

# Highlands School



## Safeguarding Policy COVID-19 addendum

<b>Written by:</b>	M. Phillips - Deputy Headteacher	<b>Date:</b> 17 <sup>th</sup> April 2020
<b>Approved by:</b>		
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## Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Michele Phillips: Deputy Headteacher	phillipsm@highlearn.uk
Deputy DSLs	Aygul Husseyin: Assistant Headteacher	<a href="mailto:Husseyina@highlearn.uk">Husseyina@highlearn.uk</a>
	Jody Larter	<a href="mailto:larterj@highlearn.uk">larterj@highlearn.uk</a>
	Christine Jesuthasan	<a href="mailto:Jesuthasanc@highlearn.uk">Jesuthasanc@highlearn.uk</a>
Looked After Students contact /deputy DSL	Yasmin Gray	<a href="mailto:grayy@highlearn.uk">grayy@highlearn.uk</a>
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	Karl Tuton: Deputy Headteacher	<a href="mailto:tutonk@highlearn.uk">tutonk@highlearn.uk</a>
Headteacher	Vin McInerney	<a href="mailto:mcinerneyv@highlearn.uk">mcinerneyv@highlearn.uk</a>
Local authority designated officer (LADO)		0208 379 4392
Enfield Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub		0208 379 5555
Chair of governors	Matt Miller	<a href="mailto:millerm@highlearn.uk">millerm@highlearn.uk</a>

### 1. Scope and context

This addendum to our safeguarding policy applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19. It sets out additional measures for safeguarding children during this time, in light of the Department for Education's guidance. This document should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding Policy, which will continue to apply unless the matter is specifically covered within this addendum.

### 2. Vulnerable students and key worker provision

During periods of school closure, schools have been asked to remain open and provide care for students who are vulnerable, and students whose parents are key workers and cannot be safely cared for at home while their parents are at work.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable students' includes those who;

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
  - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
  - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
  - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
  - those living in temporary accommodation
  - those who are young carers
  - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
  - care leavers
  - others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health
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- There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend school, so long as they do not have symptoms of Covid 19 and/or underlying health conditions that put them at risk. Where a parent does not want their child to attend school, and their child is considered vulnerable, we will discuss this with the social worker and explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.
- The SENCO will speak to the parents and carers of students with an EHC plan to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.
- We will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school.
- Senior leaders in our school, especially the DSL (and deputies) know who our most vulnerable children are, and they have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

### **Increased vulnerability or risk**

- Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Staff will be aware of this when setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. Where we are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them.
- Our staff 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.

### **3. Support for other vulnerable students**

In addition to our plans for students defined as vulnerable by the DfE, we also have plans in place for other students who we are concerned about.

#### **The school's extended criteria for vulnerable students, in addition to the DfE definition**

- Students receiving support from CAMHS services
- Students with an Early Help worker
- Students regularly see our school counsellor on a regular basis
- Students who have an SEN and are reliant on extra support
- Students who receive welfare/SEMH support from our pastoral team
- Students with medical needs
- Students with a parent known to have a serious illness.

### **4. Contact plans**

We have contact plans for all vulnerable students not attending school during closure.

#### **Reasons why vulnerable students might not attend school during closure;**

- The school, parent/carer and social worker have decided that this wouldn't be in the student's best interests as they can be safely accommodated at home.
- The student has to self-isolate
- The student is on the vulnerable student register to attend, but does not show up

#### **Our contact plan consists of**

- A list of all vulnerable students
- The nature of their vulnerability
- An assigned key worker
- Guidance to our key workers on how and when to communicate with vulnerable students.

**Each student who we define as vulnerable has a key worker. Key workers comprise of the following staff who are all experienced in supporting vulnerable students and would usually support the student when in school.**

- Behaviour mentors
- The family liaison officer
- Looked after children support officer
- Learning support assistants
- The school matron
- The school counsellor

#### **How will key workers support vulnerable students?**

- All vulnerable students are categorised as either amber or red. Red students will receive weekly mentoring sessions by video call (google meet) or by phone (through their parent/carers phone) and email support.
- Amber students will receive fortnightly mentoring sessions by video call (google meet) or by phone (through their parent/carers phone) and email support.
- Key workers will log all mentoring sessions on CPOMS.

### **What happens when a student requests welfare support?**

- Students can request welfare support by contacting their key worker, form tutor, head of year or the school's stay safe email address [staysafe@highlearn.uk](mailto:staysafe@highlearn.uk).
- If a student is in immediate danger, they should call 999. If they need to report a crime and are not in immediate danger then they should call 101.
- The stay safe email address will only be checked during the hours of 8am-5pm Monday-Friday. This includes during school holiday periods.
- When students contact the stay safe email address the action taken will be taken on a case by case basis in line with our usual process and systems for managing disclosures.
- When students email their key workers directly requesting welfare support, the key worker will speak to the DSL about next steps.
- All communication from vulnerable students must be logged on CPOMS

### **5. Core safeguarding principles**

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Students 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 students 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 will be available at all times during school opening hours.
- It is essential that unsuitable people staff, visitors and volunteers don't enter the school workforce or gain access to students.
- Students should continue to be protected when they are online.
- Staff supporting students with a social worker will continue to work with and support students' social workers, to help protect vulnerable students.

### **6. Reporting concerns**

- All staff and volunteers must continue to act immediately on any concerns they have about a student. It is still vitally important to do this, both for students still attending school and those at home.
- Staff will continue to use CPOMS to record all safeguarding concerns, which can be accessed online
- <https://highlandsevenfield.cpoms.net/>
- In accordance with our usual procedures, staff should also contact the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately if a child is in danger, has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed. The DSL's phone number is made available to staff running the school service during closure. All staff can contact the DSL (deputy headteacher) by email and the safeguarding team can make contact by phone. The deputy DSL (head of sixth form) can be contacted by email or on their usual school extension line.
- The school also has a safeguarding email address set up for school closure. Parents and student can sue this to report any welfare/safeguarding concerns or to request help [staysafe@highlearn.uk](mailto:staysafe@highlearn.uk)

## **7. Communication guidelines**

1. Key workers will offer students on their caseload mentoring sessions via google meet. This must always be from the member of staff's highlearn google email account to the student's highlearn email account. Personal email addresses must never be used.
2. Any phone calls made to parents should be done through the phone calling app or from a school phone.
3. Welfare check emails should be clear and professional and should be focused on the students welfare and school work. The key worker must not divulge any personal information. The same applies for video and phone call mentoring sessions.
4. If the student has not replied after the second welfare check in a week, then this should be followed up with a phone call to the parent to check on the student.
5. Every Friday morning key workers are required to send the family liaison officer the names of students who they have not heard from in that specific week (if the key worker has been able to speak to the parent/carer then names do not need to be submitted). They family liaison officer will collate this information and students and the DSL or a Deputy DSL will decide on next steps will be decided for students on this list and communicate this to the relevant members of staff.
6. If communication with a student, or lack of communication, raises any concerns, then this must be discussed with the DSL and logged on CPOMS. In almost all cases parents/carers will be informed, unless advice from external agencies indicates that communication with parents puts the child at risk.
7. If a student makes a disclosure this must be reported via cpoms or directly to the DSL if the student is in immediate risk.
8. Email contact should be restricted to the hours of 8am-7pm.
9. All communications with vulnerable students and their parents/carers must be logged on CPOMS.

## **8. Safeguarding protocols for the use of video technology, for teaching and mentoring**

Teachers and support staff staff may use video technology to teach lessons, for face to face virtual mentoring to vulnerable students and for pastoral events. All use of video technology must follow these guidelines.

### **Video technology platforms**

- All video calls and live lessons must be carried out through the school's Highlearn google platform (eg; facetime, zoom and WhatsApp, Microsoft Teams, video calling are not permitted).
- Staff or students personal email addresses or phone numbers should not be used. If there is a safeguarding reason to contact a student on their personal mobile or another platform, this must be agreed by a deputy headteacher in advance.
- All live lessons must be recorded by the teacher. This does not apply for mentoring sessions or any other events where cameras are turned on.

## **Staff**

- Staff should be professionally dressed.
- Staff should have cameras turned on for mentoring sessions and pastoral events. For live lessons, staff can have their cameras turned on and off.
- Staff should refrain from eating during video calls with students.
- Staff should not have members of their household actively engaging in the meeting.
- Staff should not have other open tabs on their desktop that are not relevant to the lesson or mentoring session.
- All video mentoring sessions should be logged on CPOMS.
- Staff should use one of google meets backgrounds for all video calls from home. This ensures that personal aspects of staff's homes are not visible.
- Any disclosures made or safeguarding issues that arise during a video call or lesson, should be followed up using the school's usual safeguarding reporting process.
- Staff should remove students from the live lesson immediately if they do not follow the students expectations for remote live lessons. This should then be logged on bromcom as a C2 and reported to the head of year. The teacher should follow this up with a phone call home.

## **Students**

- Students should have their cameras turned off at all times during live lessons.
- Students can choose to have their cameras turned on or off in pastoral events. Students with cameras on should be appropriately dressed (eg- no nightwear)
- Students should have their cameras turned on during mentoring sessions (unless they do not have a camera). Students with cameras on should be appropriately dressed (eg- no nightwear)
- Students should behave appropriately, following the school's behaviour policy.
- Students' microphones should remain muted from the start of the lesson and only switched on if instructed by the teacher.
- The chat feature should only be used if instructed by the class teacher.

## **9. Roles and responsibilities**

### **DSL and Deputy DSL**

- We will have a trained DSL or Deputy DSL contactable during school hours. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.
- Staff in school will be informed by email as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them.
- We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable students in our school are. There is a vulnerable students log which DSLs and the safeguarding team have access to.

### **The senior leadership team**

- There will be two members of staff on-site each day.
- The SLT on-site will ensure that the vulnerable/student provision runs smoothly and will be on call to address any issues that arise.
- The SLT on-site will notify the DSL or Deputy DSL [if the DSL is not site] of any safeguarding matters on-site.

### **Staff on site**



- There will be three staff each day who will supervise the students in the vulnerable student and key worker provision. They will liaise with the SLT on duty for any support needed or issues that arise.
- The staff on site will be responsible for completing the daily register.

### **9. 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 students and with any other external agencies who are students are supported by.
- We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from;
  - our 3 local safeguarding partners
  - The local authority about students with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and students in need

### **10. Monitoring attendance**

As most students 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 student we expect to attend school during the closure does not attend, or stops attending. In these cases we will;

- Follow up on their absence with their parents/carers, by phone and email if we cannot reach the parents by phone in the first instance. This process will be overseen by the Assistant Headteacher responsible for attendance.
- Notify their social worker, or any other external agency who needs to know this information.
- We are using the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

We will also complete the daily attendance return to the DfE and we will use the X code for all students who are not on site.

We will monitor students engagnets with Google classroom as a marker of attendance.

### **11. Peer-on-peer abuse**

- We recognise that students can abuse their peers and our staff are clear about the school's policy and procedures regarding peer on peer abuse. All peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. We also recognise that abuse can still occur during a school closure or partial closure and between those students who do attend the school site during these measures.
- Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of peer-on-peer abuse and will follow the process set out in our Safeguarding Policy, which can be accessed on our school website.
- We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Students Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

### **12. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer**

- We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Students Safe in Education.
- Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have about an adult working with our students – 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).

- Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff should be referred to the Headteacher Vin McNerney in the first instance, or the Chair of Governors, Matt Miller. This is in accordance with our whistle blowing policy. Contact details can be found in the important contacts section at the start of this policy.
- 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.

### **13. Safeguarding all students**

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all students 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 this policy.

For students at home, staff will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
- No contact from students or families
- Seeming more withdrawn during any communications

Students 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.

### **14. Online safety**

#### **In school**

- We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school. IT staff are available during school opening hours.
- The school's e-safety policy still applies to students in school during school closure.

### **15. Working with parents and carers**

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to students online and the importance of staying safe online.
- Know what our school is asking students 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 students safe online.

### **16. Mental health**

- We have a safeguarding and welfare email address that students can contact for any safeguarding, welfare and mental health needs. This email address is monitored in school hours by the DSL, who will assign the request for support to the appropriate member of the safeguarding or pastoral team. Parents and students will be directed, where appropriate, to other resources to support good mental health at this time.
- Our school counsellor will continue to offer a counselling service via email or the phone to students who are already receiving this and for any new students who require this support.

- When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, the school will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both students' and adults' mental health.

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

### **Safer recruitment**

- 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, the school will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (KCSIE).
- 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. When validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents, 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.
- If the school is utilising volunteers, the school will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.
- The school 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. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.
- The school will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral.
- During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk)
- Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, the school will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.
- 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 students.
- We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Students Safe in Education.
- During school closure all interviews will be conducted through video call. The interview process has been adjusted to ensure that extra steps are taken to ensure that remote interviewing is rigorous.
- 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 Students Safe in Education.

### **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 safeguarding policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Students Safe in Education part 1

### **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.

### **18. Students attending other settings**

Where students are required to attend another setting during school closure, we will make sure the receiving school/setting 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.
- For students who were being educated off-site prior to school closure, we will ensure that contact is made with the off-site provider to ensure an appropriate plan is in place. We will assign a key worker and access to all on-line learning, to educated off-site students.

### **19. 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 every 4 weeks by the DSL/deputy headteacher responsible for safeguarding.

### **20. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding
- Staff code of conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- E- safety policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Safeguarding checks on staff and workers policy

