

Appendix 5: COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at The Clare School

This addendum to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy contains additional information about our safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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5.1 Context

From Thursday 19th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home. From Monday 23rd March, all schools were asked to provide care for a limited number of children; children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home. Social distancing measures were also put in place across the country. As a school, it was decided that the school building would not be open due to the medical vulnerability of the vast majority of the children who attend the school. Instead, bespoke support has been offered to families of children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

It is crucial that all staff and volunteers understand the continued importance of acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns that arise. The key principles of our approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at our school remain the same. This guidance has been developed to give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about our safeguarding procedures in light of the current national and local situation. This appendix should be read in conjunction with the whole school safeguarding policy and not as a standalone document. Unless otherwise stated within this guidance, our normal safeguarding procedures should be adhered to.

5.2 Key Contact Information:

The following key contact information should be used in order to safeguard our children throughout the period whilst Covid-19 conditions are in place.

Name	Role	Key contact details
Annette Maconochie	Lead DSL Assistant Head	safeguarding@clare.norfolk.sch.uk Tel: 07534 817698 (voice calls only)
Rebecca Wicks	Deputy DSL Head Teacher	head@clare.norfolk.sch.uk Tel: 07983 151050
Diane Webb	Alternate DSL Parent Support Advisor	parentssupport@clare.norfolk.sch.uk Tel: 07494 569865
Linda Scase-Jones	Chair of Governors	chairofgovernors@clareschool.co.uk
Tina Minns	Safeguarding Governor	safeguardinggovernor@clareschool.co.uk

9.3 Providing School places for Vulnerable Children

For the purposes of this guidance, vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with EHC plans, in line with the DfE guidance. This includes all children who attend the Clare School.

At the Clare School we will risk assess the needs of all pupils in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered bespoke support in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, school staff, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. In line with Government guidance, we appreciate that many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

At the Clare School our Designated Safeguarding Leads and other Senior Leaders will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at increased risk. It has been considered that the vast majority of the children at the Clare School have underlying health conditions that put them at increased risk. The school will therefore continue to offer bespoke support that does not involve the children coming to the school building.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads know who our most vulnerable children are. As a school, we have the flexibility to provide bespoke support to other pupils we identify as being vulnerable who may be on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

9.4 Attendance monitoring

In line with the DfE guidance, we will not be following our usual day to day attendance procedures at this time. We will however be submitting daily attendance data to the DfE in line with supplementary guidance and Local Authority as requested.

At the Clare School our DSLs will liaise with allocated social workers and will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be receiving extra support. Teaching staff will be providing at least weekly telephone and/or video calls for each child. Teaching staff will also be providing a timetable of weekly virtual classroom sessions via group or individual video link, which each child will be invited to attend. Teaching staff will follow up on any pupil that has not been able to attend a session. All contact with a child and their parents/carers is being logged on CPOMS and DSLs are monitoring this daily.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up any offer of bespoke support, school staff will notify the child's allocated social worker and agree a plan to support the family.

To enable us to effectively support the virtual attendance of vulnerable children, we will ask parents/carers to confirm that emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

9.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead

We have identified key designated contacts for safeguarding at our school in section 4.2 of this guidance.

At the Clare School we will have at least one trained DSL available via phone and/or email whilst they are working remotely from home. We will ensure that all staff and volunteers know how to contact them and have access to advice from a trained DSL.

We will continue to work in partnership with children, parents and other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Our DSLs will keep up to date with the latest Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership advice and guidance from the LA. Our DSLs will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi- agency meetings, which can be done remotely in line with the NSCP guidance on attending and contributing to child protection conferences and Developing Child Protection Plans.

In line with the Department for Education guidance, for the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL even if they miss their refresher training.

9.6 Procedures for Reporting Concerns

The principles for responding to safeguarding concerns as outlined in Section 5 of the main body of the safeguarding policy still apply. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members

should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to take action as outlined in this policy. Staff should continue to use the online safeguarding reporting format, CPOMS to record any Safeguarding concerns. If staff are unable to access this remotely, they should immediately contact one of the DSLs named in section 9.2 in the order in which they appear.

During this unprecedented time, when the children will not be physically attending school, staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay in line with our usual procedures.

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online or via telephone, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk including at risk from peer on peer abuse and exploitation. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the child protection policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required the police.

When staff are working remotely and they have concerns about the welfare of a child, they should record the concern on CPOMS and contact Lead DSL Annette Maconochie by telephone to discuss what action, if any, needs to be taken.

Staff are also reminded of the need to adhere to our Staff Code of Conduct and safer working practices guidance. Staff should continue to report any concerns they have about adults who are working with children in line with Section 12 of the safeguarding policy. If your concern is about an adult (other than the Headteacher) you should contact the Headteacher Rebecca Wicks. If your concern is regarding the Headteacher, please contact the Chair of Governors Linda Scase-Jones.

9.7 Staff Training and induction

All existing staff and volunteers have received a safeguarding induction and training. They have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) and are expected to continue to follow this guidance. The DSL will ensure that all existing staff receive this addendum to the safeguarding policy and will communicate any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers join our school, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction as outlined in Section 4 of the main policy.

9.8 Safer recruitment of staff & volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable 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 and selection policy, the procedures outlined in Section 10 of the safeguarding policy and Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019).

In those circumstances where we continue to use volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment processes as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE and our own safer recruitment and selection policy. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

At the Clare School we will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2019). We will also continue to make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) in line with statutory guidance and understand that during the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk.

We will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date.

9.9 Children moving schools and colleges

Although this is not anticipated at the Clare School, in some circumstances our pupils may attend another setting. In order to support children attending another setting during this time, a named DSL will endeavour to contact a named DSL at the receiving school to provide any relevant welfare and child protection information including any arrangements in place to support them. We will continue to pay regard to data protection and GDPR but these do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

As a minimum, we will ensure that the receiving setting has access to a vulnerable 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 VSH is). This will ideally happen before a child arrives and, where that is not possible as soon as reasonably practicable. Where it is not possible for this exchange of information to occur between DSLs the identified senior leaders will take responsibility for this.

9.10 Online Safety

At the Clare School we recognise that it is more important than ever that we provide a safe environment for pupils including online.

The safety of pupils when they are asked to work online is of paramount importance. The same principles as set out our staff code of conduct must be applied to all online teaching. All staff should ensure that they have read the staff code of conduct and associated safer working practice guidance and are clear about the acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communication including the use of social media.

We will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

We will ensure that children who are being asked to work online have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns whilst online. As well as reporting routes to key school staff, we will also signpost children to age appropriate practical support from external organisations such as:

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

We will also communicate with parents to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. We will ensure that parents and carers are aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access as well as who from the school their child is going to be interacting with online.

Where parents and carers choose to supplement the school's online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors, we will emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children.

We will signpost parents and carers to advice what will help them 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
- [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