

ADDENDUM

COVID-19 school closure arrangements
for Safeguarding and Child Protection at
Meopham School

Document Management

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Contents

- [1. SCOPE](#)
- [2. CORE SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES](#)
- [3. THE ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER](#)
- [4. REPORTING CONCERNS](#)
- [5. DSL \(AND DEPUTY\) ARRANGEMENTS](#)
- [6. WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES](#)
- [7. MONITORING ATTENDANCE](#)
- [8. PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE](#)
- [9. CONCERNS ABOUT A STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER](#)
- [10. SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE NOT 'VULNERABLE' BUT WHERE WE HAVE CONCERNS](#)
- [11. SAFEGUARDING FOR CHILDREN NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL](#)
- [12. ONLINE SAFETY](#)
- [13. MENTAL HEALTH](#)
- [14. STAFF, TRAINING, RECRUITMENT AND INDUCTION](#)
- [15. CHILDREN ATTENDING OTHER SETTINGS](#)
- [16. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS](#)

Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Susie Iles	07833298775	susie.iles@swale.at
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Glyn Williams Toby Payne Lily Miles Terri Jarvis Kate Girling Zara Romney		glyn.williams@swale.at toby.payne@swale.at lily.miles@swale.at terri.jarvis@swale.at kate.girling@swale.at zara.romney@swale.at
Head of School	Suzanne Dickinson		suzanne.dickinson@swale.at
Trust Safeguarding Leadership Group Member	Susie Iles	07833298775	susie.iles@swale.at
Chair of Governors	Alan Barham		alan.barham@swale.at
Safeguarding Governor	Steve Payne		steve.payne@swale.at

**A list of additional Trust Safeguarding Leads and contact details can be found here:
Emergency Contact Details SAT Designated Safeguarding Leads**

1. Scope

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

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.

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.
- Any child whom the school has identified as in need.

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 5 for details of our arrangements).
- It is essential that unsuitable people do not enter the school workforce or gain access to children.
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online.

3. The Role of the Executive Headteacher

- The Executive Headteacher must ensure that systems are in place to regularly check on vulnerable pupils who are not in school and that the system is quality assured.
- The Executive Headteacher will ensure that all staff are aware of new procedures.
- 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.

4. 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.

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.

5. 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 'Key Contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email and the rota published on the staff Google Drive as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them.

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

The Executive Headteacher will ensure that there is a senior leader identified who will be responsible for coordinating safeguarding including 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.

6. 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 local safeguarding partners
- The local authority and local safeguarding board

7. 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
- The lead DSL (or nominated deputy, if the lead DSL is unavailable) will 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 [daily online attendance form](#).

We have made every effort to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details for parents and carers, and additional contact details where possible. If your contact details have changed please email MSS-reception@swale.at

8. 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.

9. 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.

If there is any allegation made against a professional a DSL will contact the LADO.

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.

10. Support for children who are not 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns

We have the option to offer places in school to children who do not 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. Including children who have previously had a social worker, or who have not met the threshold for a referral but where staff have raised concerns.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 11.1 below.

11. Safeguarding for children not attending school

11.1 Contact plans

We have contact plans for children with a social worker and 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

These plans set out:

- How often the school will make contact
- Which staff member(s) will make contact
- How they will make contact

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them fortnightly.

If we cannot make contact, we will contact children's social care or the police.

11.2 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 particular, children are likely to be spending more time online (see section 12 below).

12. Online safety

12.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school and will refer to the Trust IT Support Team for additional support.

12.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff code of conduct [Active Protocols](#) and acceptable use policy .

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 4 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.

12.3 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 and ensure there is guidance on our weekly communications
- 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

- Schools are likely to be in regular contact with parents and carers. Those communications should be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school their child is going to be interacting with online.
- Parents and carers may choose to supplement the school online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors.
- In their communications with parents and carers, schools should 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 careers 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 above website links can also be shared with parents/carers via the school's regular newsletters or the agreed electronic communication systems.

13. Mental health

- Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. Where they are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, schools should ensure appropriate support is in place for them.
- Support for pupils in the current circumstances can include existing provision in the school (although this may be delivered in different ways, for example over the phone) or from specialist staff or support services, e.g. a family support worker, in-house counsellor or a mental health first aider.
- Please refer to the guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) for further information.
- 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, training, recruitment 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 so that their employment is not withdrawn.
- We will continue to do our usual checks on all new volunteers, and do DBS risk assessments to ensure compliance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

14.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

We will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our school, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks. If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

Where the school are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

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 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (and this addendum).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1.
- We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:
 - A copy of our child protection policy and this addendum.
 - Confirmation of local processes.
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1.
 - Confirmation of DSL arrangements.

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 virtual school head

Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO cannot share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in section 5 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 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and should any changes need to be made these will be amended by the Safeguarding Leadership Group and reviewed by the Board of Directors.

16.1 Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Code of Conduct
- IT Acceptable Use policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Online Safety policy