Safeguarding Policy: COVID-19 addendum

September 2020

Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Mrs Sue Wade	swade@richardpate.co.uk
EYFS and Deputy DSL 1	Mrs Paula Hunte	phunte@richardpate.co.uk
SENCo and Deputy DSL 2	Mrs Christina Conner	cconner@richardpate.co.uk
Headteacher	Mr Robert MacDonald	rmacdonald@richardpate.co.uk
Safeguarding Trustee	Mrs Helen Hooper	hhooper@richardpate.co.uk

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during any period of school closure or partial closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from the GSCE.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers.

Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

> Have a social worker, including children:

- With a child protection plan
- Assessed as being in need
- Looked after by the local authority

> Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children 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 children 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

> Children should continue to be protected when they are online

3. Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately using our usual procedures. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children still attending school and those at home.

4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

If our DSL (or deputy) aren't in school, they can be contacted remotely by email for parents; staff will also have their phone numbers.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding.

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure they can:

> Identify the most vulnerable children in school

> Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary

> Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments

5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

> The GSCE

> The local authority about 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

6. Monitoring attendance

If an individual pupil is absent waiting for test results or is self-isolating for 14 days they will be expected to register with Mr MacDonald or another nominated person at 9am via Zoom. If the whole class is self-isolating they will be expected to register with the class teacher or another nominated person at 9am via Zoom.

If a pupil fails to register, the School will follow up on their absence with their parents or carers by phone.

We are using the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details.

7. Peer-on-peer abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – about both children attending school and those at home.

Cyber- bullying

Many pupils will be using social media to communicate with their friends. It is important that pupils are able to have conversations with their friends.

Due to social distancing policies the only way peer-on-peer abuse, including cyberbullying, coercion, sexting and so on can happen is online.

As a school we will send the pupils Safeguarding and E-Safety reminders (co-ordinated by the DSLs), including who to report worries to via class teachers in their PSHE lessons.

Parents can contact the DSLs if they have any concerns regarding cyber-bullying.

8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff 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).

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 for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

9. Safeguarding all children

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children 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 section 3.

For children at home, they will look out for signs like:

> Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
> No contact from children or families
> Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

Children 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.

10. Online safety

10.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

We realise that children will be spending more time online and it is important that they continue to be kept safe when doing so.

Most family homes will also have some form of filtering in place. If anyone requires more details on how to do this they can be found here: https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/)

Staff are advised to use school email accounts and devices rather than personal when communicating with parents and delivering remote education.

10.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff code of conduct and the Remote Teaching Policy.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

10.3 Working with parents and carers

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 school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school

> Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

Parents will be kept informed by email.

11. Staff recruitment, training and induction

11.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers

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 children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

11.2 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 children protection policy (and this addendum)

> Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1

> Confirmation of local processes

> Confirmation of DSL arrangements

12. Keeping records of who's on site

We will keep a record of which staff 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.

13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the GSCE, the LA or DfE is updated.

14. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Remote Teaching policy
- Health and safety policy
- E- safety policy
- Anti-bullying policy