

## CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR ESSEX PRIMARY SCHOOL COVID-19 ADDENDUM

DATE APPROVED BY GOVERNORS: 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020



At Essex Primary School, we take the duty of care towards our pupils very seriously. We seek to provide a school environment where all children are safe, secure, valued, respected and listened to.

All staff and visitors have an important role in safeguarding children and protecting them from abuse, and are made aware of their responsibilities whenever they enter the school.

We will take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to children's welfare is minimised. Where we have concerns, we will take appropriate action to address those concerns working in full partnership with other agencies.

**School Designated Safeguarding Lead** [TRACY DAVIS](#)

**School Deputy Safeguarding Lead** [SUSAN MONTGOMERY](#)

**School Designated Safeguarding Governor** [RUSSELL SHAIKH](#)

**Chair of Governors** [RICK PROBETT](#)

*This policy should be seen in conjunction with the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy dated September 2020 and used with the Covid- 19 Guidance for full opening: schools (DfE 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020)*

*This policy addendum is available on our school website and also on request from the school office. We inform parents and carers about this policy when their children join our school and through the school newsletter.*

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## 1. Scope and Definitions

This addendum to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy dated September 2020 applies during the period of the school full re-opening following the COVID-19 arrangements, and reflects updated advice from the Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership and the London Borough of Newham.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance *Covid-19 Guidance for full opening: schools (DfE 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020)* and *Coronavirus (Covid-19) - Safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers guidance. (DfE updated on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020)*

Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those children who:

- Have a social worker,
- With a child protection plan
- Are assessed as being a Child in Need (CiN)
- Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

## 2. Safeguarding principles

We welcome all our children back into school and although due to Covid-19 we are operating in a different way, we will still have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, and will follow these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children will always continue to come first;
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately;
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy should be available at all times or a member of the Senior Leadership team will act in their place;
- It is essential that unsuitable people do not enter the school workforce or gain access to our children;
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online and accessing remote learning on-line.

## 3. Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL arrangements

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy will be on the school site and will have as much time as possible to support children and staff regarding any new concerns as children return to school.

In the event, our DSL (or Deputy) cannot be in school, they can be contacted remotely by email:

[tracy.davis@essex.newham.sch.uk](mailto:tracy.davis@essex.newham.sch.uk), [susan.montgomery@essex.newham.sch.uk](mailto:susan.montgomery@essex.newham.sch.uk)

If an occasion arises where there is no Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL) or Deputy available on site, a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be Cecilia Mojzes. You can contact her by email: [cecilia.mojzes@essex.newham.sch.uk](mailto:cecilia.mojzes@essex.newham.sch.uk). In this event we will communicate with all school staff and volunteers by email/staff briefing.

The Senior Leader will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL (or deputy) to confirm:

- Identification of 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

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy (DSL) will endeavour to keep up to date with safeguarding developments and training.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy will identify and monitor the attendance and well-being of vulnerable children.

#### **4. Reporting concerns**

All staff and volunteers must continue to report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy immediately if they have concerns about a child. It remains vitally important to do this, both for children that are attending school and those not attending due to self-isolation or anxiety.

All staff will continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

#### **5. Safeguarding children**

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time has potentially put all children at greater risk of physical and emotional harm.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health and well-being that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on those concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

For children not able to attend school due to self-isolation, or anxiety, staff will be alert for signs that may be:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
- No contact from children or families
- Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

#### **6. Mental Health and Well-Being**

We will continue to offer our current support for the mental health and well-being for all children of the school. Our school counsellor/psychotherapist can offer support over the phone where necessary.

We will also signpost all children, parents/carers and staff to other resources of support for good mental health and well-being at this time.

When setting expectations for children unable to attend school and accessing remote learning at home, staff will consider the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

## **7. Online safety**

### **7.1 In school**

Our school will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school that are regularly monitored.

### **7.2 Outside school**

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing code of conduct/online safety policy. Please refer to online safety policy and staff handbook.

Staff are aware that children are vulnerable to being bullied or groomed for abuse or radicalisation on-line. 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 3 of this addendum.

We will make sure our children, whether learning in school or accessing remote learning on-line at home, know how to report any concerns they have back to our school and signpost them to other sources of support.

## **8. Contact plans**

We have contact plans for children with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about that are not able to attend school due to self-isolation or anxiety. School staff will be encouraged to maintain contact with those children unable to attend school and speak directly to children in circumstances where:

- They would usually attend school but are self-isolating or are anxious about returning to school;
- Children attending off-site alternative provision

Each child has an individual plan which sets out:

- How frequently the school will make contact
- The name of the staff member(s) who will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the child and family well
- How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant.

If we are unable to make contact, we will contact the child's social worker or children's social care.

## **9. Working with other agencies**

We will continue to work with children's social care and with Virtual School Heads for Looked-After (LAC) and Previously Looked-After Children (PLAC).

We will continue to update this Addendum to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy regularly and where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- The Newham Local Safeguarding Children Partnership
- The Local Authority in regards to children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need (CiN).

## **10. School Attendance**

Our children will be returning to school for the Autumn term and we will be completing attendance registers and following our usual procedures to follow up on non-school attendance. It is parents and carers duty to secure regular attendance for their child(ren) at school. We expect all children to attend school every day unless they are unwell or self-isolating. We will:

- Communicate with parents and children to encourage their return to school and will provide reassurance about the measures taken within school to minimise the risks;
- Follow up on any absence with parents or carers, by making first day absence calls (see Attendance Policy)
- Notify their social worker, where they have one;
- Liaise with the school nursing service as appropriate.

In the event of poor or non- school attendance we have the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with the Local Authority code of conduct.

## **11. Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers**

We will communicate with parents and carers to:

- ensure all information is kept up to date and available on the school website and through School Ping
- ask if there are any changes regarding the welfare, health and well-being that the school should be aware of before a child returns to school
- are aware of the potential risks to children on-line and the importance of staying safe online
- 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

## **12. Staff recruitment, training and induction**

**12.1** We remain committed to 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, as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

There is an expectation that staff will return to school in September 2020 and any new staff must present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers and complete risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

We will maintain the Single Central Record up to date.

## **12.2 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:

- Safeguarding induction / training
- A copy of our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (including Covid-19 addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 (2020)
- Confirmation of Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy arrangements

## **12.3 Concerns about a staff member or volunteer**

We will continue to follow the procedures as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020. Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have about a member of staff or volunteer immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site, working remotely or providing access to remote learning.

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](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk) for the duration of COVID-19 in line with government guidance.

## **13. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, at the next Governor's meeting by Tracy Davis, Deputy Head (Inclusion and Safeguarding Lead).

## **14. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- School Behaviour Policy
- Staff Handbook/Code of conduct
- Online safety policy
- Health and safety policy
- Health and safety Risk Assessment
- Whistleblowing Policy