



New Park Primary Academy

Annex to Child Protection Policy – COVID-19

31st March 2020

Response to COVID-19

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

Despite the changes, the school's 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

New Park Primary Academy continues to be open to the children of critical workers and for children that the school has identified as vulnerable. Children who have EHCPs are offered placements if parents are critical workers but may not be able to take a place in school if staffing levels are below what is required to meet the additional needs of the child. Advice from the DFE is that children with EHCPs should be kept at home if their personal care needs can be met.

Reporting arrangements

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

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Robert Mold 01423 503 011 or 07398 624 415
- The Deputy DSL is Robert Pratt 01423 503 011

The school's approach ensures that a DSL is always available either on the school site or "on-call" via phone and email.

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:

If you believe the situation is urgent but does not require the police, please call **01609 780780** to make a telephone contact.

Should your call be outside of business hours (Monday – Friday / 9am-5pm) please still call **01609 780780** to speak to the Emergency Duty Team.

A written referral using the universal referral form must be completed and submitted **within 24 hours** of your telephone call.

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, as above.

Identifying vulnerability

We have undertaken a scoping exercise to identify the most vulnerable children. This is based on school intel, children who have open cases to social care or other supporting agencies.

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

- Looked After Children – we currently have no LACs
- Previously Looked After Children – These children are offered a place in school where it is appropriate
- Children subject to a child protection plan or child in need plan – If a child has a case open at Child Protection or Child in Need they will be offered a full-time place at school. Where places are not taken up, school staff will contact the family twice weekly via telephone to offer support. The DSL is in regular contact with social workers to keep them updated and share information
- Children supported by Early Help – These children are also offered a place in school. Where places are not taken, school staff will contact the family twice weekly and the DSL remains in regular contact with family support workers
- Children who have, or have previously had, a social worker – There is an expectation that children with a social worker should attend school (or another school by arrangement), unless in consultation with the child's social worker and family it is agreed this can be safely managed with the child at home.
- Children with an EHCP – Children with an EHCP are offered a place where their personal care needs cannot be met at home. Health needs may require them to self-isolate at home
- Other children the school considers vulnerable - These children are offered a place at school

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

- Children of critical workers who may attend school. School should prioritise the placements for this group where required. School will ask that wherever possible though, children should be cared for at home.
- Children at home who are deemed vulnerable will be given a telephone contact number that will give them direct access to the Headteacher and the DSL. At least weekly contact should be made by school to check on children

Holiday arrangements

New Park Primary is continuing to provide places for children over the Easter break and this will be offered to children of critical workers only.

Attendance

The school is following the attendance guidance issued by the 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 (phone and/or email) but if necessary, arrange a home visit by another appropriate agency. A risk assessment will be undertaken to consider 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. This will, in the case of vulnerable children, involve passing details to social care for a safe and well check to be made.

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.

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 cohorts in attendance have mixed age, mixed developmental stages, are attending a different setting as an interim measure, and similar. When making contact with these families our staff will ask about relationships between learners.

Online risks

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. At this stage, home learning is not dependent on using the internet. As this period of school closure continues, this may change. 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 are learning at the school.

- The school continues to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place on school equipment.
- The school has taken on board guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning and guidance for safer working practice from the Safer Recruitment Consortium. We have reviewed the code of conduct and information sharing policy accordingly.
- Staff have been told to hide their phone numbers when contacting families from a personal mobile and have been sent updated guidance on keeping data safe. All school communication will come from the office email address and the school social media channels.
- If school uses a home-learning approach which requires online working, parents and carers will be reminded about keeping their children safe online. School will send out a list of sites children will be asked to access and support available for families including:
 - Internet matters - support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - Net-aware - support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
 - Parent info - support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - Thinkuknow - 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 that the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged.

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.

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 they are worried about a child, and will ensure that 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 require 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
- 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

Within school our procedures remain robust:

- We are unlikely to use volunteers during this crisis
- 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 the designated safeguarding lead for that week



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. 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 31.3.2020 and is available on the school website