

Annex to Safeguarding policy

September 2020

Child protection during the COVID-19 measures

Safeguarding priority

During this global pandemic the safeguarding of all children at our nursery – whether they are following mandatory isolation guidelines at home or if they are in school– continues to be our priority. The following fundamental safeguarding principles remain the same:

- the best interests of children continue to come first
- if anyone in our nursery has a safeguarding concern, they will act immediately
- a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL will always be available, ideally on site
- no unsuitable (as defined in KCSIE and DBS checks) people will be allowed to gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online.

We will ensure that on any given day all staff and volunteers in attendance will be aware of who the DSL and deputy DSLs are and how staff and volunteers can to speak to them.

All staff and volunteers attending on site from outside our nursery will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of safeguarding risks and know how to act if they have concerns.

Safeguarding partners' advice

During these times we continue to work closely with our three safeguarding partners (local authorities, chief officers of police, and clinical commissioning groups) and we will ensure this annex is consistent with their advice. This will include expectations for supporting 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.

Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for safeguarding in our nursery remain in line with our Child Protection Policy.

If possible, our DSL or at least one deputy DSL will be available on site during the nursery day. Where this is not possible, we will:

- have a trained DSL or deputy DSL available by phone and/or online video; or
- ensure we have access to a trained DSL or deputy DSL from our partner school – Park Hill Infants, by phone and/or online video.

Where our DSL or a deputy DSL cannot be on site, then in addition to one of the above options we will also ensure a senior leader from the nursery takes responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

Increased vulnerability or risk

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their parents.

Our staff and volunteers will be aware of the mental health of children and their parents and carers and will contact the DSL or a deputy if they have any concerns.

We will signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time. All staff can access counselling through the school's staff insurance.

Children may have experienced a range of difficult and varying circumstances in light of the current situation. Staff are fully aware of the difficulties that children may have experienced such as (but not limited to); poverty, food poverty, Domestic Violence, increased issues with substance abuse, child abuse, gambling / gaming and/ or bereavement (see bereavement policy). Staff are aware of these issues and will act in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding policy. Staff have received extra training on what procedures to follow if a child makes a disclosure. (There may be an increase in disclosures during this difficult time).

Attendance

Although children who attend the nursery are not of statutory school age, the nursery will actively encourage attendance for all children unless they are complying with clinical or public health advice.

Staff training and induction

All current nursery staff have received up to date safeguarding training and have read Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff have also received additional safeguarding training and are aware of the likelihood of increased disclosures due to the national lockdown. When new staff are recruited or volunteers join us, they will receive a safeguarding induction in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable to work with children are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children.

When recruiting new staff, we will continue to follow our Safer Recruitment policy.

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.

It is essential from a safeguarding perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff are on our nursery site (for example agency staff may need to be used due to staff self-isolating) and that the appropriate checks have been carried out on those individuals. We will continue to maintain our single central record (SCR) during these measures to ensure we have this awareness.

Peer on peer abuse

Young children may engage in pre-bullying behaviour. Our staff are clear about the school's policy and procedures regarding unacceptable behaviour, physical or verbal. It is never ignored when seen.

Staff will follow the process set out in our school Safeguarding policy which can be accessed [here](#).

Online safety

It is likely that children will be using the internet and possibly engaging with social media far more during this time. Our staff are aware of online risks and our filtering and monitoring software remains in use during this time to safeguard and support children and their families.

Our staff will follow the process for online safety set out in our Safeguarding Policy.

Staff who interact with children online will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. If a staff member is concerned about a child, that staff member will follow the approach set out in this annex and report that concern to the DSL or to a deputy DSL.

We will continue to raise awareness of issues around e-safety with our school community

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 nursery is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our nursery
- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our nursery provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

New children at the nursery

Children may join our nursery from other settings. When they do, we will seek from those settings the relevant welfare and child protection information. This is relevant for all children that join us, but it will be especially important where children are vulnerable.

For vulnerable children we will ensure we understand the reasons for the vulnerability and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum we will seek access to that child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible Virtual Nursery Head is).

Ideally this will happen before a child arrives but where that is not possible it will happen as soon as reasonably practicable.

Any exchanges of information will ideally happen at DSL (or deputy) level, and likewise between special educational needs co-ordinators/named individual with oversight of SEN provision for children with EHC plans. However, it is acknowledged this may not always be possible. Where this is the case our nursery senior leaders will take responsibility.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment based on the information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know the information.

Supporting children not in nursery

Welfare checks

Every child who is not able to attend nursery due to self-isolation will be contacted by telephone at least weekly by the key worker.

Where the DSL has identified a child that is self-isolating to be vulnerable they will be contacted by telephone at least twice per week by the key worker.

Children who are known to social care and have a Child Protection Plan or Child in Need plan will be contacted by telephone at least three times per nursery week by the key worker / DSL.

In the event that the key worker is unwell and is unable to contact children, the teacher and DSL's will be responsible for ensuring that welfare calls are carried out.

Details for each child will be recorded in the welfare spread sheet or individual safeguarding file (if applicable).

Remote learning

In the event of a nursery closure or self-isolation by a child, remote learning will take place. Our staff will follow the process set out within the Remote Learning Policy.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.