

# **South Failsworth Primary School**

**‘Inspiring and Creating Lifelong Learners’**



## **Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum**

Approved by the Governing Body: March 2021

Review date: April 2021 and monthly thereafter

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# Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Louise Sidaway	0161 681 6351 l.sidaway@southfailsworth.oldham.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Alison Murray	0161 681 6351 Alison.Murray@southfailsworth.oldham.sch.uk
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	Michelle Butler	0161 681 6351 m.butler@southfailsworth.oldham.sch.uk
Headteacher	Vicki Foy	0161 681 6351 head@southfailsworth.oldham.sch.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Collette Morris	Tel: 0161 770 8870 Mobile: 07583101863 collette.morris@oldham.gov.uk
Chair of governors	Ann Hanaghan	0161 681 6351

## 1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies from the start of the spring term 2021. It reflects the latest advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners:

- Oldham Council
- Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- Greater Manchester Police.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of coronavirus and the national lockdown currently in place, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

This addendum is subject to change, in response to any new or updated guidance the government or our local safeguarding partners may publish. We will keep it under review as set out in section 15 below.

In this addendum, where we refer to measures to protect pupils who are at home, this means those who are learning at home for reasons to do with coronavirus – for example, due to the attendance restrictions during national lockdown, or if they need to self-isolate when they would otherwise still be attending.

In this addendum, where we refer to vulnerable children, this means those who:

- Are assessed as being in need, including children:
  - With a child protection plan
  - With a child in need plan

- Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- On the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred
- Adopted or on a special guardianship order
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Young carers
- Care leavers
- Facing difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example, due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
- In need of support for their mental health and well being
- Families facing difficult circumstances that are or could affect the child's mental health and or well being

## 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 4 for details of our arrangements)
- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

## 3. 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, both for children still attending school and those at home.

They should continue to report using the usual procedures. Initial contact must be made directly to the DSL or Deputy DSL then logged on CPOMS.

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.

## 4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

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

Every day, regardless of who is on site, our usual procedures apply and the DSL and deputy DSL are contactable by phone or email (see details at the start of this addendum).

## 5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and with any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners, to help keep children safe.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our 3 local safeguarding partners
- The local authority about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need

During a period of school closure, or self-isolation, the following guidance is currently in place:

- For those pupils in care, weekly contact should be made to check on their health, safety and wellbeing
- For those with EHC Plans, weekly contact should be made to check on their health, safety and wellbeing

Vulnerable group tracking document is completed every two weeks and shared with the local authority.

## 6. 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.
- 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.

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible. This has been checked on the weekly calls made to parents.

## 7. 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 – about both children attending school and those at home.

## 8. 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 – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site or remotely.

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 the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

## 9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns

We have the option to offer places in school to children who don't 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. For example, poor home lives/ parental support, families where a younger sibling is ill in hospital and mum is unable to return home. Families where our knowledge of their backgrounds have caused us to monitor more closely. Pupils who are in the process of being assessed for an EHC Plan.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10 below.

## 10. 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

- How often the school will make contact – Twice weekly for CLA and information shared on ‘Welfare call’, weekly for EHC and vulnerable pupils
- Which staff member(s) will make contact – this will be the DSL
- How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, email, text, doorstep visits, or a combination

We have agreed these plans with children’s social care where relevant, and will review them monthly

If we can’t make contact, we will contact social services.  
All contact is recorded on CPOMs.

## 11. 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 line with the procedures set out in section 3 above.

For children at home, they will look out for signs like:

- 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

Children are likely to be spending more time online during this period – see section 12 below for our approach to online safety both in and outside school.

See section 13 below for information on how we will support pupils’ mental health.

## 12. Online safety

### 12.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

The LA ICT team at Coop Academy, Failsworth are available for support if needed.

### 12.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing code of conduct policy and online safety 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 3 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.

### **13.3 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
- 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

We will achieve this through our website, letters and through social media.

## **13. Mental health**

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils, through our regular contact and reminding parents they can still contact us here at school. We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time. If any pupil, parent or carer has concerns about mental health and wellbeing, they should contact their child's class teacher in the first instance and they may refer them to Mrs Louise Sidaway (contact details at the beginning of this policy).

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 recruitment, training 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.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance 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. The School Business Manager will complete the checks.

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 children protection 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
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

### **14.4 Keeping records of who's on site**

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.

## **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 can't share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in section 4 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 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum each month by the DSL. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

## **17. Links with other policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the other policies as outlined in the school's Child protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Policy agreed 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020 by SLT and shared with governors.

Most recent review March 2021 by SLT and shared with governors.