institution with any relevant welfare and child protection information. This will be especially important where children are vulnerable. For looked-after children, any change in school should be led and

managed by the VSH with responsibility for the child. For any child coming to Woodside School from elsewhere, a member of the safeguarding team will contact a designated lead or deputy from the school sending this child. If a child is sent elsewhere from Woodside, a designated lead or deputy will contact the receiving school and share relevant safeguarding information with the designated lead or deputy. Any relevant plans including CP, CIN and EHCPs will be shared as soon as reasonably practicable. Senior leaders from both schools should take responsibility for the transferring of information to ensure this is done as securely as possible. This will most likely be done by secure, password-protected email.

Whilst schools and colleges must continue to have appropriate regard to data protection and GDPR they do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Further advice about information sharing can be found at paragraphs 76-83 of KCSIE.

Mental health

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their families. Teachers should be aware of this in setting expectations of children's work where they are at home. The work we send to Woodside children consists of a balance between key learning skills and knowledge such as times tables, spelling and reading with physical activities and ideas for families to do together.

Where they are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, schools should ensure appropriate support is in place for them. Shropshire Educational Psychology Service has provided a helpline for children expressing unusually high levels of anxiety. The telephone number is 01743 258414.

At Woodside School we have sent out a letter to remind children at home that we are thinking of them, of our values and ways to keep themselves happy and resilient. We will continue to regularly keep in touch with all our children via email with suggestions on how to keep happy and safe.

Online safety in schools

As previously stated, any remote working recommended by Woodside School is via platforms and applications that we use within school and/or know to be safe. These known platforms and applications are also in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. Parents/carers are reminded of the importance of online safety when remote working recommendations are emailed out to families. Any reports of online or other peer-on-peer abuse reported to staff at Woodside School will be dealt with by Claire Bennett, Karen Williams or Louise Jones via phone contact with relevant parents/carers.

Our IT Technician, Mark Owen continues to be available to work both in school and remotely providing IT support as needed.

The UK Council for Internet Safety provides information to help governing boards assure themselves that any new arrangements continue to effectively safeguard children online.

The UK Safer Internet Centre's professional online safety helpline also provides support for the children's workforce with any online safety issues they face.

Through the computing curriculum, Woodside children have been taught reporting routes so they can raise any concerns whilst online.

Parents and carers may choose to supplement the school or college online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors. When we communicate with families we continue to 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.

Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes:

Internet matters - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
London Grid for Learning - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

Net-aware - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC

Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online

UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carers

The department encourages schools and colleges to share this support with parents and carers.

This addendum will be reviewed regularly according to local and national advice.