



## Annex to Child Protection Policy

### COVID-19 changes to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

27 March 2020

#### **Response to COVID-19**

There have been significant changes within our setting in response to the outbreak. Many children are now at home and staffing is likely to be significantly affected through illness and self-isolation.

Despite the changes, the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is fundamentally the same: children and young people always come first, staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and contact the DSL in line with our established safeguarding procedure.

This annex sets out some of the adjustments we are making in line with the changed arrangements in the school and following advice from government and local agencies.

The current school position and local advice:

*During this period of partial closure this school site continues to be open for provision for vulnerable pupils and children of key workers. Irrespective of any partial closure or collaboration with another school, the safeguarding of all our children remains our top priority. At this time, our school will continue as normal in supporting our vulnerable children and if anyone has any questions regarding this they are asked to make contact with Mrs Mandy Williams Headteacher at [office@downviewprimary.co.uk](mailto:office@downviewprimary.co.uk) Please contact the school if you have any queries.*

#### **Reporting arrangements**

The school arrangements continue in line with our child protection policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mrs Mandy Williams 01243 820511

The Deputy DSLs are: Mrs Faye Hawkins and Mrs Lisa Jackson 01243 820511

The school's approach ensures the DSL or a deputy is always on site while the school is open. In the unusual circumstance this is not possible the DSL or Deputy DSL will be contactable and the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team will email all staff by 9am to advise they are acting in an on-site safeguarding role, together with contact details for the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Staff will continue to follow the Child Protection procedure and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child, whether in school or not. COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.

Children's services may be affected by the impact of the virus on staff and an increased demand for services. Where a child is at risk of significant harm there may be a need to be persistent in referring concerns to the local authority. The arrangements for contacting children's services are:

#### **West Sussex Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub:**

Tel: 01403 229900 (Out of Hours – 0330 222 6664)

[MASH@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@westsussex.gov.uk)

Referrals in to MASH should be made on the following web-based forms which can be accessed by:

Adults - <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/raiseaconcernaboutanadult>

Children's - [www.westsussex.gov.uk/Raiseaconcernaboutachild](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/Raiseaconcernaboutachild)

Should a child in the school's view be at risk of significant harm and local agencies are not able to respond, the school will immediately follow the safeguarding children partnership escalation procedure; **Professional Differences and Concerns Protocol**

In such circumstances the Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the impact of such a decision on the child(ren) and where concerns remain, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will engage the Managing Professional Difference protocol which can be found on the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Website, accessed [here](#).

### **Identifying vulnerability**

We have undertaken a scoping exercise to identify the most vulnerable children. School Leaders compiled a list of all vulnerable children in school. All class teachers were asked to email children of potential concern.

We have put in place specific arrangements in respect of the following groups:

- Looked After Children – All families telephoned and offered care in school. Contact made on a weekly basis.
- Previously Looked After Children – All families telephoned and offered care in school. Contact made on a weekly basis.
- Children subject to a child protection plan – All families telephoned and offered care in school. Contact made on a weekly basis.
- Children who have, or have previously had, a social worker – All families telephoned and offered care in school. Contact made on a weekly basis. There is an expectation that children with a social worker must attend school (or another school by arrangement), unless in consultation with the child's social worker and family it is agreed this is not in the best interests of the child.
- Children with an EHCP – All families telephoned and offered care in school. Contact made on a weekly basis.
- Children on the edge of social care involvement or pending allocation of a social worker – All families telephoned and offered care in school. Contact made on a weekly basis. Where required these children will be offered a place at school (or another school by arrangement).
- Other children the school considers vulnerable. More children may be added to this group in response to concerns raised with the DSL. These children can be offered care at school if required.

In addition, the following groups have specific arrangements around contact and support from the school.

- Children of key workers who may attend school – Headteacher writes regular updates to parents offering care at school whenever required if children cannot be cared for safely at home
- Children at home – Headteacher writes regular updates to parents and class teachers write to classes on a weekly basis.

### **Holiday arrangements**

Downview Primary School is continuing to provide places for children over the Easter break.

## **Attendance**

The school is following the attendance guidance issued by government. Where a child is expected and does not arrive, the school will follow our attendance procedure and make contact with the family. If contact is not possible by 9:30am the DSL must be informed. The DSL will attempt a range of methods to contact the parent (telephone or email, including through a relative or other contact.) but if necessary arrange a home visit by another appropriate agency. A risk assessment will be undertaken to consider managing the implications of COVID-19 alongside other risks perceived to the child. The risk of COVID-19 does not override the duty on the school to ensure children and young people are safe.

The school will also follow the attendance procedure if contact proves impossible with children at home. A referral will be made to MASH.

Staff will be aware of increased risk

The pressures on children and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, poverty, and financial or health anxiety. These areas should be considered in the setting of any work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below). Staff will be aware of the mental health of both children and their parents and carers, informing the DSL about any concerns around children in their class.

## **Peer on peer abuse**

We recognise the potential for abuse to go on between young people, especially in the context of a school closure or partial closure. Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of peer-on-peer abuse, including those between young people who are not currently attending our provision. Extra care should be taken where groups have mixed age, developmental stages, are attending other schools as an interim measure and similar. When making contact with these families our staff will ask about relationships between learners.

## **Risk online**

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. The school is encouraging limited time on computers and recommended appropriate programmes to use to support home learning, e.g. Times Tables Rockstars, My Maths, Purple Mash.

Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and other risks online and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when children were learning at the school.

- Staff are aware of the school's code of conduct and importance of only using school systems to communicate with children and their families. All telephone calls are made from the school telephones only. (No personal mobile phones are used to call parents or children. All emails are via office@ or Parentmail which is limited to admin team and head teacher use.
- Parents and carers have received information about keeping children safe online with peers, the school, other education offers they may access and the wider internet community.

We have set out the school's approach, including the sites children will be asked to access. Parents have been offered the following links:

- [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
- Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the [Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

### **Allegations or concerns about staff**

With such different arrangements young people could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

Any staff or volunteers from outside our setting will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to take action if they are concerned.

We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged:

#### **Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO):**

- The LADO for West Sussex is **Jenny Coker**
- Consultation Contact Number: **0330 222 6450** (Available 09.00 – 17.00)
- LADO Service Contact Number: (Available through the MASH) **01403 229900**
- LADO Service email address: [LADO@WestSussex.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@WestSussex.gov.uk)  
**Jenny Coker** 01403 229900  
Assistant LADO **Claire Coles and Sally Arbuckle** 01403 229900 [Claire.Coles@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.Coles@westsussex.gov.uk)  
[sally.arbuckle@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:sally.arbuckle@westsussex.gov.uk)

If necessary, the school will continue to follow the duty to refer to DBS any adult who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, and to the Teacher Regulation Agency in line with paragraph 166 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 using the address [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk).

### **New staff or volunteers**

New starters must have an induction before starting or on their first morning with the DSL or a deputy. They must read the school child protection policy, the behaviour policy, the whistleblowing policy and the code of conduct. The DSL or deputy will ensure new recruits know who to contact if worried about a child and ensure the new starters are familiar with the child protection procedure.

If staff or volunteers are transferring in from other registered education or childcare settings for a temporary period to support the care of children, we will seek evidence from their setting that:

- the member of staff has completed relevant safeguarding training in line with other similar staff or volunteers,
- they have read Part I and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and
- where the role involves regulated activity and the appropriate DBS check has been undertaken by that setting we will undertake a written risk assessment to determine whether a new DBS would need to be undertaken. It may be in these exceptional times we can rely on the DBS undertaken by their setting.

Our child protection procedures hold strong:

- Volunteers may not be left unsupervised with children until suitable checks have been undertaken. People supervising volunteers must be themselves in regulated activity, able to provide regular, day to day supervision and reasonable in all circumstances to protect the children.

- The school will undertake a written risk assessment on the specific role of each volunteer to decide whether to obtain an enhanced DBS check (with barred list information) for all staff and volunteers new to working in regulated activity in line with DBS guidance.
- When undertaking ID checks on documents for the DBS it is reasonable to initially check these documents online through a live video link and to accept scanned images of documents for the purpose of applying for the check. The actual documents will then be checked against the scanned images when the employee or volunteer arrives for their first day.
- The school will update the Single Central Record of all staff and volunteers working in the school, including those from other settings. This will include the risk assessment around the DBS. A record will be kept by Mandy Williams of which adults are working in the school each day.

### **New children at the school**

Where children join our school from other settings we will require confirmation from the DSL whether they have a Safeguarding File or SEN statement/EHCP. This file must be provided securely before the child begins at our school and a call made from our DSL or a deputy to the placing school's DSL to discuss how best to keep the child safe. In some unusual circumstance this may not be possible. Information provided must include contact details for any appointed social worker and where relevant for the Virtual School Head. Safeguarding information about children placed in our school will be recorded on our safeguarding system, will be securely copied to the placing school DSL and will be securely returned to the placing school on completion of the child's placement with us so there is a continuous safeguarding record for the child.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment in respect of any new information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know about the information. This will be recorded on our safeguarding recording system.

This policy has been remotely approved by Governors on 31/3/30 and is available on the school website