



# SAWLEY INFANT & NURSERY SCHOOL

## Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Addendum COVID-19 (Coronavirus)



### Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Addendum - COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

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VERSION CONTROL			
VERSION	DATE	AUTHOR	CHANGES
Draft – April	6 <sup>th</sup> April	M Harral	New policy
May Update	6 <sup>th</sup> May	M Harral	Changes are shown in green text and reflect advice from DSCB and DFE guidance

### Context:

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19. This is interim safeguarding guidance, it is under continuous review and will be updated as necessary. 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](#). Following the introduction of the Coronavirus Act, the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership has access to additional COVID Standalone Resources, which contain relevant changes and information as they relate to key procedures which are reflected in this policy.

<https://www.proceduresonline.com/resources/covid19/>



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### **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 affect 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 online safety section below). Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

The school is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students and will continue to be a safe space for children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to learner ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The School 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 handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID-19.

The School will ensure that where they care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, will ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on My Concern as appropriate.

### **Vulnerable children**

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
- There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a Social Worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have significant underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent/carer does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the Social Worker and the School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent/carer.
- Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, the School or the Social Worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.
- The School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend School, including remotely if needed.

### **Support for children who are not 'Vulnerable' but where there are concerns**

Senior Leaders in the School, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy), are aware of who our most vulnerable children are. They also have the flexibility to offer a place to those who do not meet the Department for Education's definition of 'Vulnerable' but where the School has concerns. For example children who are receiving support though Early Help



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processes, on the edge of receiving Children's Social Care support or those who have had recent Social Worker involvement. If these children will not be attending school a Contact Plan will put in place.

### Core Safeguarding Principles:

~~KCSIE is statutory safeguarding guidance that we will continue to have regard to as part of our legislative duty.~~ We will still have regard to the statutory Safeguarding Guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education and relevant Government Coronavirus Guidance such as Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers to ensure we keep children safe.

It remains essential that schools continue to be safe places for children.

The way we 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 school has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy will always 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
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### 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. Any member of staff who has a concern about a child should contact a DSL immediately face-to-face in school or via telephone. Staff have agreed policy access to My Concern at home.

The school will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. Senior Leaders have setup online conferencing tools and will continue to participate in meetings for vulnerable pupils.

All staff should share concerns with the DSL about pupils they are concerned about who do not meet the 'vulnerable' definition throughout this period of closure who are not physically attending the school.

If staff become aware of any peer on peer abuse, they should report this to the DSL who will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE.

Should a safeguarding concern arise against the Headteacher, please contact Wendy Crowder on: enquiries@sawley-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk who will provide with a contact number for the Chair of Governors – Diane Dakin.



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If you are concerned about the welfare of a child or young person or are worried they are being abused, you can make a referral to Children's Social Care. Wherever practicable, contact should be indirect, such as by telephone/video call or using the online referral form.

### **DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) arrangements**

A trained DSL or deputy DSL will be either on site or contactable by telephone whilst children are present in school – all staff have contact numbers for the DSL/Deputy DSL.

One Senior Leader will always be on site who will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding in contact with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and, as required, liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school. We will ensure that DSLs, senior leaders and deputies, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

- Senior Leaders: Marie Harral, Becky Morley, Katie Clampin and Rebekah Ades

It is acknowledged that DSL training is very unlikely to take place during this period (although the option of online training can be explored). For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

- DSL: Marie Harral
- Deputy DSL: Becky Morley
- Link DSL: Alison Burton (Sawley Junior School)
- Link DSL: Luise Taylor & Heather Stead (Sawley Junior School)

DDSCP Safeguarding face to face training events have been cancelled up until the end of May (this will be the subject of review). However, the option of online training will be explored, there are some e-learning opportunities and podcasts on the DDSCP website [training pages](#).

### **Working with Other Agencies**

The School will continue to work with Children's Social Care and with Virtual School Heads for Looked-After and previously Looked-After Children and will update this Addendum as/when necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from Local Safeguarding Partners, The Local, Children's Social Care,

### **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Meetings**

All meetings (for example: Looked After Reviews, Child Protection Conferences, Children in Need Reviews) will take place virtually and no face to face conference/meetings will currently take place. As there will be delays in circulating the records of such meetings, the School representative will take notes of recommended actions.

For these statutory meetings to go ahead it is equally important that all professionals and especially the allocated Social Workers provide updated reports and the school will ensure this is a priority. All reports will be emailed using the current arrangements for these meetings taking place.



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For Initial Child Protection Case Conferences and Review Conferences, the DSL will be expected to be available so that the Child Protection Managers (CPMs) can call them to discuss the children and issues of risk, enabling partners to contribute to the plan that the CPM will build based on information shared from all parties.

### Derbyshire Community Response Unit

As people become ill with COVID-19 and need to self-isolate their personal circumstances may mean they need some additional help. The Community Response Unit (CRU) is for people who have no one else to support them. The CRU will be helping people to access food banks or shopping depending on their financial resources; they will help people access support for prescriptions; they will be signposting people to financial advice; and will be offering support for those in social isolation such as telephone befriending. This will be delivered by the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS).

As CRU requests for help are triaged, if any children are identified as being vulnerable the CRU hub will liaise directly with Children's 'Starting Point' to support the triage of the children's needs. The CRU is not a service as such it is an enabler to help people who have no other support to be able to access local support through the CVS network. The CRU has linked up with District/Borough Councils, locality CVS's and key voluntary sector organisations who are coordinating voluntary support within communities. Anyone who requires support can use the online form:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/health-and-wellbeing/health-protection/disease-control/coronavirus/community-response-unit/if-you-need-help/if-you-need-help.aspx> or telephone 01629 535091.

### Attendance

Schools do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

Schools and social workers should be agreeing with families whether children in need should be attending education provision – and the school should then follow up on any child that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

Schools should also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their children and the children subsequently do not attend. To support the above, schools should take the opportunity when communicating with parents and carers to confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available. In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, the school should notify their social worker.

The department for education 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.



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### **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 completed individual risk assessments and have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant. These will be reviewed monthly by the DSLs. If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care or the police as appropriate.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral type support in school, they should ensure that a robust contact plan and risk assessment is in place for that child or young person. Details of this plan must be recorded on MyConcern as should a record of contacts that have been made. The contact plans can include; remote contact, phone contact and other contact methods should be considered. The School and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any contact plan. This plan and risk assessments will be reviewed regularly and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

### **Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff**

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.

We have organised existing staff on a rota basis to maintain social distancing and allow for self-isolation as required. We are continually reviewing staffing plans to meet the need of staff and pupils as safely as possible.

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its [guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking](#) to minimise the need for face-to-face contact. 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 keep a record of which staff are working on site or off site each day, and can guarantee that appropriate checks have been carried out for them. We will not use any volunteers or unpaid staff during this period of closure. We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

Schools should continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's [Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral](#).



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During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk). All referrals received by the TRA will continue to be considered. Where referrals on serious safeguarding matters are received, and it is deemed that there is a public interest in doing so, consideration will be given as to whether an interim prohibition order (IPO) should be put in place. The TRA will continue to progress all cases but will not schedule any hearings at the current time.

### **Online safety in and out of school**

It is more important than ever that schools and colleges provide a safe environment, including online safety. The Acceptable Use of IT Policy remains in place during the COVID-19 closure as does the children's Safer Internet Policy.

The UK Council for Internet Safety provides information to help governing boards and proprietors 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. Local authorities may also be able to provide support.

As the majority of children will not be physically attending the school, any concerns regarding online safety should be dealt with as per the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and, as required, the police.

All schools and colleges should consider the safety of their children when they are asked to work online. We have provided work activities via the school website. Parent/carers have also received a list of online learning sites.

Any introduction/use of online learning tools and systems must be in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements and should signpost children to age appropriate practical support from the likes of:

- [Childline](#) - for support
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - to report and remove harmful online content
- [CEOP](#) - for advice on making a report about online abuse

Pupils at Sawley Infant & Nursery School are not currently being required to access any new online learning tools. If staff wish to 'sign up' pupils to online learning environments – this should be discussed with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team first.

School will remain in regular contact with parents and carers and will reinforce the importance of children being safe online. It is especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being encouraged to do online.

The school will send reminders to all parents to highlight online safety and provide links to support information for parents and carers to keep their children safe online including:

- [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



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- [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

### **Mental health**

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of adults and children alike. Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

The School recognises that education is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers at the School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of learners' work where they are at home.

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.

Resources are available and have been especially adapted to support children who may be anxious during social distancing and self-isolation; these are available from the DCC website and school staff can be guided to these resources by the local Early Help Teams:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/health-and-wellbeing/health-protection/disease-control/coronavirus/schools/schools-parents.aspx>

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/media/1960/coronavirus-mental-health-and-wellbeing-resources.pdf>

### **Domestic Abuse**

The current COVID-19 measures being taken are likely to increase the stress on family life and it is expected that domestic abuse incidents are likely to rise. The School will continue to receive domestic abuse notifications via the Stopping Domestic Abuse Together (SDAT) initiative as will Children's Social Care. Notifications will continue to be recorded on MyConcern. The Police are providing the existing responses and there is no change to practice:

<https://schoolsnet.derbyshire.gov.uk/keeping-children-safe-in-education/safeguarding-policies-guidance-and-protocols/domestic-abuse-notifications.aspx>

As with any concern about a child the School will take steps to ensure the child is safe. In all cases the School will review what they know about the child and their family. If the child is expected to attend school the usual checks should be made on their welfare.

When a child is not at expected to be at school there should be consideration about how best the School can seek assurance on their welfare and what checks can be made. In all cases the School will make general enquires with the child about how they are. The Domestic Abuse Notification should not be referred to unless it is directly mentioned by the child or where the parent/carer raises the issue.



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If the DSL/Deputy DSL identifies any child protection concerns they will refer to Children's Social Care. Children's Social Care will also review the incident and will liaise with the school where there are Child Protection concerns about the safety of the child.

### Staff Absence

Where the School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as Designated Safeguarding Lead or First Aiders, this will be discussed immediately with the Executive Headteachers/CEO.

### Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed monthly by DSLs Marie Harral & Becky Morley and Designated Safeguarding Governors James Wilton & Diane Dakin. At every review, it will be shared for approval by the full governing board.

**Staff must be aware of this addendum and keep themselves up to date as it is revised. The revised policy will be shared on the school website. An update link will be shared via staff WhatsApp / e-mail groups.**